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EXPLANATORY, HOMILETIC AND ILLUSTRATIVE

FORMING A

COMPLETE COMMENTARY ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR THE USE OF

MINISTERS, BIBLE STUDENTS AND SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS

By JAMES COMPER GRAY

AND

REV. GEORGE M. ADAMS, D. D.

DISCARD

THE OLD TESTAMENT

VOL. I

CONTAINING GENESIS TO II KINGS INCLUSIVE.

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THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

1663.

Introduction.

GENESIS.

I. Title. From Gk., *γένεσις*, a birth, because it describes the generation or production of all things. The Hebrews called this book *Bereshith* = in the beginning; from the first word in the Hebrew text. **II. Authorship.** Jewish tradition ascribes the authorship to Moses. The way in which Genesis, in common with the other books of the Pentateuch, is referred to by our Lord and the Apostles, leads to the conclusion that it was in some sense the work of Moses. But it is evident from the book itself that ancient documents were used in its composition. There are also here and there marks of addition or revision by a later hand. **III. Time.** About 1500 B. C., so far as it was the work of Moses. **IV. Contents.** The book falls naturally into two portions: (1) the early history of the race of mankind in the first eleven chapters; (2) the history of the Patriarchs, as the ancestors of the people of Israel, in chapters xii-l. **V. Design.** (1) To define the place occupied by Israel among other nations, and to show how it gradually emerges into separate and distinct existence." (2) To furnish the history of the patriarchal church. (3) "It serves as the narrative preamble to the legislation of Moses. It is the first volume of the history of man in relation with God." There is a unity of plan in the book, in accordance with which the material gathered from different sources is arranged and welded together. (*G. M. A.*)

Synopsis.

(According to Bush.)

1. The Creation..	i. ii.
2. Sabbath and Fall	ii.-iii.
3. Adam and Posterity to the Flood...	iv.
4. Genealogy of Patriarchs.....	v.
5. World bef. the Flood.....	vi.
6. The Flood	vii-viii. 14
7. Covenant with Noah.....	viii. 15-ix. 17
8. Noah prophesies conc. his Sons	ix. 18-29
9. Confusion of Tongues and Dispersion	x. xi. 1-26
10. Life of Abraham.....	xi. 27-xxv. 10
11. Death of A. to Sale of Joseph	xxv. 11-xxxvii. 38
12. Joseph and Israel in Egypt	xxxix-xlvii. 27
13. Death of Jacob and the Patriarchs	xlviii. 28-l. 26

(According to Ayre.)

PART 1.—Early hist. etc., of Mankind.

1. Creation and Eden....	i. ii.
2. Man's Fall and Expulsion.....	iii.
3. Antediluvian World.....	iv.-vi. 8
4. Flood and restoration.....	vi. 9-ix. 29
5. Call of Abram, etc.....	x.
6. Confusion of Tongues, and Descent of the Chosen Race.....	xi. 1-26

PART II.—Early hist. of Jews.

1. Abraham..	xi. 27-xxv. 18
2. Isaac	xxv. 19-xxxiii. 9
3. Jacob.....	xxxv. 28-xxxvi. 43
4. Israel in Egypt.....	xxviii. 10-l. 26

PRACTICAL HINTS.—1. Read the Bible with prayer. 2. Go to it to learn, not to judge. 3. Read it methodically, regularly, day by day. 4. Compare Scripture with Scripture. “God is His own interpreter; and He will make it plain.” 5. Apply as you read, and practice what you learn. 6. Read with a spirit of self-examination. 7. Judge of and interpret other books by this; not this by others. 8. Be men of one book, and that book the Bible. When Sir Walter Scott was dying, he said to the watcher, “Bring the Book.” “What book?” asked Lockhart. The dying man replied, “There is but ONE BOOK.”—*Topics for Teachers.*

THE HOLY BIBLE.

I. Title: BIBLE, fr. Gk. βιβλος (= *book*) the name of inner bark of linden or teil-tree: applied to this bk., bec. it is of all books "*The Book*"—par excellence. **II. Other names.** (1) **SCRIPTURES**, *i. e.* writings: or, in Gk. *Hagio-grapha* = Holy Writings. (2) **WORD OF GOD**, the most full and significant title. **III. Divisions.** 1. **TWO CHIEF:**—(1) *The Old Test.* The record of the *covenant* of salvation through a Saviour who should come in the fulness of time. (2) *The New Test.* The record of the fulfilment of that cov. in our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. **OTHER DIVISIONS.** i. The Old Test. contains—(1) *The Pentateuch* (or 5 bks of Moses). (2) *Historical* (Joshua to end of Chrons.). (3) *Poetical* (Job to end of Song of Sol.). (4) *Prophetical* (Isa. to Mal.). ii. The New Test. contains—(1) *Historical* (Mat. to Acts). (2) *Epistolary* (Roms. to Jude). (3) *Prophetical* (Rev.). 3. **MINOR DIVISIONS.** i. *Chapters.* As first projected, and still used, were arranged (*cir.* middle of 13th cent.) by Card. Hugo de Sancto Caro, to facilitate the use of his concordance to the Lat. Vulg. ii. *Verses* By R. Stephen, who printed the first Gk. Test. with his verses at Geneva (1551). The 1st Eng. Bib. so divided was print. at Geneva (1560). **IV. Genuineness.** The A. V. is the final result of a careful collating of many anc. MSS. i. **HEB. MSS.** For his crit. Heb. Bib. Kennicott coll. 630; De Rossi coll. 734 more. The oldest Heb. MS. (now at St. Petersburg) cannot be less than 1,300 years old. From these Heb. MSS., the Septuagint trans. (made ab. 300 B. C.) does not dif. in any important degree; and as that trans. was usually quoted by our Lord and the Apostles, it may be regarded as truly representing the old Heb. original. ii. **GK. MSS.** Of these there are many hundreds in existence, of wh. the chief are (1) *C. Vaticanus* (A. D. 300—400). (2) *C. Alexandrinus* (A. D. 400—500). (3) *C. Sinaiticus* (A. D. 300—400). No one doubts the genuineness of the present versions of the Gk. and Rom. classics, yet of only 15 MSS. of Herodotus, wh. have come down to us, the oldest is of the 10th cent. **V. Ancient Translations.** 1. **THE SEPTUAGINT**, or trans. of the *seventy* (hence written LXX.) of the O. T. in Gk. Prob. begun at Alexandria in the reign of Ptolemy Lagus, at the instigation of Demetrius Philareus, and finished in the reign of P. Philadelphus (*cir.* B. C. 285). 2. **THE PESHITO** (or literal) SYRIAC. O. T. (*cir.* A. D. 100—200). 3. **THE LATIN VULGATE**, by Jerome, presbyter of Dalmatia, who (in 382) at wish of Damascus, B. of Ro., undertook revision of old Lat. ver. The present Lat. Vulg. is a transcript of the corrected edition of Jerome's pub. by Pope Clement VIII. (1593) **VI. Famous Eng. Vers.** 1. **BEDE**, trans. Bib. into Saxon (735). 2. **WICLIFF'S** (1380), not printed for many yrs. 3. **TYNDALE'S** (1525), the first printed Eng. Bib. 4. **COVERDALE'S** (1535), a revis. of No. 3. 5. **MATTHEWS', or J. ROGERS'** (1537). This founded on Nos. 3 and 4. 6. **TAVERNER'S** (1539), revis. of No. 5. 7. **CRANMER'S**, or *the great Bible* (1539): this a reprint in large fol. of No. 4, revised. The first pub. "by authority." 8. **GENEVA** (1557—60), ed. by Coverdale and others: and also called "*the Breeches Bib.*" (see on Ge. iii. 7). 9. **THE BISHOPS' BIBLE** (1568), revis. and ed. by Abp. Parker. 10. **THE AUTHORIZED VERSION**, *written* A. V. (1611). 54 learned men, forming 6 companies, of wh. 2 comps. sat at Westminster 2 at Oxford, and 2 at Cambridge, began this ed. in 1607, and completed it in 4 yrs. This is the version in common use by all English-speaking people. 11. **THE REVISED VERSION**, *written* R. V., began in 1870, N. T. published in 1881, O. T. in 1885. **VII. Hebrew Comments.** 1. **TARGUMS**, fr. Chaldee word = explanation. (1) The most anc. is the T. of Onkelos (*cir.* 1—200 A. D.), on the Pentateuch. (2) Of Jonathan Ben Uzziel. (3) Pseudo-Jonathan. (4) Jerusalem T. 2. **MISHNAH**, the *second* or oral law of the Jews (A. D. 150), trads. explanatory of the law of Moses. 3. **GEMARA**, *i. e.* perfection (*cir.* A. D. 300—500). 4. **TALMUD**, doctrine or learning, composed of Mishnah and Gemara united. 5. **MASORAH**, *i. e.* tradition. Not known who compiled it. Consists of notes on letters, words, verses, etc. In the course of time took the form of marg. notes to text. As applied to Eng. Bib., and including the N. Test., they are as follows:—*Books*, in O. T., 39; in N. T., 27; total, 66. *Chapters*, in O. T., 929; in N. T., 260; total, 1,189. *Verses*, in O. T., 23,214; in N. T., 7,959; total, 31,173. *Words*, in O. T., 592,493; in N. T., 181,253; total 773,746. *Letters*, in O. T., 2,728,100; in N. T., 838,380; total, 3,566,480. Middle chap. (and least), Ps. cxvii.; mid. ver., Ps. cxviii. 8. The word "*and*" in O. T., 35,535; in N. T., 10,684; total, 46,219. Word "*Jehovah*," 6,855 times. Of the *Old Test.*, Prov. is middle bk.: Job xxix., mid. chap.; 2 Ch. xx. 18 the mid. ver.; and 1 Ch. i. 1 the shortest ver. Of the *New Test.*, 2 Thess. is mid. bk.; betw. Ro. xiii., xiv. the mid. chap.; Ac. xvii. 17 mid. ver.; and Jo. xi. 13 is the shortest ver., both in the N. T. and in the whole Bible. All the letters in the alphabet are in Ezra vii. 21; 2 Kings xix. and Isa. xxxvii. are alike. Neither the word "*God*" nor "*Lord*" occurs in Esther.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

B, C. 4004.

1, 2. [vss. 1, 2 include the hist. of the world prior to the begin. of the six days.] (1) **beginning**,^a indicates *that* the beginning was, not *when* it was; has reference to action not to time; "no time bef. creation:" this may ref. us back to an epoch, hundreds of thousands of yrs. fr our age. The chronology of Archbp. Usher which set the creation 6000 years ago, has long ago been abandoned. **God**, Heb. *Elohim*, (*plu.*) There are many theories to account for this plural. Some would say that the Heb. believed in many Gods; others say (Gesenius) that it is a linguistic remnant of polytheism, which became fixed in the language with a singular meaning; yet others, see in it a gleam of the Trinity; while some others still, consider it a plural of majesty. The last has been most generally held, but scholars are beginning to adopt the view of Gesenius. The Divine Name fr. this *vs.* to ii. 3. **created**,^b out of nothing: the Heb. word *bara* used exclusively of God. Man *makes*: only God can *create*. the . . **earth**.^c (2) **earth**, wherein now we live, was then **without . . void**, *lit.* wasteness and emptiness; *i. e.* Chaotic. **deep**, this word from the Heb. root meaning "to disturb;" "a raging deep of wild waters and storm." **spirit**, *lit.* breath or wind, whence some say that a mighty wind of God swept over it. Better the Divine energy which we have come to know as the Holy Spirit. **moved**,^d *lit.* was hovering; or brooding.

The creation — (on the whole chapter). — We learn that — I. There was a beginning, and this was the act of God. II. The disorder of primal creation is reduced to order by the power and intelligence of this Divine will. We might have had matter created by will, but all might have remained shapeless and inane. The life of God is imparted to the chaotic world. Light is approved by God. Power develops through will and intelligence into emotion. III. This progress of creation passes from order, through organization, into life, until it culminates in man. Plants and animals are *after their kind*. Man is *after the likeness of God*. He is subject to expressed law — a king, he is yet to obey. Moral law must be recognized by Him. — *Bevan*.

The beginning. — Between the initial act and the details of Genesis, the world, for aught we know, might have been the theatre of many revolutions, the traces of which Geology may still investigate, and to which she, in fact, has confidently appealed as the vestiges of so many continents that have now passed away. — *Chalmers*. "The first verse of Genesis seems explicitly to assure the creation of the universe and the heaven, including the sidereal system and the earth, more especially specifying our planet, as the subsequent scene of the operations of the six days about to be described. No information is given as to events which may have occurred upon this earth, unconnected with the history of man, between the creation of its component matter, recorded in the first verses, and the era at which its history is recorded in the second verse; nor is any limit fixed to the time during which these intermediate events may have been going on. Millions of years may have occupied the indefinite interval between the beginning in which God created the heaven and the earth, and the evening or commencement of the first day of the Mosaic narrative." — *Buckland*.

3-5. (3) **said** . . **light**,^f it is not said that L. was now first made: but that now at God's bidding it *was*, *i. e.* where the darkness had been (God Himself is light), the lifting of the vapors which prob. had obscured the light. (4) **good**,^g fitting, suitable, beautiful, perfect. **divided . . darkness**,^a separated, suffered not the light to blend with the darkness: 'but to alternate with it. (5) **and . . day . . night**, *i. e.* the distinguishing mark of what we call day, and night. **evening . . day**, *lit.* "the evening was: and the morning was, — *day one*." We know not how often the evening and the morning were repeated during the period here called *One Day*. The expression "day" cannot refer to our day of twenty-four hours, although it must be said that in Heb. generally it has that meaning. Josephus in his *Jew. Ant.* considered this word in this instance to be used in a peculiar sense, and geology merely proves that it cannot be understood as our day of twenty-four hours. so one must understand it to be an *epoch* or *period*. So also of all the other days.

the creation

^a Jo. i. 1-3; He. i. 10; Ps. cii. 25.

^b He. xi. 3; Col. i. 16; Re. iv. 11.

^c Pr. iii. 19; Ne. ix. 6; Ps. xevi. 5; Je. xxxii. 17.

^d Ps. civ. 30; Is. xl. 13.

"The first four words of the Bible make a model motto for every enterprise and labor of man: — 'In the beginning, God.'" beginning,

"Let us read both of God's books — Nature and Scripture — with reverence, humility, and prayer for the illumination of His Holy Spirit; and He will reveal Himself to us in both." — *Wordsworth*.

By creation we mean that free act of the triune God by which in the beginning for His own glory He made, without the use of pre-existing materials, the whole visible and invisible universe. — *A. H. Strong*.

day one

^e Ps. xxxiii. 9; cxlviii. 5.

^f Job xxxviii. 19; Is. xlv. 7; Ps. lxxiv. 16; 2 Co. iv. 6.

^g Ecc. xi. 7.

^h 2 Co. vi. 14; Ps. lxxiv. 16; civ. 20.

ⁱ but see *Bush in loc.*

B. C. 4004.

"Then bless the shadows, the beautiful shadows! And take this tho't, as thou goest abroad, That in heaven and earth Shades owe their birth To light; and light is the shadow of God."

"It is in vain to inquire scientifically as some have done, of what kind this first-created light was." — *Alford*.

"Light ethereal, first of things, quint essence pure." — *Milton*.

day two

a Job ix. 8; Ps. xix. 1; cxlviii. 4; cxlviii. 18; Is. xl. 22; Je. ii. 15; Job xxxvii. 18.

"The poets fabulously fancied that the giants scaled heaven by heaping mountain upon mountain. What was their fancy is the gospel truth. If you would get to heaven you must climb b thither by putting Mount Zion upon Mount Sinai." — *Ep. Hopkins*.

day three

b Je. v. 22; 2 Pe. iii. 5; Job xxvi. 10; Ps. xxxiii. 7, xc. 5, cxxxv. 6; Ecc. i. 7.

The quantity of water suspended in the atmosphere is enormous; and the rains, the springs, and rivers which fertilize the earth and sustain its inhabitants, are only the overflowings of this vast aerial reservoir, upheld by the laws established by God. — *Dawson*.

"Clouds that looked as though an angel in his upward flight had left his mantle floating in mid-air." — *J. Baillie*.

Light and its laws. — I. The light God has made, and His mind concerning it: 1 Physical light—good; sweet, pleasant. Sun, the emblem of many things; cheerful, revealing. 2 Mental light—good. 3 Gospel light—good; the light of the story of God; light that shined out of darkness to enlighten Gentiles; Christ the Light of the world, the Sun of Righteousness. 4. Spiritual light—good. 5. Essential light—light of heaven from the Father of lights.

The Creation. — In the year 1808 a grand performance of the "Creation" took place at Vienna. Haydn was present, but he was so old and feeble that he had to be wheeled in a chair into the theatre, where a princess of the house of Esterhazy took her seat by his side. This was the last time that Haydn appeared in public, and a very impressive sight it must have been to see the aged father of music listening to the "Creation" of his younger days, but too old to take any active share in the performance. The presence of the old man roused intense enthusiasm among the audience, which could no longer be suppressed as the chorus and orchestra burst in full power upon the superb passage, "And there was light." Amid the tumult of the enraptured audience the old composer was seen striving to raise himself. Once on his feet, he mustered up all his strength, and in reply to the applause of the audience, he cried out as loud as he was able: "No, no! not from me, but," pointing to heaven, "from thence—from heaven above—comes all!" saying which, he fell back in his chair, faint and exhausted, and had to be carried out of the room. — *Frederick Crowest*.

6—8. (6) firmament,^a expanse, that wh. is spread out, as a curtain, or beaten as gold leaf, not to be understood as a solid dome, as some have erroneously stated: the root of the Heb. word refutes that. (7) made (not created as vs. 1) formed out of what now existed. the .. under, ocean, seas, etc. the .. above, rain, etc. (8) heaven, has reference here to the region in which the atmosphere moves. And .. evening, etc. *lit.* "and evening was and morning was. — DAY TWO."

The two firmaments. — This harmonizes with what is known of the processes of evaporation to which the clouds are subject as they float above us—lakes of water in the azure vaults. The firmament sustains the waters collected in its scattered clouds, and separates them from those resting on the surface of the earth. Take, in connection with this, what Solomon has written, "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." (Eccl. i. 7); and we may fairly press the question, can any brief description more exactly set forth what has been ascertained as to the settled course of evaporation? — *W. Fraser*.

9, 10. (9) gathered,^b out of the watery desert. Hitherto land and water formed one mass. and .. appear, the upheaving of the land, etc. "Perh. many of the irregular and broken appearances and traces of violent action now visible on the earth's surface are to be referred to this event." The language of the Psalmist, Ps. civ. 6—9, would seem to corroborate this. (10) earth, Heb. *Aretz*—land, earth-soil, as the Heb. word for the firmament means the "heights," the one for earth means the "flats" (Gesenius). seas, the ocean. The Heb. *yamin*, is fr. a word = tumultuous agitation. "The plural form seas shows that the one place consists of several basins." — *Murphy*.

Moral uses of the sea. — I. One great problem of God, in building a school for man, was, how to distribute the school. No one government could occupy the whole domain. But, since the world is distributed into nations, which are likely to be hostile to each other, they need to be separated by natural barriers. This is well effected by spreading the sea between them. II. It will be found that the sea has oftentimes contributed to the moral and social advancement of the race, by separating one part of the world even from the knowledge of another, and preserving it for discovery and occupation at an advanced period of history. III. While oceans have a disconnecting power, they have, at the same time, a connecting power, bringing all regions and climes into correspondence and commercial interchange. The good resulting from commerce is incalculable: 1. Its spirit is the spirit of peace; 2. The nations engaged in it will, of course, be the most forward nations; 3. Through it, these nations, most forward in art, are gradually civilizing barbarous tribes;

4. It opens the way for the universal spread of Christianity. IV. The sea has yet another kind of moral use, more direct than the others, in the influences it has over the minds of men. How many have received lessons of patience and humility from the ocean! — *Bushnell*.

The benefits of the ocean. — How numberless are the blessings we owe to the ocean, the father and sustainer of all organic life! He it is that feeds the streams, that fills the lake, that bubbles in the spring, that foams in the cataract, or rushes along in the mountain torrent. Should his eternal fountains be dried up, the blooming surface of the earth would be converted into a naked waste. To him we owe the magnificence of our forests, the verdure of our meadows, the beauty of our fields. It is his waters we enjoy in the luscious fruits of our orchards, or quaff in the juice of the exhilarating grape. They circulate in the veins of numberless animals — of the bee, which offers us the sweet tribute of its honey; of the bird, that charms us with its melodious song; of the domestic quadruped, on whose flesh we feed, and whose services are indispensable to our welfare. Nay, our own blood is originally drawn from the wells of the ocean, and is constantly refreshed and replenished from its exhaustless sources. — *Hartwig*.

11-13. (11) **grass**,^a tender budding grass, first sprouts of the earth. **seed**, the striking feature of this second class. **fruit**, the distinguishing mark of the third class. (12) **seed . . kind**, answering to the nature of the herb, fr. wh. the same kind of herb would grow. **whose . . itself**, whose seed is in the fruit. **good**, answering to His purpose. (13) **and . . day**, Heb. *as before*, — DAY THREE.

Creation of plants. — These verses show God's thoughtfulness and care with regard to — I. The present: 1. Man is about to be created; 2. At his creation, his wants will require to be satisfied; 3. Therefore, to meet these wants at once, the means for supplying them are created beforehand. II. The distant future. Each herb contained the seeds of future representatives of their kind. Thus, a second creation was avoided. — *L. Masters*.

Creation of plants. — "What a thought that was, when God thought of a tree!" exclaimed a philosopher. Yes, a tree, a single tree, originating in an atom seed, deriving its vitality from heaven, drawing its juices from the earth, feeding upon the air, eliciting its coloring from the sunbeam, and elaborating its several parts by the mysterious power of its own vitality — presents a concourse of contrivances and properties and functions such as would never have entered the mind of man, or perhaps of any other intelligence, had not God set it in living form before him. — *W. Morris*.

14, 15. (14) **lights**, luminaries, repositories of light, centres of radiant light. If the sun and moon were not created until the third day, the question arises whence the light mentioned in vs. 3. The most satisfactory explanation is that the clouds and mists and vapors having been dispelled the luminaries now appeared to view. In Script. things are not scientifically expressed, but rather as they appear. So we should say that the light of the first day was the dim glimmer of a heavily clouded day, and when the clouds disappeared the source of the light, viz., sun and moon, stood out in view in the firmament. **divide . . night**,^b the purpose they were to serve in relation to the earth. **signs**, refers here doubtless to the subsequent employment of heavenly bodies for warnings, portents, etc. (see Acts ii. 19, 20). "That they may have been designed also to subserve important purposes in the various economy of human life, as in affording signs to the mariner and husbandman, is not improbable, though this is not so strictly the import of the original." — *Bush*. **seasons**,^c the nat. seasons of the year. **and . . years**, marking off, by the earth's revolution, days and years. (15) **to . . earth**, to shine upon. **and . . so**, the result was as God willed.

The great time-keeper. — What are the benefits God intends to secure for us, by the arrangements here made? By this means, He — I. Compels men, as far as they can be compelled, to reckon their time, or number their days aright. II. Calls us often to a reckoning with ourselves under the most impressive influences. III. Invites us to new purposes of future life. IV. Teaches us, in the most impressive manner possible, the value of time. V. Impresses upon us, as a truth of practical moment, that everything must be done in its time. VI. Reminds us both of our rapid transit here and immortality hereafter. VII. Teaches us that there is a changeless empire of being,

B. C. 4004.

The use of the sea in the economy of creation should lead us to admire the wisdom of God. It supplies water for rain, rivers, etc.; cools the air, is a wonderful storehouse of provision.

"I cannot look upon the ocean and the mountains without loving them; and I am greater than they because I can do so."

a Ps. cxlvii. 8; He. vi. 7.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass," etc. So when called by God the most barren instrumentalities become life-giving and verdant. When the Divine Being is about to enrich men, He gives them the power to help themselves. — *Exell*.

day four

b Ps. lxxiv. 19; civ. 19-23.

c Ge. viii. 22.

That we may sleep and wake at healthful intervals, the Framers of our bodies and Father of our spirits has mercifully divided the day from the night; at every sunset dropping the curtains of His evening, and so inviting to repose; at every sunrise lifting the curtains of His morning and so inviting to labor. — *Boardman*.

B. C. 4004.

"The sun doth rise, and shuts the lids of all heaven's lesser eyes."—*Parnassus*,
Poole's."

"The sun, God's crest upon His azure shield the heavens."—*Bailey*.

a Je. xxxi. 35; Ps. cxxvi. 7-9; xix. 4-6.

b Ps. cxlviii. 3; viii. 3, 4; Is. xl. 26.

Herschel calculated that in fifteen minutes, 16,000 stars crossed the field of his telescope when directed towards one pt. of the Milky Way. "Biblical astronomy is derived fr mere optical appearance; the eye alone is the judge; the moon is represented as the second of the great heavenly orbs, and as a luminous body; the stars are nothing else but her companions; and their only end is to shed their chaste lustre on our small planet."—*Kalisch*.

day five

c Ps. clv. 24, 25.

d *Kalisch*. "Monstrous crawlers that wriggle through the water, or scud along the banks."—*Murphy*. "Vast fishes, crocodiles, serpents."—*Wordsworth*. cf. Job vii. 12; Is. xxvii 1; Ex. vii. 9.

which the established round of seasons and years, and the mechanical order of heaven itself suggests and confirms.—*Bushnell*.

Sunset on the mountains.—First there comes a flood of rosy light, and then a deep bright crimson, like the ruby's flash or the sapphire's blaze, and then a circlet of flaming peaks studs the horizon. It looks as if a great conflagration were about to begin. But suddenly the light fades, and piles of cold pale white rise above you. You can scarce believe them to be the same mountains. But, quick as the lightning, the flash comes again. A flood of glory rolls once more along their summits. It is a last and mighty blaze. You feel as if it were a struggle for life—as if it were a war waged by spirits of darkness against these celestial forms. The struggle is over; the darkness has prevailed. These mighty mountain tombs are extinguished one after one; and cold ghastly piles of sepulchral hue, which you shiver to look up at, and which remind you of the dead, rise still and calm in the firmament above you. You feel relieved when darkness interposes its veil betwixt you and them. The night sets in deep and calm, and beautiful, with troops of stars overhead. The voice of streams, all night long, fills the silent hills with melodious echoes.—*Wylie*.

16-19. (16) two . . lights,^a sun and moon. It will be noted that the Bible holds to the geocentric conception of the universe. The appearance always governs Scripture narration. the . . day, the sun; Diam, 853,000 ms.; Bulk, 1,400,000 times larger than earth; Dist. ab. 91,000,000 ms. fr. earth; Rota. on axis 25 dys. 8 hrs. 9 min. lesser . . night, moon : Dia. 2,165 ms.; Bulk, one eighty-ninth part of earth; Dist. 239,000 ms. He . . also,^b number incalculable, ab. 2,000 visible to naked eye on a clear night: nearest fixed star 19 billions of ms. fr. earth. (17) give . . earth, all light, whether physical or spiritual, the gift of God—the Father of light. (18) rule . . divide . . darkness, the purpose they serve in rela. to the earth. and . . good, "Laplace was inclined to question the Divine verdict with regard to the moon, which he thought might have been so placed as to be always full, whereas, at its present distance from the earth, we are sometimes deprived of both its light and the sun's together. * * * The immediate effect of such a disposition of the lunar orb would be to give us a moon of only one-sixteenth the size of that which now dispenses its silver beams upon our darkened globe (Job xi. 12)."—*Pulp. Com.* (19) and . . day, Heb. as bef.—DAY FOUR.

The Celestial luminaries.—I. Display the Divine wisdom. "The heavens declare the glory of God." II. Attest the Divine goodness. 1. To give light upon the earth. 2. To distinguish day and night. 3. To mark times and seasons. III. Proclaim the Divine power. IV. Reflect the Divine beauty.—*Whitelaw*.

The order of nature.—A clergyman asked an old negro his reasons for believing in the existence of a God. "Sir," said he, "I have been here going hard upon fifty years. Every day since I have been in this world I see the sun rise in the east and set in the west. The north star stands where it did the first time I ever saw it; the seven stars and Job's coffin keep on the same path in the sky, and never turn out. It ain't so with man's works, He makes clocks and watches: they may run well for a while; but they get out of fix, and stand stock still. But the sun and moon and stars keep on the same way all the while. There is a power which makes one man die and another get well; that sends the rain, and keeps everything in motion."

20-23. (20) let . . forth,^c let the waters crawl, teem, swarm. the . . life, "that live by breathing;" applied gen. to creatures capable of sensation to distinguish from inanimate creation. and . . fly, birds not formed fr. the water (see ii. 19); a better translation (see R. V.), "and let the fowl fly." It is very evident, however, that insects are here included for the Heb. for fowl is winged creature (see Lev. xi. 20). above . . heaven, lit. towards the face of the expanse. (21) created, note this word when a new thing is introduced. Animal life was created, not made. whales, sea monsters: inclusive of mammals and non-mammifers.^d moveth, or creepeth. kind, variety, species, nature; this is the second class. (22) blessed, i. e., gave them power to propagate their several species. (23) and . . day, Heb. as bef.—DAY FIVE.

The sea teeming with life.—A correspondent of the newspaper press writes the following account from the Gulf of Siam; "We steamed forward at the rate of six or seven knots an hour, and a wonderful spectacle presented itself.

Athwart the vessel long white waves of light were seen rushing towards it, ever brighter and in swifter motion, till they seemed to flow together, and at length nothing could be seen on the water but a whirling white light. Looking steadfastly at it, the water, the air, and the horizon seemed blended in one; thick streamers of mist seemed to float by both sides of the ship with frantic speed. The appearances of color resembled those which arise when one turns a black and striped ball so quickly that the white stripes seem to run together. The spectacle lasted for five minutes, and was repeated once again for two minutes. No doubt it was caused by shoals of animalculæ in the water."

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24, 25. (24) **cattle**, graminivorous, tamable, and . . **thing**, as reptiles, and . . **earth**, beast of prey. (25) **God . . earth**, Heb. for earth *Aretz*. *creepeth . . earth*, Heb. for earth *Adamah*. *Aretz*, used hitherto = the earth as a whole. *Adamah*, now first used, cognate to Adam.

The creation of life.—In this account of the creation of plants and animals, we note the following particulars: (1) It is a creation out of pre-existing materials, and not, like that of the universe, out of nothing. (2) The origin of life, like the origin of matter, is traced directly to God Himself. (3) Special provision is made that each several kind of plant and animal shall continue his kind by natural generation. (4) Plants and animals are brought into being not singly, nor in pairs, but in great numbers. (5) This creation is said to have been effected in a certain order. — *Armstrong*.

26-28. (26) **and . . said**, now that the home had been prepared. **let us**, no hint of the trinity or council of angels, more likely used with reference to the superior dignity of the creature now introduced. **man**, Heb. *Adam*, = red, the crowning work of creation. **image . . likeness**, prob synonymous terms used for emphasis = shadow, resemblance: ref. to man's spiritual nature. "The expression implies that man was appointed by the Creator to sustain towards inferior animals a relation strikingly similar to that in which He Himself stands towards man; and hence that man upon earth represents or bears the image of God nearly in the same sense in which the governor of a province is said to represent or bear the image of his sovereign." — *Bush*. **dominion**,^a rule, authority. **over**, etc., relation of man to rest of creatures that of sovereignty: by force of reason he everywhere makes his power felt. (27) **so**, etc.,^b having thus deliberated; He executed His resolve. (28) **blessed**, etc.,^c see on vs. 22. The chief element in this blessing being supremacy. **subdue**, the earth's vast resources were given into his hand.

Man was created in the image of God. — 1. In respect to his intelligence. 2. In respect to his moral nature. 3. In respect to his dominion. 4. In respect to his immortality. **Learn**: 1. The dignity of man's nature. 2. The greatness of man's fall. 3. The glory of man's recovery by Christ. — *Ewell*.

Man a child of mercy. — When God, in His eternal counsel, conceived the thought of man's creation, He called to Him the three ministers who wait constantly upon His throne — Justice, Truth, and Mercy — and thus addressed them: "Shall we make man?" Then said Justice, "O God! make him not; for he will trample upon Thy laws." Truth made answer also, "O God! make him not, for he will pollute Thy sanctuaries." But Mercy, dropping upon her knees, and looking up through her tears, exclaimed, "O God! make him. I will watch over him with my care through all the dark paths which he may have to tread." Then God made man, and said to him, "O man! thou art the child of Mercy; go and deal with thy brother." — *Crittenden*.

29-31. (29) **said**, to man. **behold**, all this thoughtful consideration is indeed a matter for wonder. **given . . herb . . etc.**,^d the whole vegetable world. No animal food is provided for man or beast; Delitzsch infers that before sin came man and animals were not predaceous. **meat**, food, sustenance. (30) **and . . earth**, etc.,^e assignment of food to animals. (31) **saw**, perfect knowledge in that omniscient glance. **and . . good**,^f ea. step was good; the whole, very good. **and . . day**,^g *lit.* — **DAY SIX**.

A pretty world. — I once, writes Joaquin Miller, strolled through a miserable Mexican village. The shadows were creeping over the cabins, where women came and went in silence, and men sat smoking at the cabin doors, while children played in swarms by the water. The air was like a breath of God, and all nature seemed as sacred as rest to a weary man. A black, bent, old negro

day six

"I have carefully examined the figures of animals and birds engraven on the obelisks brought from Egypt to ancient Rome. In the general character these representations perfectly resemble the originals as we see them." — *Cuvier*.

creation of man

^a Ge. ix. 2; Ps. lviii. 6; Ja. iii. 7.

^b Ec. vii. 29; Is. lxiv. 8; Ge. v. 1; Ja. iii. 9; Ps. c. 3; Ac. xvii. 26.

^c Ps. cxxvii. 3; cxxviii. 3, 4; Is. xiv. 18.

"The new and brilliant science of geology attests that man was the last of created beings on this planet." — *Hitchcock*.

food for man

^d Ps. xxiv. 1; cxv. 16; 1 Ti. vi. 17; Job. xxxvi. 31; Ge. ix. 3; Ps. cxxvii. 25; cxlvi. 7; Ac. xiv. 11.

^e Ps. civ. 14, 15; cxlv. 15, 16; cxlvii. 9.
^f Ps. civ. 24; 1 Ti. iv. 4; De. xxxii. 4.
^g Ex. xxxi. 17.

B.C. 4004.
"There is not the least flower but seems to hold up its head, and to look pleasantly, in the secret sense of the goodness of its heavenly Maker." — *South.*
— *Bib. III.*

the Sabbath

a He. iv. 4.
b Ex. xx. 8-11; xxxi. 13-17; Ia. lvi. 2; He. iv. 9-11; Jo. xx. 19, 26; Ac. xvi. 13; xx. 7; 1 Co. xvi. 2.
A world without a Sabbath would be like a man without a smile, like a summer without flowers, and like a homestead without a garden. It is the joyous day of the whole week. — *Beecher.*
Poor soul! And don't you know without the work and strife and weary days you would not long for rest? Those are God's ways that win you from the life below. — *E.S.S.*

man a living soul

"By the use of the name *Jehovah*, the narrative advances a very important step towards the peculiar theocratical character of the Pentateuch; but by combining it with *Elohim*, it reminds, also, of the omnipotent Creator. The God of the universe is the God of Israel; but the God of Israel is, at the same time, Governor of the whole world." — *Kalisch.*

c Ps. civ. 14; Job v. 10.
d 1 Co. xv. 47; Ge. iii. 19; Job iv. 19; Ps. ciii. 14; Ec. xii. 7; Is. lxiv. 8.
e Job xxvii. 3; xxxiii. 4; Ac. xvii. 25; Is. ii. 22.
f 1 Co. xv. 45; He. xii. 9.

woman, all patches from head to foot, frosty-headed and half blind, came crooning forth with a broken pot tied together, in which she had planted a flower to grow by her door. I said — "Good evening, auntie; it's a fine evening." She slowly straightened up, looked at me, looked away at the fading sunlight on the hills, and said softly, "Oh, it's a pretty world, massa!" The old woman was a poetess — a prophetess. She had a soul to see the beauty, the poetry about her. "Oh, it's a pretty world, massa!" She had no other form of expression, but that was enough. Hers was the password to nature. "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold it was very good." — *Bib. III.*

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-3. (1) **finished**, perfected. The verb implies a gradual process. **host**, *Heb. sig.* a band duly disposed and marshalled; an army in battle array. "The visible contents of the heaven are so called from their multitude, variety and order." (2) **ended**, had ended. **rested**,^a cessation from previous occupation is all that is implied in this figure; not involving idea of weariness. (3) **sanctified**,^b set it apart as holy. "Separated fr. other days, and gave it a higher significance."

The advantages of the Sabbath. — A "blessed" day. 1. Its temporal advantages. (1) The curse of toil is for a while suspended. (2) The mind and body are invigorated for fresh exertion. (3) Sabbath observance has the reward of prosperity ordinarily attached to it. 2. Its spiritual advantages. (1) Finished redemption is then celebrated. (2) The means of grace are enjoyed. (3) The heavenly rest is anticipated. — *W. Conway.*

The first Sabbath. — Hugh Miller remarks, that while we find it recorded at the end of each of these "days" that "the evening and the morning were the first day," it is not said of the seventh day that "the evening," etc. What is the natural conclusion, but that the day is not yet ended? And hence Miller's sublime suggestion, that God, having made man, rested on the seventh day from His material creation; and this is now God's sabbath day, in which He is carrying on the redemption of man, the transformation of man, the salvation of man, and eventually the glorification of man. — *Bib. Treas.*

4-7. (4) Critics say that we have two accounts of creation, one covering Gen. i-ii.3, the other Gen. ii.4-25. Thus the second account begins at this point. It may be noted that the name *Jehovah* is used in this narrative of creation instead of God (*Elohim*) alone. **generations**, birth stages; events in Scripture are represented as having been begotten (see Prov. xxvii. 1, 2.) **day**, in or at that time. **Lord God, Jehovah Elohim.** The word *Jehovah* occurs ab. 6,000 times in Scripture and has in it the idea of absolute self-existence. The name was so sacred that the Jews never uttered it, using in its stead the name *Adonai* (Lord). (5) **plant . . herb**, reversion to third day of creation (i. 11-13), when the earth was void of vegetable life. Not a natural production, but like earth and heaven came into being by the direct fiat of God. **rain . . man . . ground**,^c both conditions of cultivation—rain and human care—being absent, therefore supernatural or unnatural means must be employed. (6) **mist, fog-vapor. earth, ha aretz. ground, adamah.** (7) **formed, fashioned, shaped. dust . . ground**,^d man a fragile "vessel in the potter's hand." **and . . life**,^e of no other living creature do we read this. This must not be understood in a mechanical sense. The dust of the ground became empowered by the Divine life. **man . . soul**,^f "materialism will never explain these words."

The earth without a man: — I. The world's independency of man. The terraqueous globe, embosomed in those wonderful heavens, and filled with every species of vegetable and animal life, existed before man appeared. 1. The world can do without him. The heavens would be as bright, the earth as beautiful, the waves of the ocean as sublime, the song of the birds as sweet; were man no more. 2. He cannot do without the world. He needs its bright skies, and flowing rivers, and productive soil, etc. He is the most dependent of all creatures. — *Homilist.*

Man, a living soul. — He did not merely possess it; he *became* it. It was his proper being, his truest self, the man in the man. All organized beings have life in common, each after its kind. This, therefore, all animals possess, and man as an animal. But, in addition to this, God transferred into man a higher

gift, and specially inbreathed even a living — that is, self-subsisting — soul ; a soul having its life in itself. — *Coleridge*.

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8, 9. (8) and . . . planted, man's first home in the world divinely contrived ; Eden specially fruitful and beautiful. garden, or park, idea of inclosure. eastward, foreplace ; this suggestive of its being in the best part of the district called Eden,^a *delight*, this the name, not of the garden, but of the region wherein it was situated. It is quite undecided where E. was.^b The name probably was given to the garden by the writer or compiler of the narrative ; it is not to be supposed that Adam knew it as such. (9) grow . . . food, realizing the old Spartan prayer, " grant us the beautiful with the good." Ornamentation as well as utility was considered. the . . . life,^c " the fruit whereof conferred immortality." — *Alford*. " A symbolical tree, a sign not only of a blessed natural life in Paradise, for a time ; but of a spiritual life after in heaven for ever, if he continued in obedience to his Creator." *Ainsworth*. midst, within. tree . . . evil, wh. " conferred knowledge of the difference betw. right and wrong." To eat of this tree was wrong ; he who did so would at once see and feel the dif. betw. that state and one of innocence. As to whether these trees actually existed, or whether they are but symbols to mark the growth of man's ethical nature depends entirely upon the conception we have of the whole story of the creation of the first man and the garden. If we take one statement literally we must make all so ; if the entire narrative be poetic and figurative we must search for the deeper meaning which lies imbedded in all this symbolism.

Lessons of the story. 1. And, first, the birth of industry. Jehovah God took the man He had formed and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and to keep it. Man must work for (a) the soul's sake ; (b) his own sake ; (c) God's sake. 2. The birth of language. (1) Wonderfulness of language. (2) Our words are judges. 3. The birth of immortality. " The tree of life." 4. The birth of probation. — *Boardman*.

Man and woman. — Man is strong ; woman is beautiful. Man is daring and confident ; woman is diffident and unassuming. Man is great in action ; woman in suffering. Man shines abroad ; woman at home. Man talks to convince ; woman to persuade and please. Man has a rugged heart ; woman a soft and tender one. Man prevents misery ; woman relieves it. Man has science ; woman taste. Man has judgment ; woman sensibility. Man is a being of justice ; woman of mercy. Each possesses peculiar gifts and a wide sphere of usefulness, and, by the wise use of these respective gifts, society is benefited and God is honored.

10-14. (10) river. . Eden,^d one great river, wh. may or may not have had its source in E. Here we begin to have a description of exact locality, and yet this would not vitiate what is stated above (see vs. 9), since there is but little doubt that man must have had his beginning in some place, and the consensus of opinion place that place somewhere about the banks of the Euphrates. parted, divided, branched out, heads,^e arms, streams. (11) Pison (overflowing), not identified. As all is conjecture, it is useless to enumerate the var. opinions. Havilah,^f where, uncertain. (12) bdellium, Heb. *bedolah*, of wh. we know little, but that it was like manna,^g and as that resembled coriander seed, some (as *Kimchi*) think pearls are meant. But most think it was a kind of gum. Yet its enumeration with gold and onyx would seem to imply that it was some precious gem. onyx, Heb. *shoham* = pale. (13) Gihon, prob. the Nile. Ethiopia, Heb. " land of Cush." (14) Hiddekel,^h Heb. *Diyah*, rapid : prob. the Tigris. Euphrates, Heb. *Frat.*, the sweet or broad stream.

Good Gold. — I. If men so willed, gold might be won and no soul lost. And therefore we must take care to distinguish between gold and the thirst for gold. Gold is like the rest of God's gifts, a good thing or a bad thing, according to the use made of it. And so it is no wonder that Scripture has recorded that near to paradise was a land of gold. The land of Havilah may exist still ; the fine gold and the bdellium and the onyx stone may now lie buried deep beneath its surface, or, perhaps, may yet be lying disregarded, like the treasures of California or Australia not many years ago. II. Be this as it may, there is another land whose gold is good, a land farther off than the far West and the islands of the sea, and yet ever close at hand, approachable by all, attainable by all, where no rust corrupts and no thieves break through

Eden

a Is. ii. 3; Ex. xxvii. 13.

b "Eden comprised that tract of land where the Euphrates and Tigris separate; fr. that spot the 'Garden of Eden' cannot be distant. Let it suffice that we know its general position; but we are not permitted to penetrate within, as if the angel with the flaming sword forbade the access." — *Kalisch*.

c Ge. iii. 22; Pr. iii. 18; Re. ii. 7; xxii. 2, 14.

"The tree of life, it is prob., was designed to sustain and refresh the life infused into man at his creation." — *Wordsworth*.

the river of Eden

d Re. xxii. 1. e Many critics, as Baumgarten, Kitzo, etc., are of opinion that the position of the rivers has totally changed in the course of time, especially since and by the deluge. f Ge. xxv. 18; 1 Sa. xv. 7; Ge. x. 7. g Nu. xl. 7; Ex. xvi. 14. h Da. x. 4.

"1. Rivers fertilize and beautify; lives should be useful. 2 The cold and rapid river of death will soon have to be passed. That it may not bear us away to eternal death, seek a present Saviour; so shall we, like Israel of old, find the passage safe and easy, and we shall be willing

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to advance at
His command."—
Topics for teachers.

permission
and prohibition

a Ep. iv. 28.

b 1 Ti. iv. 4; vi 17.

c Ro. vi. 23; 1 Co. xv. 22; Ja. i. 15.

"Death is not only the actual separation of soul and body, but includes all that culminates in that separation. A man may, as we say, 'die by inches'; and may be said, especially if passing fr. a state where death was not the necessary end of his days, to die, when the seeds of death begin to work in him."—*Alford*.

the naming
of the
animals

d Pr. xviii. 22;
1 Co. xi. 9; 1 Ti.
ii. 13; iv. 1-3.

e Ps. viii. 6-8; Ge.
ix. 2.

"The names given by Adam had, doubtless, their foundation in the nature of the creatures to wh. they were given. An evidence of man's intuitive knowledge, derived fr. God; and of the origin of language as God's gift."—*Wordsworth*.

the creation
of woman

f 1 Co. xi. 8; He.
xiii. 4.

g Ma. xix. 5, 6;
Ep. v. 29, 30.

h Mal. ii. 14-16; Ro.
vii. 2; 1 Co. vii. 10,
11.

i Ex. xxxiii. 25; Is.
xlvii. 3; Je. xvii.
13.

and steal. The gold of that other land is good, simply because, though the words sound like a contradiction, it is not gold. It has been changed. In the world above, that which stands for gold is more precious than gold itself, for even gold cannot purchase it, though gold may serve it.—*F. E. Paget*.

15-17. (17) and . . took, "Not physically lifting him up and putting him down in the garden, but simply exerting an influence upon him which induced him, in the exercise of his free agency, to go. He went in consequence of a secret impulse or an open command of his Maker."—*Bush*. dress,^a till, cultivate. keep, guard. (16) Of . . eat,^b of every tree of the garden, eat, eat mayest thou, i. e. eat without stint or fear. (17) But . . evil, see vs. 9. thou . . it, the only prohibition by wh. God asserted His supreme sovereignty. for . . die,^c "thou wilt have the sentence of death within thee wh. grows on sin as its root . . sin, pain, sorrow are not only fore-runners of death, but parts of death."—*Wordsworth*. The sentence included especially moral and spiritual death.

The paradise life, not an unrestricted state.—There is limitation of—I. Action: the calling to dress and keep. II. Enjoyment: not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. III. The treatment of nature, and especially of the beasts: no enclosing. IV. Human society: regulation of marriage and domestic life.—*Lange*.

Traditions of the Fall.—The Persian tradition is to the effect that man, at first, enjoyed a period of happiness and innocence in an elevated region which his god, Ormuzd, had assigned to him; but it was necessary to his existence in this state, that he should be humble of heart, and humbly obey the Divine ordinances; pure he must be of thought, pure of word, pure of deed. For a time, the first pair were holy and happy. But at last Ahriman, the evil one, appeared, and beat down their good dispositions; and, under the influence of his glozing lies, they began to ascribe their blessing to him. Emboldened by this success, Ahriman the liar presented himself again, and brought with him fruit; of which they ate; and in that instant, of a hundred excellences which they possessed, all but one departed from them; and they became subject to misery and death.

18-20. (18) It . . alone,^d regard being had to his social and moral nature and also to the fulfilling of the Divine will; i. 28; help . . him, *lit.* a help as over against him, before him, so as to meet him, tally and correspond to him as his counterpart. (19) out . . air, see on i. 24. brought . . Adam,^e the more naturally we interpret this, the easier will it be for us to comprehend the meaning. what . . them, hence he had the gifts of speech, reason, perception, etc. whatsoever . . thereof, the names given, answering prob. to their nature, met with God's approval. (20) Adam . . him, *ea.* other creature had its mate: but the man was alone.

The creation of woman.—Here we have an instance of—I. The Creator's care of man, and His fatherly concern for his comfort. Observe—I. God's pity for his solitude, 2. His resolve to provide society for him. II. The creatures' subjection to man, and his dominion over them. God brought the animals to Adam that he might name them, and so give a proof of—1. His knowledge; 2. His power. III. The creatures' insufficiency to be a happiness for man.—*M. Henry*.

Woman, a helpmeet.—Joshua Reynolds met Flaxman the day after his marriage, and said: "You are a happy man, but you are ruined for an artist." He told his bride of it in great despondency. "I wanted to be a great artist." "And, John," said Annie, with the fire in her eye, "a great artist you shall be!" He always said that was what made an artist of him.—*Bib. Ill.*

21-25. (21) deep sleep, prob. a *trance* or *ecstasy*: so the LXX. took . . ribs, "the miracle is in the creation, not in the choice of subjects to create from." (22) made . . woman, *lit.* builded her to a woman. brought . . man,^f "Here He [God] appears as the first bridesman." *Delitzsch*. (23) This . . now, *lit.* this is for this time, this once. The only woman produced in this way. bone . . flesh,^g nearness of mar. relation. Husband to care for wife, as for himself. woman, Heb. *Isha*. man, Heb. *Ish*. (24) Therefore, *etc.*^h This may have been spoken by Adam, but was more prob. the inspired reflection of the author. But by whomsoever said, it is prophetic of all mankind. (25) ashamed,ⁱ they knew no shame, bec. they knew not sin.

The creation of woman. — I. Woman was brought to man in order that she might relieve his solitude by intelligent companionship. II. Woman was brought to man that she might be his helpmeet in the struggles of life. 1. To develop his intellectual thinkings. 2. To culture his moral sympathies. 3. To aid him in the daily needs of life. 4. To join him in his worship of God. III. Woman was brought to man that she might receive his love, protection and care. — *Exell.*

Man and woman. — I have no manner of sympathy with the cackle and clatter we sometimes hear about the relative excellences of the two sexes — about the superiority of one or the inferiority of the other. To me the idea that a woman wants only a "clear stage and no favor," wants training and education, and suitable circumstances, in order to develop as big a brain and as vigorous a muscle as man, and so to be able to cope with him in the struggle of life — to me such a thought is unutterably repulsive. The great charm of a woman is that she is diverse from man: not a man in a lower stage of development. She is the complement of the man: her nature, her disposition, her powers, supply what is lacking in his. The two together make a completed orb: apart they are only segments of the circle. — *Althorp.*

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-3. (1) **serpent**, Heb. *nachash*; of wh. the root denotes mental properties, i. e. to search, scrutinize. Thus the tempter was prob. a superior being to what we call the serpent. **subtil**, "and so a more fit instrument of that old serpent the devil" **he**, the devil in this form. **said**, not as endowed with speech, but allegorical. The temptation came as tho' it were whispered. **woman**, the weaker of the two, and alone. **yea . . garden?** throwing her off her guard by showing an acquaintance with the law: yet subtly conveying a taunt "you dare not:" and rousing desire, and curiosity. Inspiring in her distrust of God. (2) **woman . . serpent**, this parley was her ruin. **we . . garden**, she had heard the law fr. her husband: and now corrects the tempter. (3) **touch**, not in the original law. Perh. Adam, to prevent her fr. eating, told her not even to *touch*.

Lessons: 1. To obey God's word, even when it contradicts our own inclinations. 2. To be humble and patient, waiting God's time and will, as to His "secret things." 3. To refuse to listen to temptation from without, and to evil lusts in ourselves. — *W. S. Smith.*

Traditions of Eden. — We have before us the whole history of this transaction in an engraving (see *Creuzer's Symbolik*, pl. 158) from ancient bas-relief; and what is most remarkable, there are two groups at each extremity of the tablet, offering, as it were, a Biblical key to the whole scene. On the one hand, are a man and woman standing naked under a tree: the woman in a drooping and disconsolate posture; the man with one hand raised to the tree, and the other directed towards the woman. It is such a picture that a child would at once say, "That is Adam and Eve!" At the other extremity is a sedate and august figure, seated upon a rock, and strangling the serpent with his outstretched hand. — *Kitto.*

4-7. (4) **ye . . die**,^b *lit.* ye shall not dying die: or, as LXX., ye shall not die the death. Absolute denial of God. (5) **for . . know**, he impugns the veracity of God and endeavors to make her think that God is withholding privileges she ought to be permitted to enjoy, **that . . eat**, other and better effects than death shall *immediately* ensue. **then . . opened**, not closed in death, but beholding things with a deeper insight. **gods**, Heb. *Elohim*. **knowing . . evil**, till now only the good was known, this was merely a half truth; more deceptive than a lie; the consequence of that knowledge he did not state. (6) **saw**, by looking long, and longingly. **tree . . wise**, assuming the devil's words to be true. **gave . . her**, Adam was thus reached at last. **he . . eat**, out of affection for her, being importuned by her, not perceiving that she was injured. (7) **eyes . . opened**,^c they saw that they had sinned. **naked**, sin brought a sense of shame. The knowledge came, but not the anticipated blessing. **sewed**, twisted, platted. **aprons**, *lit.* things to gird about.

The woman and the serpent. — We have here a sample of the wisdom of the world. Among the maxims of this wisdom are these — 1. That happiness is

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"Wherever found, women are the same kind, evil, obliging, human, tender beings, inclined to be gay and cheerful, timorous and modest." — *Ledyard.*

the first temptation

a 2 Co. xi. 3; Re. xii. 9; xx. 2.

"Woman was the first sinner; and, behold, in the two greatest falls, and most immediate denials of God, Adam's and Peter's, woman is made the first tempter." — *Bp. Reynolds.*

"When I cannot be forced, I am fooled out of my integrity. He cannot constrain if I do not consent. If I do but keep possession, all the posse of hell cannot violently eject me; but I cowardly surrender to his summons. Thus there needs no more to be my undoing but myself." — *Fuller.*

the first sin

b 1 Ti. ii. 14; Jo. viii. 44. "Clothes are the ensigns of our sin and covers of our shame. As the prisoner looking on his irons thinketh of his theft, so we looking on our garments, should think on our sins." — *Trapp.*

c Ro. v. 12; 1 Jo. ii. 16; Ja. i. 14, 15; iv. 7; 2 Co. ii. 11; Ma. vi. 13.

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"The Genevan Bible, 1560, is sometimes called the 'Breeches Bible,' fr. its trans. of vs. 7: 'They sewed fig-tree leaves together, and made themselves breeches.'"

fear and shame

a Ps. xlv. 9; cxxxix. 7; Job xxxi. 33; xxxiv. 21, 22; Pr. xv. 3; Je. xxiii. 24; Am ix. 3; He. iv. 12, 13; De. v. 25, 26.

b Ps. cxix. 120; Job. xxiii. 15; 1 Jo. iii. 20; Re. iii. 18.

"Adam, where art thou? I am come to find thee, wherever thou mayest be. I will look for thee, till the eyes of My pity see thee. I will follow thee till the hand of My mercy reaches thee; and I will still hold thee till I bring thee back." — *Spurgeon*.

c Ps. xc. 8.

sinful

evasions

d Pr. xxviii. 13; Ja. i. 15; e Ga. vi. 7.

"There is nothing of so ill consequence to the public as falsehood, which, as Montaigne saith prettily, 'is only to be brave towards God and a coward towards man;' for a lie faceth God, and shrinketh from man." *Lloyd*.

the promised seed

the end of human existence; 2. That nature is a sufficient source of happiness; 3. That man's chief happiness lies in forbidden objects; 4. That God is what we fancy or desire Him to be. — *J. A. Macdonald*.

A poisoned honor. — If we are to credit the annals of the Russian empire, there once existed a noble order of merit, which was greatly coveted by the princes and noblesse. It was, however, conferred only on the peculiar favorites of the Czar, or on the distinguished heroes of the kingdom. But another class shared in its honor in a very questionable form. Those nobles or favorites who either became a burden to the Czar or who stood in his way, received this decoration only to die. The pin-point was tipped with poison — and when the order was being fastened on the breast by the imperial messenger, the flesh of the person was "accidentally" pricked. Death ensued, as next morning the individual so highly honored with imperial favor was found dead in bed from apoplexy. Satan offered to confer a brilliant decoration upon Adam and Eve — "Ye shall be as gods." It was poisoned; the wages of sin is death. — *W. Adamson*.

8-11. (8) *voice . . walking*, it was the *voice* (not the Lord) *walking*: *i. e.* it sounded along through the avenues of the garden, growing louder and louder; by the voice of the Lord is gen. to be understood the thunder, which now terrorized them, and their guilty minds were startled by hearing it. "Walking," here is the same Hebrew word as in Ex. xix. 19, "the voice of the trumpet sounded long." *cool . . day, lit.* in the wind of the day, *i. e.* towards evening. *hid . . garden,*^a guilt-inspired terror: once they would have joyously welcomed that voice. (9) *Adam . . thou?* this was what the voice said. Where was he morally? A sinner vainly flying fr. his Maker. (10) *afraid . . naked,*^b the devil had deceived him with a lie: not so could he deceive God. (11) *who . . naked?* only a heart knowing *evil* could have told thee that. Jehovah will wring a confession from his own lips before passing judgment. *hast, etc.*^c by this question the origin of the fear and shame was urged home.

God's question. — I. The speaker is God; the person spoken to is the representative of us all. II. The call is — 1. Individual. 2. Universal. III. God calls in three ways. 1. In conscience. 2. In providence. 3. In revelation. IV. His call is — 1. To attention. 2. To recognition of God's being. 3. To reflection on our own place and position. V. It is a call which each must answer for himself, and which each ought to answer without delay. — *Dean Vaughan*.

Sinner shuns God. — A burglar, not long ago, rifled an unoccupied dwelling by the seaside. He ransacked the rooms and heaped his plunder in the parlor. There were evidences that here he sat down to rest. On a bracket in the corner stood a marble bust of Guido's "Ecce Homo" — Christ crowned with thorns. The guilty man had taken it in his hands and examined it. It bore the marks of his fingers; but he replaced it with its face turned to the wall, as if he would not have even the sightless eyes of the marble Saviour look upon his deeds of infamy. So the first act of the first sinner was to hide himself at the sound of God's voice. — *Professor Phelps*.

12, 13. (12) *and . . said,*^d equivocating. *woman . . tree*, you gave the woman, she gave the fruit. He shifts the blame in guilty fear first upon Eve, but indirectly on God. *I . . eat*, not denying, but extenuating: stating *last*, what should have been confessed *first*. (13) *and . . woman*, first Adam, now Eve, to convict both and lead to repentance. *and . . me,*^e fear, in her case also, would shift the blame.

God's first words to the first sinner. — Mark the alienation of heart which sin causes in the sinner. Adam ought to have sought out his Maker. He should have gone through the garden crying for his God, "My God, my God, I have sinned against Thee. Where art thou?" But instead thereof, Adam flies from God. The sinner comes not to God; God comes to him. It is not "My God, where art Thou?" but the first cry is the voice of grace, "Sinner, where art thou?" God comes to man; man seeks not his God. — *Spurgeon*.

14, 15. (14) *cursed*, addressed no question to, but pronounced a woe upon. *upon . . go*, the form thou hast assumed shall be degraded in the eyes of those whom thou hast deceived. They shall henceforth look upon thee with loathing and horror. Impossible to say how far and in what respect, the form and

motion of the serpent may have now been changed. But it suffered extremest subjection and degradation. **dust . . eat**, this literally true. The S. swallows dust with its food. It grovels in the dust. (15) **enmity**, thy friendship being so dangerous. **between . . seed**,^a literally true. Man is everywhere the foe of the serpent. **it . . head**,^b man shall ultimately destroy the whole serpent race. **thou . . heel**,^c thou shalt injure the human race but slightly. (*Note*. — There is a higher meaning. The Messiah, the promised seed of the woman, shall destroy the devil and his works: being Himself wounded only in His lower, *i.e.* His human nature.)

The curse. — 1. I lay down the position that no punishment in the way of physical degradation was inflicted by God in His sentence upon the serpent tribe. 2. I lay down the position, which I think no one will seriously dispute, that the real tempter was not the serpent at all, but the devil. 3. I conclude from the foregoing positions, and conclude with confidence, that the serpent was not really cursed at all, while the devil was. — *Winterbotham*.

Death Conquered.—

Death, the old serpent's son,
Thou hadst a sting once like thy sire,
That carried hell and ever burning fire;
But those black days are done;
Thy foolish spite buried thy sting
In the profound and wide
Wound of our Saviour's side:
And now thou art become a tame and harmless thing;
A thing we dare not fear,
Since we hear
That our triumphant God, to punish thee
For the affront thou didst Him on the tree,
Hath snatch'd the keys of hell out of thy hand,
And made thee stand
A porter at the gate of life, thy mortal enemy
O Thou who art that gate, command that he
May when we die,
And thither fly.

Let us in the courts of heaven through Thee! Hallelujah. — *Taylor*.

16-21. (16) greatly . . **conception**,^d pain and sorrow of pregnancy and parturition. **thy . . thee**,^e in all things — even thy desires — he shall rule thee (17) **because . . tree**,^f commands and entreaties of nearest relatives not to usurp the relations of God. **cursed . . ground**,^g fr. wh. thy living shall be drawn. **sorrow . . life**,^h the sorrow of toil, disappointment, etc. (18) **thorns . . thee**, without cultivation. **eat . . field**,ⁱ the poor reward of thy toil. (19) **bread**, Heb. *lehem* = all kinds of food. (20) **Eve**, Heb. *Havah* = life. A name sugg. of honor and hope: pointing to that eternal life wh. the woman's seed procured.^j (21) **made**, prompted and taught the doing of it. **coats . . them**, skins of animals offered in sacrifice. Man did not then eat flesh. (III. Our Great Sacrifice provides us with a dress.)^k

The curse and the blessing of labor. — I. The universal necessity of labor. The earth no longer produces fruit independently of labor. II. The fact, asserted in the text, that labor is a curse. It is part of our punishment for the Fall, that it should be so. III. The manner in which we may lighten this curse, and cause it to be borne. We may not escape from it; but it may be lightened by — 1. Religion — personal, practical, and real: 2. The cultivation of knowledge; 3. The maintenance of good health; 4. The practice of economy. — *Maskell*.

Labor necessary to success. — Turner, the great painter, was once asked the secret of his success. He replied, "I have no secret but hard work." *Labor the best seasoning.* — Dionysius the tyrant, at an entertainment given to him by the Lacedæmonians, expressed some disgust at their black broth. "No wonder," said one of them, "for it wants seasoning." "What seasoning?" asked the tyrant. "Labor," replied the citizen, "joined with hunger and thirst." — *Everett*.

22-24. (22) **man . . evil**, not an ironical expression as some would say, but inasmuch as we cannot believe God to be using this sarcasm, it is better to hold that man had *attempted* it; it was his object and wish. **and now . .**

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d Ma xiii. 38; Jo. viii. 44; Ac xiii. 10; 1 Jo iii. 8; Is. vii. 14; Lu. i. 31-35; Ga. iv. 4.

b Ro. xvi. 20; Ep. iv. 8; Col. ii. 15; He. ii. 14, 15; 1 Jo. iii. 8; Jo. xvi. 11; xii. 31; Lu. x. 17-20; Re. xii. 17.

c Is. liii. 3, 4, 12; Da. ix. 26; Ma. iv. 1.

"Labor is become necessary to us, not only because we need it for making provisions for our life, but even to ease the labor of our rest, there being no greater tediousness of spirit in the world than want of employment and an inactive life." — *Jeremy Taylor*.

"The body returns to the earth, fr. whence it was framed, and the spirit ascends to the ether." — *Euripides*.

the punishment of sin

d 1 Ti. ii. 15. e Ep. v. 22-24; 1 Co. xi. 3; xiv. 34; Col. iii. 18; 1 Ti. ii. 11, 12; Tit. ii. 4, 5; 1 Pe. iii. 1-7; f 1 Sa. xv. 23.

g Ro. viii. 20-22. h Job v. 7; xiv. 1; Ec. ii. 23.

i Ep. iv. 28; 2 Th. iii. 10.

j 1 Co. xv. 21. k Is. lxi. 10; Ps. xxxii. 1.

"Why do we fret and murmur and toil, and consume ourselves for objects so transient and frail? Is it that the soul, living here as in her prison-house, strives after something boundless like herself, and finding it nowhere, still renews the search? — *Carlyle*.

paradise lost

"The Almighty placed cherubims

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and a flaming sword to keep man from returning to Paradise, to the tree of life, but He has placed Himself in all the terror, grandeur, loveliness and majesty of His character between sin and man, to prevent him touching the accursed thing." — *John Bale.*

"They build too low who build beneath the skies." — *Exell.*

ever, eating it now with wrong motive; *i. e.* to counteract the sentence. (23) sent . . . Eden, losing both holiness and happiness. The meek inherit the earth, the ambitious forfeit it. (24) drove . . . man, forcible ejection of one who was loth to leave. cherubims, (*warders*), living creatures; prob. angels. and . . . way, it flashed in all directions. keep . . . life, prevent access.

Observations. — I. God oftentimes withholds from us, or deprives us of many blessings for our good. II. When men have once broken out into one sin, they are in danger to fall into any other. III. God, as He always foresees, so oftentimes He prevents men's falling into sin. IV. The surest way to prevent man's falling into sin, is to be far from the allurements that might entice him unto sin. V. Men are naturally apt to think themselves safe in the performance of outward acts of holy duties. VI. God cannot endure the defiling of His ordinances by such as have no right to them. — *J. White.*

The closed Eden, the open heaven. — You remember the old legend of Greek mythology, of one to whom, when he had pleased the gods, they said: "Ask what you will, and we will give it." And he said, "Give me immortality." They did so, and he lived on and on, and could not die. He had immortality, but it was immortality with mortal woes. How wretched was his lot! How wearily did he go along his way of weakness and distress! How he prayed for the revoking of the favor that was only a curse! The woes of man are such that the only immortal who can bear them must be God. It is therefore God's infinite pity and tenderness, that when man had taken of the tree of knowledge, he is forbidden the tree of life. — *L. D. Bevan.*

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

birth of Cain and Abel

a Ge. xxxiii. 5; Ps. cxxviii. 3.

"As the heavens are sometimes fair and sometimes overcast, alternately, to mepetuous and serene; so is the life of man intermingled with hopes and fears, with joys and sorrows, with pleasures and with pains." — *Burton.*

1, 2. (1) Cain, (*possession; acquisition*). I . . . Lord, *lit.* I have gotten a man, the Jehovah. They perch. thought this man-child was the promised seed; the destined deliverer. (2) Abel, (*vanity, vapor*) name prophetic of his untimely end. They may have been secretly moved to give that name. Abel . . . sheep, *lit.* a feeder of a flock. Cain . . . ground, a husbandman. (The husband and wife, in their new relation of father and mother, bring up their children to industrial pursuits.)

Naming of children. — She called her eldest Cain, which signifieth a possession, and her second son when she had also borne him, Abel, which signifieth vain or unprofitable. By which diversity of names evidently appeareth a diversity of affection in the namers, and so teacheth us two things. First, the preposterous love that is in many parents, esteeming most oftentimes of those children that are worst, and least of them that deserve better. Their Cains be accounted jewels and wealth, but their Abels unprofitable, needless and naught. Secondly, it teacheth the lot of the godly in this world many times, even from their very cradle, to be had in less regard than the wicked are. So was here Abel, so was Jacob of his father, so was David and many more. Such and so crooked are men's judgments often, but the Lord's is ever straight, and let that be our comfort. — *Bp. Babington.*

the brothers' sacrifices

b Ex. xiii. 2; Nu. xviii. 17.

c Ex. xxix. 13; Le. iii. 3, 4.

d He xi. 4; 1 Pe. i. 18, 19.

e Le. ix. 24; 1 K. xviii. 24; 1 Ch. xxi. 26; 2 Ch. vii. 1; Ps. xx. 1, 3; Pr. xxi. 27.

f Ma. xx. 15; Ac. x. 35.

"Had I a careful and pleasant companion, that

3-5. (3) and . . . time, *lit.* at the end of days. Cain . . . ground, Adam incultured the duty of religious worship, as well as industry. offering, Heb. *mincha* = oblation, token of subjection or submission. brought . . . Lord, perhaps at the gate of the garden where the flaming sword was seen. (4) Abel . . . flock, *b* a sin offering. and . . . thereof, *lit.* the fatnesses of them: *i. e.* the best portions. respect . . . Abel, *d* he offered with faith in the appointed Lamb of God. offering, wh. was a type of Xt. (5) Cain, who lacked faith. offering, the offering was not rejected as such, but because it was not brought in the right spirit. he . . . respect, *e* there was prob. some visible sign of acceptance or rejection. wroth, *f* filled with burning, intense rage: instead of spirit of self-examination and repentance. and . . . fell, became gloomy, sullen.

The sin of Cain. — The sin of Cain — a sin of which we have all been guilty — was that he supposed God to be an arbitrary being, whom he by his sacrifice was to conciliate. The worth of Abel's offering arose from this: that he was weak and that he cast himself upon One whom he knew to be strong; that he had the sense of death, and that he turned to One whence life must come; that he had the sense of wrong, and that he fled to One who must be right. His sacrifice was the mute expression of this helplessness, dependence, confidence. From this we see: 1. That sacrifice has its ground in something

deeper than legal enactments. 2. That sacrifice infers more than the giving up of a thing. 3. That sacrifice has something to do with sin, something to do with thanksgiving. 4. That sacrifice becomes evil and immoral when the offerer attaches any value to his own act and does not attribute the whole worth of it to God. — *F. D. Maurice.*

Cain and Abel. — Cain was not without a kind of religiousness, remember. He did go to the unroofed church sometimes; but he went so unwillingly, so slouchingly, so coldly, that it was no church to him. He begrudged the few roots and fruits that he took, just as we begrudge the weekly offering, and therefore God let him take them home, just as we would do if we could get secretly at the box. God takes nothing from our unwilling hand. He loves a cheerful giver! He will take two mites, He will take a cup of cold water, He will take a box of ointment if given gladly; but none of your grudging, none of your dropping a penny as if it were a half crown, none of your grunting, none of your porcupinishness: all must be free, glad, honest, open, and joyous; then the fire will come down and take back to heaven the gift of your love. Abel was religious in the right way. He gave the best he had with an open heart, and the Lord said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." — *J. Parker.*

6-8. (6) why . . . fallen? ^a question to turn his attention to real cause of rejection. (7) if . . . well, offerest the right sacrifice with a right spirit. God has no respect for the offering, but He does demand a right spirit on the part of those who come before Him. shalt . . . accepted? ^b as well as thy bro. God is not a respecter of persons, and the question implies that Cain ought to have known it. lieth, *lit.* croucheth. Thy sin, like a beast of prey, ready to spring upon thee. (But some think the meaning is, "if thou doest not well, sin" — *i. e.* a sin-offering — "lieth at the door" — *i. e.* is close at hand. "Sin" sin-offering; as Xt. was "made sin" — *i. e.* a sin-offering — "for us.") and . . . him, some think this means that Cain, if he did well, should, as the first-born, have the pre-eminence over his bro.; others, that he should overcome the sin now crouching at the door. "Of the various solutions of this '*difficilimus locus*,' all of which are plausible, and none of which are entirely destitute of support, that appears the most entitled to acceptance which, excluding any reference either to Abel or to a sin offering, regards the language as warning Cain against the dangers of yielding to sin" — *Pulp. Com.* (8) Cain, rejecting Divine counsel. talked . . . brother, ^c familiarly, concealing his anger. Cain . . . him, ^d the first death in the first family: murder the offspring of envy.

Three experiments and three failures. — I. The family idea won't keep men right. Cain and Abel were brothers. II. Religious ceremonial won't keep men right. Cain and Abel both offered sacrifice. III. Religious persecution won't keep men right. Cain killed his brother, but a voice cried against him. What will keep men right? The love of God through Jesus Christ. — *J. Parker.*

Sin ready to enter. — A young friend was one day calling upon an old Christian woman, nearly eighty years of age, just waiting for the summons. Said this friend, "Oh, granny, I wish I was as sure of heaven, and as near it, as you are!" With a look of unspeakable emotion, the old woman answered, "And do you really think the devil cannot find his way up an old woman's garret-stair? Oh, if He hadn't said, 'None shall pluck them out of My hand,' I would have been away wandering long ago!" — *Old Testament Anecdotes.*

I can no longer what I *would*, no longer draw back at my liking; I must do the deed, because I *thought* of it, and fed this heart here with a dream; because I did not scowl temptation from my presence. — *Schiller, "The Piccolimini."*

9-12. (9) where . . . brother? ^e this to awaken a sense of guilt as in iii. 9. Shows Divine knowledge of human actions. Whether this question was asked by Adam or was the whispering inquiry of the soul, he was being examined by the Divine voice. I . . . not, a falsehood, one sin leads to another. am . . . keeper? repudiating fraternal regard. "He not only boldly denies all knowledge of the fact, but with amazing hardihood charges impertinence upon his Judge in putting to him this question, as if He had no right to interrogate him respecting it!" — *Bush.* (10) what . . . done? dost thou know the extent of thy crime? voice . . . ground, ^f the murdered Abel not so voiceless as Cain might deem, concealment is vain. "The blood crying is a symbol of

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should show me my angry face in a glass, I should not at all take it ill." — *Plutarch.*

God does not judge of what you are by what you say to Him or do for Him, but He judges what you say to Him and do for Him by what you are. — *Dods.*

the first murder

^a Is. i. 18; III. 10, 11.

^b Ro. ii. 11.

^c Pr. xxvi. 24, 25.

^d 1 Jo. iii. 12-15; Ja. i. 15.

"O envy, the corrosive of all ill minds, and the root of all desperate actions! The same cause that moved Satan to destroy the first man, the same moves the second man to destroy the third. If there be an evil heart there will be an evil eye; and if both these, there will be an evil hand. There never was an envy that was not bloody; if not in act, yet in affection." — *Ep. Hall.*

the fratricide

^e Nu. xxxii. 23; Ps. x. 13, 14; Pr. xxviii. 13; Jo. viii. 44.

^f Ps. lxxii. 14; He. xii. 24; Re. vi. 10.

"Heart murder is the secret wishing or designing the

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death of any man; yea, the Scripture saith, 'Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.' (1 Jo. iii. 15.)"—C. Buck.

the soul crying for its right to live."—*Lange*. (11) **cursed . . earth**, fr. the ground thus moistened by thy bro's. blood a curse arises to thee. "The first curse pronounced against a human being." (12) **tillest . . strength**, *lit.* it shall not add to yield. The manner in which the curse is to be carried out is here set forth. **vagabond**, the ground had already been cursed for Adam's sin, and now another curse being added, made it well-nigh barren, so that Cain must become a wanderer, "a wretched outcast, abhorred and rejected of his kind."

My brother's keeper.—Where is Abel thy brother? Down in a back street in London. He is half drunk already. Have you done anything, friend, towards the reclaiming of the drunkard? Where is your sister?—your sister who frequents the midnight streets? You shrink back and say, "She is no sister of mine." Ay, but God may require her blood at your hands, if you thus leave her to perish. Have you ever done anything towards reclaiming her?—*Spurgeon*.

Cain's punishment

α Job xv. 20-24; Ps. li. 11. Pr. xiv. 32; xxviii. 1.

δ Ge. ix. 6; Nu. xxxv. 21.

Thales Milesius, one of the wise men of Greece, being asked what was the most difficult in life, answered, "For a tyrant to live to old age."

When God is against a man the whole world is against him.—*Hom. Com.*

13-15. (13) **greater . . bear**, it is not the greatness of the sin that appals Cain, but the heaviness of punishment which he describes in the remaining part of the verse. (14) **driven . . earth**, fr. the part I have hitherto cultivated. **face . . hid**, fr. the favored spot on wh. Thy protecting glance falls. **fugitive . . earth**,^c fr. all dear and familiar spots. **one . . me**, in ancient times a man cursed for wickedness might be freely killed. Fr. the time that had elapsed since the creation, 130 years (*vss.* 4, 5), it is quite possible that there were many men now on the earth. (15) **Lord . . him**, God is ever merciful. **sevenfold**,^b manifold, utter, complete vengeance. **mark**, not necessarily a mark or brand on Cain. Whether it was an outward brand or an inward assurance it was the badge of God's protection. The LXX. says, "God set a sign bef. Cain to persuade him that whosoever should find him should not kill him."

The sparing of Cain's life.—Observe that—I. Abel was happier dying than Cain living. II. The righteousness of God's providences is not to be judged of only according to outward appearances. III. The greatest seeming earthly prosperity may be the greatest punishment.—*Lightfoot*.

Remorse.—Tiberius felt the remorse of conscience so violent, that he protested to the senate that he suffered death daily; and Trapp tells us of Richard III. that, after the murder of his two innocent nephews, he had fearful dreams and visions, would leap out of his bed, and catching his sword would go distractedly about the chamber, everywhere seeking to find out the cause of his own-occasioned disquiet.—*McCosh*.

Cain's posterity

"Life is made up, not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things in which smiles and kindness and small obligations given habitually, are what win and preserve the heart and secure comfort."—*Sir Humphrey Davy*.

16-18. (16) **presence**, His special presence, seat of His worship. **Nod**, (*flight, exile*) the land of the wanderer. It received its name from Cain's dwelling there. (17) **and . . wife**, the wife of Cain must have been his sister; a connection in marriage with a sister was indispensable at the beginning of man upon the earth. Such a connection would be incest now, and the tendency is always toward enlarging rather than restricting the circle of prohibited relationships. **Enoch . . city . . Enoch**, he gave to both [to his son and the city] the name Enoch, that is 'initiation,' or 'beginning,' as if he were saying in his heart, 'What so great harm after all in cutting short one line in Abel? I can begin another and find a new starting point for the race. I am driven forth cursed as a vagabond, but a vagabond I will not be; I will make for myself a settled abode, and I will fence it round with knife-blade thorns so that no man will be able to assault me.'"—*Dods, Exp. Bib.* (18) **Irad** (*wild ass*). Note resemblance of this and following names with the names of sons of Seth. **Mehujael**, (*smitten of God*). **Methusael**, (*man of God*). **Lamech**, (*powerful*).

The city of Cain.—Cain is a type of the worldling, cut off from God, whose all is in this life, and who has no hope of heaven. I. His thought is of living here always. A city is a settled place of residence, meant to endure long. II. His ambition and pride. Great pomp and state in cities. III. His covetousness. Money made and hoarded in cities. IV. His luxuriousness. Cities are scenes of luxury and vice. There is Satan's seat.—*T. G. Horton*.

The benefits of cities.—I bless God for cities. Cities have been as lamps of life along the pathway of humanity and religion. Within them Science has given birth to her noblest discoveries. Behind their walls Freedom has fought her noblest battles. They have stood on the surface of the earth like great

"The price of life is greater than that any man, how wealthy soever, can compass it. Money is the monarch of this world, but not of the next."—*J. Trapp*.

breakwaters, rolling back or turning aside the swelling tide of oppression. Cities, indeed, have been the cradles of human liberty. They have been the active centres of almost all Church and State reformation. Having, therefore, no sympathy with those who, regarding them as the excrescences of a tree, or the tumors of the world, would raze our cities to the ground, I bless God for cities. — *Guthrie*.

19—22. (19) **two wives**, first recorded instance of polygamy: directly contravening God's command that two only should constitute one flesh. **Adah** (*ornament, beauty*). **Zillah** (*shade*). (20) **Jabal** (*a stream*). **father . . cattle**, he inaugurated a nomad, or migratory life; like that adopted by present Bedouins. (21) **Jubal** (*music*) . . **father**, originator, inventor. **harp**, prob. similar in shape to present harp, but of rude construction; it had ten strings, played upon by the hand and sometime struck with a plectrum. **organ**, Heb. *oogab*, mouth-organ, flute, or like the pipe of Pan. (22) **Tubal-Cain**, (*metal-worker*), prob. the original of the Gk. Vulcan. **Naamah** (*pleasant*)—How sugg. are these names and brief descriptions of primitive life, "in the days when earth was young."

Tubal-Cain.

Old Tubal-Cain was a man of might
In the days when Earth was young;
By the fierce red light of his furnace bright
The strokes of his hammer rung.
And he lifted high his brawny hand
On the iron glowing clear,
Till the sparks rushed out in scarlet showers
As he fashioned the sword and spear.
And he sang: "Hurrah for my handiwork!
Hurrah for the spear and sword!
Hurrah for the hand that shall wield them well,
For he shall be king and lord!"

But a sudden change came o'er his heart
Ere the setting of the sun,
And Tubal-Cain was filled with pain
For the evil he had done;
He saw that men with rage and hate,
Made war upon their kind;
That the land was red with the blood they shed,
In their lust for carnage blind.
And he said: "Alas! that ever I made,
Or that skill of mine should plan,
The spear and the sword for men whose joy
Is to slay their fellowman!"

And for many a day old Tubal-Cain
Sat brooding o'er his woe;
And his hand forebore to smite the ore,
And his furnace smouldered low.
But he rose at last with a cheerful face,
And a bright courageous eye,
And bared his strong right arm for work
While the quick flames mounted high.
And he sang: "Hurrah for my handiwork!
And the red sparks lit the air;
"Not alone for the blade was the bright steel made;"
And he fashioned the first ploughshare.

And men, taught wisdom from the past,
In friendship joined their hands,
Hung the sword in the hall, the spear on the wall,
And ploughed the willing lands;
And sang: "Hurrah for Tubal-Cain!
Our staunch good friend is he;
And for the ploughshare and the plough
To him our praise shall be;

B C. 4004.

Lamech

"I believe that the ages which are to follow this will surpass our possibilities of art. The art of to-day should embody the highest life of to-day for the use of to-day; for those who have gone before us need it not, and those who will come after us will have something better." — J. G. Holland.

"We speak of profane arts; but there are none properly such: — every art is holy in itself; it is the son of Eternal Light." — *Tegner*.

"If this life is unhappy, it is a burden to us, which it is difficult to bear; if it is in every respect happy, it is dreadful to be deprived of it; so that in either case the result is the same, for we must exist in anxiety and apprehension." — *La Bruyère*.

"God gives us arms and hands, but he does not give us strength and dexterity. He gives us brains, but he does not give us learning or wisdom, or power of easy expression, or strength and skill in intellectual labor. All these must be purchased, and

B. C. 4004.

all these are a sufficient reward for what we give for them."—*J. G. Holland.*

"Noble, upright, self-denying toil," wrote Hugh Miller, "who that knows thy solid worth and value would be ashamed of thy hard hands, thy soiled vestments and thy obscure tasks, thy humble cottage and hard couch and homely fare!"

birth of Seth and Enos
a Ge. v. 3.

b 1 K. xviii. 24; Ps. cxvi. 17; Joel ii. 32; Ac. ii. 21; Ro. x. 13; 1 Co. i. 2; Ac. ix. 14; xxii. 16.

c *Lightfoot*, who supposes that Noah is called in 2 Pe. ii. 5, the eighth person in ref. to these times. viz., the eighth in succession fr. Enos, in whose days the world beg. to be profane.

the death of Adam

d Ps. II. 5; Jo. iii. 6; Job. xiv. 4.

"Grace does not run in the blood, but corruption does. A sinner begets a sinner, but a saint does not beget a saint."—*M. Henry.*

But while oppression lifts its head,
Or a tyrant would be lord,
Though we may thank him for the plough,
We'll not forget the sword!"

Charles Mackay.

23, 24. (23) **hear . . speech**, the oldest snatch of poetry known. It is uncertain whether Lamech speaks here of an actual occurrence or a hypothetical case. His meaning is that he has no need of God's protection. His sons' ingenuity together with his own might he considers sufficient. The posterity of Cain ends here. We hear no more of them.

The ground of Lamech's argument.—The act of Lamech, in taking to himself two wives, had probably excited the jealousy of some young man, says Geddes, who under the impulse of this passion had attacked and wounded Lamech, and whom Lamech in his own defense had slain. To allay the fears of his wives, therefore, he argues, and justly, that if Cain, who had wilfully and maliciously killed his brother, was nevertheless protected from the blood-avenger by the special providence of God, he might confidently expect the same protection, since the person whom he had slain had sought and endangered his life; and that a still heavier punishment than that which was threatened to the avenger of Abel's death, would fall upon the man who should attempt to molest him.—*Carpenter.*

25, 26. (25) **Seth**,^a (*set, appointed*), who took the place, whence his name, of his slain brother. (26) **Enos**, Heb. *Enosh* (*sorrowful, miserable*). **began . . Lord**,^b prob. it means that there now began a more marked distinc. betw. the godly and ungodly. Some^c think now the Lord began to be called upon in a profane sense.

Institution of public worship.—Consider in what manner we should—I. Confess God. We should—1. Separate ourselves from the ungodly; 2. Make an open profession of our attachment to Christ. II. Worship Him. Publicly, because public ordinances—1. Preserve the knowledge of God in the world; 2. Are the means of perfecting His work in His people's hearts.—*Simeon.*

Called on the name of the Lord.—"We incline to the opinion that the sense of *profane invocation* is really conveyed by the original word; but that the other idea also of a *pious profession* of the name and worship of Jehovah is directly and necessarily inferred from it, for the fact of the increasing profaneness and irreligion of one portion of the race would naturally tend to produce a more public and decided adherence to the worship of God by the other, and the Heb. idiom, we believe, allows us to consider both facts to be alluded to by one and the same term."—*Bush.*

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1--5. (1) **generations**, history and posterity—family tree. **in . . him**; (2) **male . . created**, see on i. 26, 27. **called . . Adam**, the name of the whole human race, altho' we apply it gen. to the first man. (3) **and . . years**, during which time he begat other sons and daughters (vs. 4). **begat . . likeness**,^d Adam was made in the likeness of God—and he fell. Seth was begotten in the likeness of Adam. (4) **eight . . years**, the extraordinary length of human life at that period was wisely ordered, not only for peopling the world, but for supplying the defect of a written revelation. * * * The advancement of the race itself into high civilization and refinement could not have taken place, had not each person been permitted to live during a much longer space of time than is found to be the case at present in every portion of the globe. The first generations having no past experience to look back upon, must have owed all their knowledge to their own individual exertions; and how far these would have carried them in the short space of seventy or eighty years, we need only examine the condition of the wandering tribes in America to discover.—*Bush.* (5) **and . . died**, words sev. times repeated in this chap. The longest life must end.

The first Adam dies, and we die in him; but the second Adam dies, and we live in him! The first Adam's grave proclaims only death; the second Adam's grave announces life—"I am the resurrection and the life." We

look into the grave of the one, and we see only darkness, corruption, and death; we look into the grave of the other, and we find there only light, incorruption, and life. — *H. Bonar.*

6-11. (6) Seth . . Enos, *see* on iv. 25, 26. (7) *begat* . . daughters, prob. many, the formula is oft. repeated to indicate the rapid increase of the race; and fulfilment of original promise. (9) *Cainan*^a (*possession*) or *Kenan*.

Brief records of lives. — Notice — I. The longevity of the antediluvian race. This longevity — 1. Might be explained on natural principles; 2. Was for special ends; 3. Contributed to their depravity. II. The poverty of human history. III. The materializing tendencies of sin. IV. The inevitableness of man's mortality. These men lived long, yet of each it is said "he died." V. The blessedness of practical godliness — Enoch. — *Thomas.*

"*And he died.*" — A certain libertine of a most abandoned character, happened one day to stroll into a church, where he heard the 5th chapter of Genesis read, importing that so long lived such and such persons, and yet the conclusion was, "they died." Enos lived 905 years, and he died. Seth 912, and he died — Methuselah 969, *and he died.* The frequent repetition of the words *he died*, notwithstanding the great length of years they lived, struck him so deeply with the thought of death and eternity, that, through Divine grace, he became a most exemplary Christian.

12-17. (12) *Mahalaleel*^b (*praise of God*). (15) *Jared*^c (*descent*) or *Jered*.^d

The moral characteristics of man. — Every man is a missionary now and for ever, for good or for evil, whether he intends or designs it or not. He may be a blot, radiating his dark influence outward to the very circumference of society; or he may be a blessing, spreading benediction over the length and breadth of the world: but a blank he cannot be. There are no moral blanks; there are no neutral characters. We are either the sower that sows and corrupts, or the light that splendidly illuminates, and the salt that silently operates; but being dead or alive, every man speaks. — *Chalmers.*

18-24. (18) *Enoch*^e dedicated or initiated, or *Enoch*.^f (21) *Methuselah*^g (*man of the dart*) oldest man. (22) *walked* . . *God*,^h passed his life in intimate communion with God. Walked with as a friend. (24) *and* . . *him*, was translated.ⁱ "The dread monotony of 'and he died' is now first broken through." — *Delitzsch.*

What is it to walk with God? — 1. Reconciliation with God. 2. Spiritual life (Gal. v. 25). 3. None walk with God closely but those who love Him supremely. 4. Those with whom we walk, and whom we love, we are desirous to please and oblige. And those who walk with God delight to do His will. 5. Communion with God. 6. Similarity of disposition and feeling.

A safe walk. — During a sudden freshet, a laboring man and his child, living in a cottage that stood by itself, were obliged to walk at midnight for more than a mile through water reaching to the little boy's waist before they could reach a place of safety. After they had changed their clothes, and were feeling comfortable, the friend in whose cottage they had found shelter said to the little boy, "And weren't you afraid, Jack, while walking through the water?" "No, not at all," said the little fellow, who was but seven years old: "I was walking along with father, you know. And I knew he wouldn't let the water drown me." This was very sweet. And if, like Enoch, we are walking with God, let us remember that we are walking with our heavenly Father. And he promises us expressly, "When thou passest through the waters, they shall not overflow thee" (Isa. xliii. 2). — *R. Newton.*

25-32. (25) *Lamech*^j (*powerful*). (27) *and* . . *died*, acc. to usual calculation he died in the yr. of the deluge. (29) *Noah* (*comfort*). *saying* . . *cursed*, of wh. there have been many inconclusive explanations.^k (32) *Shem* (*name*). *Ham* (*warm, black*). *Japheth*^m (*widely spreading*).

Uncertainty of life. — "To-day I, to-morrow thou," saith the wise man. His conceit was not unprofitable that imagined man's life to be as a tree, at the root whereof two mice lay gnawing and nibbling without ceasing, a white mouse and a black. The white mouse he conceived to be the day, and the black mouse the night, by which day and night man's life, as a tree, by continual gnawing, at last is ended. Who can now tell how far these two mice

B. C. 4004.

Seth's posterity

a Lu. iii. 37; 1 Ch. i. 2.

"In a gathering of Quakers, an aged and venerable-looking man arose, and with prophet-like authority said, 'Many say it is a solemn thing to die; but, bethink you all, and bethink you well, it is a solemn thing to live.'" — *S. Coley.*

b 1 Ch. i. 2.

c Lu. iii. 37.

d 1 Ch. i. 2.

"The life of man is summ'd in birthdays and in sepulchres." — *H. K. White.*

"At twenty years of age, the will reigns; at thirty, the wit; and at forty, the judgment." — *Gratian.*

Enoch's translation

e Lu. iii. 37; He.

xi. 5, Jude 14.

f 1 Ch. i. 3.

g 1 Ch. i. 3.

h Ge. vi. 9; xvii. 1;

xxiv. 40; Ps. xvi. 3;

cxvi. 9; cxxviii. 1;

1 K. iii. 6; 2 K. xx.

3; Lu. i. 6; Ac. ix.

31; Ga. v. 16; 2 Co.

v. 7; 1 Jo. i. 6; 7; ii.

6; Am. iii. 3.

i He. xi. 5.

"We are convinced that the 'taking away' of Enoch is one of the strongest proofs of the belief in a future state, prevailing among the Hebs." — *Kalisch.*

Methuselah and Noah

j 1 Ch. i. 3; Lu. iii.

36.

k "As that in his time the race would be relieved fr. the need of eating vegetable food and hence of the toilsome raising of it." — *Kalisch.*

l Ge. vi. 10; vii. 13;

ix. 20-27; 1 Ch. i. 4.

m 1 Ch. i. 4.

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have eaten upon him? Haply the tree that seemeth yet strong ere night may shake, and ere day again fall flat down. Oh, let us think of this uncertainty! — *Babington.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

race of Seth and Cain

a In this view most eminent critics are agreed; but some say, "Sons of God" = angels.

b "The daus. of the stirring Cainites, disting. by the graces of nature, the embell. of art, and the charms of music and song, even though destitute of the loftier qualities of like-mindedness with God; would attract attention, and prompt to unholy alliances. — *Murphy.*

Noah finds favor with God

c Ge. viii. 21; 1 K. viii. 46; Ps. xlv. 2, 3; Ro. iii. 10; Pr. xx. 9; Ec. ix. 3; vii. 20; Ma. xv. 19, 20; Ro. i. 28; iii. 18; De. xxix. 19.

d He. iii. 10; Mal. iii. 6; Ja. i. 17; 1 S. xv. 29; Nu. xxiii. 19.

e 2 Pe. ii. 5; Ex. xxxiii. 13, 17; Lu. i. 30; Pr. iii. 1-4.

"How loath is God to strike that threatens so long!"

the world's condition and Noah's election

f Job. i. 1; Ps. xxxviii. 37, 38; Hab. ii. 4; Ez. xiv. 14; Ge. xvii. 1.
g Ge. v. 32, and notes on ix. 24, and x. 21.
h Pr. xv. 3.

1-4. [Having traced race of Seth; the hist. now descr. the growth of wickedness leading to the flood]. (1) **when . . multiply**, Heb. "when the Adam began to multiply." The men referred to here are possibly the corrupt posterity of Cain, who are distinguished from the "sons of God" in the following verse. (2) **sons . . God**, descendants of Seth; ^a the godly — or more godly — race. **daughters . . men**, descends. of Cain. **fair**, ^b beautiful. These daus. of C. were the *city dames* of that early time: the Sethites were a pastoral race. The corruption of the entire human race because of their charms became a frightful possibility. **took . . chose**, making beauty of person the basis of the choice. (3) **my . . man**, *lit.* shall not judge, *i. e.* shall not continue to rebuke, condemn. Implies an abandonment on the part of God; a cessation of His providential control. **for . . flesh**, sinful beings. **yet . . years**, time for repentance bef. the flood. (4) **giants**, Heb. *Nephilim*, ref. not so much to bodily stature as to moral qualities — lawless, violent, cruel men. **mighty**, exploits, wrong-doing. Perh. they became the heroes of the ancient heathen mythology. **renown**, *lit.* men of name. Fame founded on preceding qualities.

A wonderful and alarming fact. — We have here — I. A wonderful fact implied. The Holy Spirit strives with man. Here observe — 1. Remarkable human power; 2. Amazing divine condescension; 3. Astounding human obduracy; 4. A merciful reason; 5. A benevolent purpose; 6. A mysterious method. — *C. W. Evan.*

The danger of beauty. — Gaze not on beauty too much, lest it blast thee; nor too long, lest it blind thee; nor too near, lest it burn thee. If thou like it, it deceives thee; if thou love it, it disturbs thee; if thou hunt after it, it destroys thee. If virtue accompany it, it is the heart's paradise; if vice associate with it, it is the soul's purgatory. It is the wise man's bonfire, and the fool's furnace. — *Quarles.*

5-8. (5) **wickedness . . earth**, result of unholy alliances, casting off fear of God, withhold. of divine rebuke. **every . . heart**, *lit.* the whole fabrication. That wh. the heart forms, and wh. forms character. **continually**, without exception, or cessation. (6) **repented**, *etc.* ^d speaking aft. the mann. of men. A change of dispensation, wh. in man's view is a change of inward feeling and purpose. **grieved . . heart**, indicative of God's attitude; not angry, but loving. (7) **and . . said**, purposed. **destroy**, *lit.* blot out; wipe out. **man . . beast**, man the head of creation, brings ruin on all beneath him. (8) **grace**, favor, *Chal.* "found mercy bef. the Lord." The world is never without a few faithful men thro. whom God works out a world's destiny.

Moral declension. — No propagation is more rapid than that of evil: no growth more certain. He who is in for a penny, if he does not resolutely fly, will find that he is in for a pound. The longer the avalanche rolls down the glacier slopes, the swifter becomes its speed. A little group of Alpine travelers saw a flower blooming on the slope of a cliff on which they stood surveying the prospect below. Each started to secure the prize; but as they hastened down, the force of their momentum increased with each step of the descent — they were borne on the smooth icy surface swiftly past the object of pursuit — and were precipitated into a yawning crevasse. Such is the declension of the soul. — *Morlais Jones.*

9-13. [It may be noted that the term Elohim rather than Jehovah for God is used in this chapter. There are supposed to be two accounts of the flood here loosely connected.] (9) **generations**, times, history, events. **Noah . . generations**, ^f upright and sincere in his relations with men. **and . . God**, had communion with him, conversed with him as friend with friend. (10) **and . . sons**, ^g they are again named to prepare us to note their place in hist. (11) **earth . . corrupt**, *i. e.* in the abuse of its inhabitants. **violence**, wrong-doing, lawlessness, cruelty; in contrast with above which was corruption in religion, offenses against God not necessarily against men. (12) **and . . earth**, ^h He still looks, always looks. **all**, with exception of one family.

had . . way, had wilfully perverted its right manner of life. (13) end . . come,^a human corruption had reached its profoundest depths. behold . . earth, grace being scorned, justice will be severely tested.

A good man living in degenerate times.—Good men living in degenerate times:—I. Are not overlooked by God. II. Are often characterized by signal piety. Piety at such times is—1. A contrast. 2. A rebuke. 3. A testimony. 4. A duty. III. Are anxious that their family connections may be preserved from moral defilement. IV. Receive the communications of heaven in reference to the destiny of men. Lessons: (1) The good man is worth the mention and commendation of God. (2) True piety can survive the darkest ages and live through the most arduous toils. (3) Good men know most of the mind of God in reference to the world's future. (4) Good men will not be included in the destructions which overtake the wicked.—*J. S. Exell.*

Good men in bad times.—Many men owe their religion not to grace, but to the favor of the times; 'tis in fashion, they may profess it at a cheap rate, because none contradict it. Indeed it shows they are extremely bad that are bad when they may be good without any loss to themselves, but it does not show they are good that are only good in good times. They do not build upon the rock, but set up a shed leaning to another man's house which costs them nothing. Then is integrity discovered, when persons dare be good in bad times, as Noah was said to be an upright man, because he was perfect in his generation.—*Manton.*

14-17. (14) ark, Heb. *tehvah* (word found only in hist. of Moses and Noah = hollow vessel, chest, capable of floating. gopher, woods of pitch; prob. the cypress.^b rooms, nests, cells. pitch . . pitch, *lit.*, coat it with a coating to secure it against leakage. (15) fashion, taking the cub. at 18 in., it was 450 ft. long; 75 ft. broad; 45 ft. high;^c it had a tonnage of 43,413 = to twenty ships of 2,100 tons ea.^d It was prob. not unlike a huge house on a raft. (16) window, the Heb. word occurs but once in the O. T., and its significance is supposed to be an apparatus for or a system of lighting. It has no reference to the window which N. afterwards opened to let out the dove. cubit . . above, *i. e.* the ridge of the roof was to be a cub. higher than the eaves. lower . . it, *i. e.* the ark. (17) I . . I, the awful resolve is repeated to give emphasis. flood, etc., this explains to N. the use of the A., and the instrument of destruction. The Hebrew word for flood has in it the idea of a general deluge, not a partial inundation.

The flood.—I. The first fact that strikes us in the story of the flood is this: that God, on account of the wickedness to which the world had grown, had made up His mind to sweep it away, once and for all. II. Out of the seed of Noah God had determined to people the earth once more with a race that would not be so wicked as the one He destroyed. III. Noah was told to go into the ark because his life was to be saved from the flood. God has provided another ark for us; He tells us to go into it and be saved. IV. Noah's family was taken with him into the ark, showing the value God sets on family life. V. God gave it as a reward to Noah for his righteousness that his children went with him into the ark. A holy and loving example preaches a sermon to those who watch it, and remains in the memory of the godless son and the godless daughter long after the parents have been laid in the grave.—*Bp. Thorold.*

Noah's patience.—There was something wonderful and Divine in Noah's patience. He knew that a flood was to come; he set to work in faith to build his ark, and that ark was in building for one hundred and twenty years. During all that time Noah never lost faith, and he never lost love either, for we read that he preached righteousness to the very men who mocked him, and preached in vain. One hundred and twenty years he warned those sinners of God's wrath, of righteousness and judgment to come, and no man listened to him. That must have been the hardest of his trials.—*C. Kingsley.*

18-22. (18) establish, make sure. covenant, testament, promise. thou . . thee, 8 souls, 4 married pairs. (19) two,^e the interpretation "by pairs" is unwarrantable and was forced to make this verse and vii. 2 harmonize. The consensus of scholarship holds to two accounts of the flood, and the contradiction of detail is due to the lack of the historic sense of the Oriental mind. The great, supreme fact of a flood designed to blot out human wickedness is not hereby impaired. to . . alive, nourish, preserve fr. flood. (20) come,

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a 1 Pe. iv 7; 2 Pe. iii. 7, 11, 12.

Evil thoughts.—We cannot keep thieves from looking in at our windows, but we need not give them entertainment with open doors.

"Wash thy heart from iniquity, that thou mayest be saved; how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" They may be passengers, but they must not be sojourners.—*T. Adams.*

the ark

b Used in Asia for ships, in Athens for coffins, in Egypt for mummy cases. It is said that the gates of St. Peter's at Ro., made of cypress, suffered no decay in 1,100 years.

c The Great East-ern was 680 ft. long, 83 ft broad; 58 ft. deep; light draught 12,000 tons. The ark was as high as Solomon's temple, five times as long, and twice as wide.

d These would carry 20,000 men, besides cannon, and stores, etc., for six mos.

"A life of the most absolute devotedness to God is the only righteous way of living; no man lives a righteous life that doth not live a devoted life."—*Howe.*

Noah's obedience

e Alford sees a discrepancy in the two accs., and accepts as an explanation De-

B. C. 2349.

litzsch's supplement theory; i. e. "The original document spoke of only two of each kind taken in by N, the supplement specifies this more clearly fr. sources wh. gave more particulars."

God invites Noah into the ark

a 1 Pe. iii. 20; Pr. xiv. 26; Ps. xci. 7, 8; Zep. ii. 3; Is. lii. 10, 11; Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19.

"What a wonder of mercy is this that I here see! One poor family called out of a world, and, as it were, eight grains of corn fanned fr. a whole barn-full of chaff." — *Bp. Hall*.

"Just one week was allowed for N. to embark, and for the world to repent; and what a week was this." — *Bush*.

"For if he had been led by sense, he would have fled as far as Jonah did, ere ever he had gone about it." — *Trapp*.

their instincts overruled, and guided, by their creator. (21) **food**, herbs, fruits. (22) **according**, persevering for 120 yrs. till the work was done.

Odd-job Christians. — "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." And it is always pleasant to meet with persons who are trying to serve God as thoroughly as Noah did. A religious meeting was once held among some working-men. One after another of them rose up to speak of their experience on the subject of religion. This was the way in which one of them spoke about himself: "I used to be an odd-job Christian; but now, thank God, I'm working on full time." This was very expressive. There are a great many "odd-job Christians." They work for Jesus just when it suits them. For the rest of their time they are pleasing themselves. — *R. Newton*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1-6. [Note the change in the name of God, Jehovah being used; supposed to be another document.] (1) **come . . ark**, "He was there who gave the invitation: this, a call to prepare to enter. **for**, etc., divine testi. to moral character. (2) **by sevens**, *R. V.*, "seven and seven." (4) **yet . . days**, to yet, etc., i. e. the seventh day aft. this. **forty . . nights**, "The importance assigned in subsequent Scripture to the number forty, probably from the circumstance here recorded, is too obvious to be overlooked. Israel wandered forty years in the wilderness (*Num. xiv. 33*). The scouts remained forty days in Canaan (*Num. xiii. 26*). Moses was forty days in the mount (*Exod. xxiv. 18*). Elijah fasted forty days and forty nights in the wilderness of Beersheba (*1 Kings xix. 8*). A respite of forty days was given to the Ninevites (*Jonah iii. 4*). Christ fasted forty days before the temptation (*Matt. iv. 2*), and sojourned forty days on earth after his resurrection (*Acts i. 3*). It thus appears to have been regarded as symbolical of a period of trial, ending in victory to the good and in ruin to the evil." — *Pulp. Com.* (5) **Noah . . him**, as bef. in building the ark; so now in these final preparations. (6) **Noah . . old**, *lit.* a son of 600 yrs; i. e. going on his 600th. yr. **was . . earth**, i. e. began to be.

Fathers invited into the ark. — I. There is provision in the ark for thee and for all thy house. II. There is no safety for you or for your children out of it. III. You should enter, and seek to bring all your children in with you, not only because your salvation depends upon it, but because it may be indispensable to theirs. 1. Your children, that are outside, will not believe that there is a storm coming. Who can convince them of their error but you? 2. They need an Almighty arm around them to protect them. What prayers can obtain this so well as yours. 3. They need also the influence of example, as well as of instruction and prayer. Whose example can influence them like that of their father. — *Badger*.

Chaldean account of deluge. — Sometimes the language comes so close to that of the Bible that one almost seems to read disjointed or distorted quotations from Scripture. We mention, as instances, the scorn which the building of the ark is said to have called forth on the part of contemporaries; the pitching of the ark without and within with pitch; the shutting of the door behind the saved ones; the opening of the window, when the waters had abated; the going and returning of the dove since "a resting-place it did not find," the sending of the raven, which, feeding on corpses in the water, "did not return;" and, finally, the building of an altar by Noah. We sum up the results of this discovery in the words of Mr. Smith: "Not to pursue this parallel further, it will be perceived that when the Chaldean account is compared with the Biblical narrative, in their main features the two stories fairly agree; as to the wickedness of the antediluvian world, the Divine anger and command to build the ark, its stocking with birds and beasts, the coming of the deluge, the rain and storm, the ark resting on a mountain, trial being made by birds sent out to see if the waters had subsided, and the building of an altar after the flood. All these main facts occur in the same order in both narratives, but when we come to examine the details of these stages in the two accounts, there appear numerous points of difference; as to the number of people who were saved, the duration of the deluge, the place where the ark rested, the order of sending out the birds, and other similar matters." — *Bib.*

III.

7—10. (7) **because . . flood**, *lit. fr. the face of; i. e. for fear of.* (8) **of clean, etc.,** in the proportions ordered. (9) **two . . female**, note the consistency of the narrative which has Elohim as the name for God; there nothing is said of the seven; it is always two of each sort. (10) **after . . days**, *lit. at the seventh of the days.*

A whole family in heaven.—I. God in the Scriptures deals with families both in saving and destroying. II. Special obligations on heads of families to bring the household to Christ. III. Unspeakable joy of the family reunion after the storms and separations of earth. What greetings—memories—unalloyed fellowship—blissful employments.—*The Homiletic Review.*

Effects of judgments.—In the province of Quito, after the tremendous earthquake of 1797, a number of marriages were contracted between persons who had neglected for many years to sanction their union by the sacerdotal benediction. Children found parents by whom they had never till then been acknowledged; restitutions were promised by persons who had never been accused of fraud; and families who had long been at enmity were drawn together by the tie of common calamity. But if this feeling seemed to calm the passions of some, and open the heart to pity, it had a contrary effect on others, rendering them more rigorous and inhuman.—*Humboldt.*

11—16. (11) **in . . month**, “Before the departure from Egypt the Israelites began their year about the 22d of September, and therefore the 17th day of the second month answers to about the 6th of November. This, according to the Hebrew computation was 1656 years from the creation.”—*Bush.* **all . . deep**, *lit. fountains of the great deep; not necessarily of the sea.* **windows**, sluices, flood-gates. LXX. cataracts. The more advanced critics hold that the Jewish conception of the sky was of a solid dome with lattice work windows, thro’ which the waters were poured. (12) **rain . . nights**, continued falling in an unceasing *torrent* through all that time. (13) **In . . day**, precisely. (14) **bird . . sort**, *lit. of every wing; not only feathered fowls, but bats, larger insects, etc.* (15) **they . . Noah**, God collected, selected, guided them. (16) **Lord . . in**, *lit. closed round ab. him.* LXX. “shut the ark on the outside of him.” *Chal.* “protected over him.” Enclosed him, excluded others. “We take the sense to be, that the ark and its inmates now became the special objects of the divine care and protection, and that a superintending providence so completely encompassed the structure, that not only were its inmates perfectly secured within, but also all other persons, as well as the waters, were effectually precluded from without.”—*Bush.*

The Lord shut him in.—Noah was shut in.—I. Away from all the world. II. With His God. “Come thou into the ark,” said God; by which He clearly showed that He Himself meant to dwell there. III. So that no evil could reach. Floods did but lift him heavenward, and winds did but waft him on the way. Outside the ark all was ruin; inside all was rest and peace.—*Spurgeon.*

The Lord shut him in.—There is room enough in Christ for all comers. Those that by faith come into Christ, the ark, shall by the power of God be shut in, and kept as in a stronghold *by the power of God* (1 Pet. i. 5). God put Adam into Paradise, but He did not shut him in, and so he threw himself out; but when He put Noah into the ark, He shut him in, and so, when He brings a soul to Christ, He insures the salvation; it is not in our own keeping, but in the mediator’s hand. The door of mercy will shortly be shut against those that now make light of it. *Now knock and it shall be opened*; but the time will come when it shall not (Lu. xiii. 25).—*M. Henry.*

17—20. (17) **forty . . earth**, *i. e. descending on it.* and **. . increased**, fed by the fountains and the rain. (18) **prevailed**, overcame absorption and exhalation. **went**, *lit. walked: i. e. with a gentle motion.* (19) **upon . . earth**, that part of its surface known to man. **all . . hills**, in that region. **that . . heaven**, that bounded the human horizon. (20) **fifteen . . covered**, *i. e. above the highest mountains obviously, otherwise it could not be said that the mountains were covered.*

The waters of the flood a boon to Noah, but destruction to the world.—I. The waters, which broke down everything else, bore up the ark. That which to unbelievers is a savor of death, is to believers a savor of life. II. The more the waters increased, the higher was the ark lifted up towards heaven. Thus sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions; and as troubles abound, consolations much more abound.—*M. Henry.*

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Noah accepts the invitation

a Is. xi. 6, 7.

“The wages that sin bargains with the sinner are life, pleasure and profit; but the wages it pays him with are death, torment, and destruction. He that would understand the falsehood and deceit of sin, must compare its promises and payments together.”—*South.*

the flood begins

b Ma. xxiv. 37—39; 1 Th. v. 3.

c Ps. xlii 1—3; Ma. xxv. 10; Lu. xiii. 24, 25; Jo. x. 27, 28; 1 Pe. i. 5.

“The margin has the ‘flood-gates of heaven were opened.’ In the East, when the rain falls in torrents, the people say, ‘the heavens are broken.’”—*Roberts.*

“There is more bitterness following upon sin’s ending than ever there was sweetness flowing from sin’s acting. You that see nothing but *well* in its commission, will suffer nothing but *woe* in its conclusion. You that sin for your profits, will never profit by your sins.”—*Dyer.*

the flood prevails for forty days

The theory of a universal deluge cannot be reasonably entertained. Astronomy, geology, and zoology, each furnish evidence against it. A partial deluge, meets the necessity

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of the case, — the destr. of man and his immediate surroundings, — does not violate the true sense of Scripture and is the view held by eminent critics; as M. Poole, Bp. Stillingfleet, Pye, Smith, Murphy, Geikie, Hitchcock, Perowne, etc. etc.

all creatures
in the world
die

α Nu. xxiii. 19;
Pr. xi. 21; Ma.
xxv. 46; Ez. xiv.
14.

"Sin is the only thing in the world that is contrary to God. God is light, and that is darkness; God is beauty, and that is ugliness and deformity. All sin is direct rebellion against God; and with what notions soever we sugar it and sweeten it, yet God can never smile upon it." — *Cudworth.*

the waters
decrease

b Ge. xix. 29; Ps.
xxxvi. 6; Jon. iv.
11; Ma. x. 22.

"No sails were unfurled to the breeze, no rudder was employed to steer. The Providence of God was deeper than the winds and waves and contrary current; and to that, Noah fastened his barque with the strong cable of faith." — *W. Adamson.*

the raven
and the dove

If she had been a raven, she would have found plenty

Legends of the flood. — The ancient inhabitants of Mexico had many variations of the legend among their various tribes. In some, rude paintings were found representing the deluge. Not a few believe that a vulture was sent out of the ship, and that, like the raven of the Chaldean tablets, it did not return, but fed on the dead bodies of the drowned. Other versions say that a humming-bird alone, out of many birds sent off, returned with a branch covered with leaves in its beak. From other tribes in every part of America, travelers have brought many variations of the same world-wide tradition, nor are even the scattered islands of the great Southern Ocean without versions of their own. In other islands we find legends recording the building of an altar after the deluge; the collection of pairs of all the domestic animals, to save them, while the Fiji islanders give the number of the human beings saved as eight. Thus the story of the deluge is a universal tradition among all branches of the human family with the one exception, as Lenormant tells us, of the black. — *Geikie.*

21 — 24. (21) **flesh . . man,**^a the impossibility of escape beyond a hilly boundary of the deluged district will be clear to any who consider the dreadful violence of this flood-storm, and the difficulty of progress through ordinary storms. (22) **the . . life,** *lit.* the breath of the spirit of life. **all . . land,** thus excepting the fish in the sea. (23) **every . . substance,** *lit.* every thing that stood up, *i. e.* whatever by the principle of life is capable of maintaining an erect posture. **Noah . . ark,** how strange and startling to them within; the cry, and presently the scene, without. The ark, — the only safe spot in the habitable globe (safety alone in Christ). (24) **waters . . days,** by which time not only all life, but all old landmarks, etc., would be "wiped out."

God destroys that He may save. — A mariner in a storm would very vainly save his goods, but to save his ship he heaves them overboard. A tender-hearted mother corrects her child, whereas the stripes are deeper in her heart than in its flesh. As it was said of a judge who, being about to pass sentence of death upon an offender, said, "I do that good which I would not." Thus God, more loving than the careful mariner, more tender than the indulgent mother, and more merciful than the pitiful judge, is willingly unwilling that any sinner should die. He punisheth no man as he is a man, a sinful man; He loves him, yet turns him over to justice. It is God's work to punish, but it is withal His strange work, his strange and foreign act, not His good will and pleasure. — *J. Spencer.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

1—5. (1) **remembered,**^b figurative, since God cannot be said to forget. Had him in mind, and did him good. **wind . . earth,** a beating, drying wind. **assuaged,** *lit.* settled down, depressed. (2) **fountain . . rain,** *etc.* as the wind operated, the flood-storm ended. (3) **the . . continually,** *lit.* going and returning: *i. e.* gradually but ceaselessly settling down. (4) **in . . month,** five clear months after begin. of flood. **upon . . Ararat,** not necessarily on the top of Mt. Ararat, wh. is not only 17,750 feet high; but at least 4,000 ft. fr. the summit is cov. with perpetual snow. Some spur of A. must be meant. (5) **tops . . seen,** prob. the highlands of Armenia, 3,000 or 4,000 ft. above the sea.

Security. — When Alexander the Great was asked how he could sleep so soundly and securely in the midst of surrounding danger, he replied that he might well repose when Parmenio watched. Noah might well be in peace, since God had him in charge. A gentleman, crossing a dreary moor, came upon a cottage. When about to leave he said to its occupant, "Are you not afraid to live in this lonely place?" To this the man at once responded, "Oh! no, for faith closes the door at night, and mercy opens it in the morning." Thus was Noah kept during the long night of the deluge; and mercy opened the door for him. — *Adamson.*

6—9. (6) **end . . days,** fr. first app. of mts. **window,** Heb. *hallow*, not the word trans. window bef. Here some aperture. (7) **raven,** if the waters had subsided it would not return. It would follow its instincts and feed upon dead bodies. From this circumstance the raven has always been considered a bird of ill-omen. **went . . fro,** fr. the Ark and back. (8) **dove**

of swift and long-sustained flight, rests on dry places only, feeds on grain. (9) **dove** . . **foot**, no dry spot, doves fly low, do not affect mts. **returned** . . **hand**, etc., all this tallies with the domestic nature of the bird.

Indications of duty are always given to those who seek them devotedly. — The dove returned to Noah with the olive leaf. Men who seek prayerfully to know their duty in the events of life, will surely have given them the plain indications of Providence. Lessons:—1. That men should not trust their own reason alone to guide them in the events of life. 2. That men who wish to know the right path of life should employ the best talents God has given them. 3. That honest souls are divinely led. — *J. S. Exell.*

The ark and the dove. —

There was a noble ark
Sailing o'er waters dark,
And wide around:
Not one tall tree was seen,
Nor flower, nor leaf of green,
Nor e'en the ground.

Then a soft wing was spread,
And o'er the billows dread
A meek dove flew;
But on the shoreless tide,
No living thing she spied
To cheer her view.

So to the ark she fled,
With weary, drooping head,
To seek for rest.
Christ is the ark, my love,
Thou art the tender dove—
Fly to His breast.

10—12. (10) **stayed**, *lit.* patiently abode. **yet** . . **days**, there had prob. been one such interval betw. the sending forth of raven and dove. (11) **olive**, grows in Armenia, on lower hills and plains, but not so high on mts., as walnut, apricot, etc. **plucked off**, *i. e., lit.* a newly-plucked olive-leaf: not a loose leaf or floating twig. Olive leaves keep green under water (Chrysostom). **knew** . . **earth**, since they were lower than the tops of trees wh. grew in the plain. (12) **which** . . **more**, finding now some other place of rest and safety.

Lesson of the bird. — A woman, who was striving to find rest for her soul, was sitting in her summer-house, when in through an open door flew a bird. It was alarmed, and flew up toward the roof, and tried to get out at this window and at that. It flew from side to side until it panted with fright and weariness. The woman said, "Poor bird, why do you not come down lower, then you would see this open door, and you could fly out easily?" But the bird kept wounding itself against the closed windows and at every crevice. At last its wings grew tired, and it flew lower and lower until it was on a level with the open door, when quickly it escaped, and soon its song was heard in the trees of the churchyard near by. A new light dawned upon the mind of the woman: "I, like that poor bird, through my pride and self-sufficiency, have been flying too high to see the door which stands wide open." Her heart was humbled, and soon she too was singing songs of gladness. — *T. L. Cuyler.*

13—19. (13) **pass** . . **year**, of Noah's life. **covering**, Heb., *mikseh*, used in ref. to cov. of tabern; perh. the ark was cov. with skins; or, if wood. N. now broke up the planking. **face** . . **dry**, the dry earth appeared, yet still saturated. (14) **second** . . **month**, hence the duration of the flood was 1 yr. 10 dys. (15) **and** . . **saying**, the new race, like the old, begin life with the divine blessing. (16) **forth**, be as confident of safety on leaving as on entering. (17) **bring** . . **earth**, there had been no death in the ark. **that** . . **earth**, indicating the end for wh. they had been preserved. (18) **Noah** . . **him**, he left, as he entered, at God's bidding. (19) **after** . . **ark**, an orderly egress, not a tumultuous rush into liberty.

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of rest for the sole of her foot. It was her nature that made her unresting, and the reason why the Christian cannot find satisfaction in worldly things is because there is a new nature within him that cannot rest. "Up! up! up!" cries the new heart, "what hast thou to do here?" — *Spurgeon.*

the dove and the olive leaf

α Ps xl. 1.

"Peace is the still music of the soul. It is the calm sunset of a summer's Sabbath. It is the olive branch—sign of judgment abating. It is Jerusalem, *i. e.*, the vision of peace. It is Melchizedec, king of righteousness, king of peace." — *G. S. Bowes.*

the earth dried

"Nature gives in every time and season some beauties of its own; and from morning to night, as from the cradle to the grave, is but a succession of changes

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so gentle and easy that we can scarcely mark their progress." — Dickens.		Tr. of N's life.	mo.	dy.	EVENT.
"The deluge was God's sermon against sin, whose echoes will be heard until the consummation of all things." — Melvill.		600	2	17	The Ark entered : flood begins, vii 11.
		"	3	27	The 40 dys. rain : the Ark floats, vii. 17.
		"	7	17	The 150 dys. (incl. the 40) the Ark rests, viii. 3, 4.
		"	10	1	The mountains visible, viii. 5.
		"	11	11	The raven sent out, viii. 6, 7.
		"	"	18	The dove sent out, and returned, viii. 8, 9.
		"	"	25	The dove sent and returns with leaf, viii. 10, 11.
		"	12	2	The dove sent and returns no more, viii. 12.
		601	1	1	Waters off the earth, viii. 13.
		"	"	27	Earth dry : Noah leaves the Ark, viii. 14—19.

Noah offers sacrifice

a Ex. xx. 24; He. xiii. 10.

b Ep. v. 2.

c "The meaning is, that N's sacrifice was as grateful and acceptable to the Lord as sweet odors are to a man." — *Bush. Chaf. V.*, "The Lord accepted with favor his oblation." "The favor of satisfaction or delectation." — *Sp. Comty.*

d Je. xvii. 9; Ro. viii. 7, 8.

"Men will wrangle for religion; write for it; fight for it; die for it; but live for it." — *C. Colton.*

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God's blessing on Noah and his sons

e Ge. i. 29.

f Le. xvii. 10, 11; i Ti. iv. 4.

"The greatest man is he who chooses right with the most invincible resolution; who resists the sorest temptation from within and without; who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully; who is calmest in storms, and most fearless under menaces and frowns; whose reliance on truth, on virtue, and on God, is most unflinching." — *Seneca.*

20—22. (20) altar,^a prob. of earth. Our Eng. word comes from the Lat. *altus*, *high*, *elevated*, because originally altars were constructed of high mounds of earth. took . . fowl, (see on vii. 2) *i. e.* of such as were suitable; as oxen, sheep, goats, doves, pigeons. and . . offerings, *lit.*, ascensions, or rise-offerings; so called bec. they *went up* to the Lord in fire. (21) smelled . . savour,^b *lit.* a savor of rest^c (Anthropomorphic). It meant that Noah's sacrifice was as grateful and acceptable to God as sweet odors are to a man. said . . heart, inward determination, not expressed purpose. curse . . ground, not applying to original curse, but to the deluge. for . . youth,^d God mercifully considers the nat. tendency to evil. (22) while, *etc.*, the world must at that moment have presented a spectacle of utter desolation as if there were an end of all the seasons.

Carnal thoughts and religious worship.—Some years ago, two pious weavers were conversing together, and complaining of the trouble which they found from vain and evil *thoughts* in the solemn duties of religion. Another person of the same business overheard them, and rushing forth, said, "I always thought you two vile hypocrites; but now I know it from your own confessing. For my part I never had such vain and wicked thoughts in my life." One of the men took a piece of money out of his pocket, and put it into his hand, adding, "This shall be yours, if, after you come from the church the next time, you can say you had not one vain thought there." In a few days he came, saying, "Here, take back your money, for I had not been five minutes in the church before I began to think how many looms could be set up in it."

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1—4. (1) blessed, a repetition of the primal blessing necessitated by the devastation and destruction of the flood. (2) fear . . dread, *etc.*, supremacy of man reasserted; but *now* on the basis of fear instead of as formerly on the basis of gentleness and love. (3) every . . you, animal food, wh. had never been *prohibited*, is now expressly named and *permitted*. This excludes such as had died or been torn by beasts (see Lev. xxii. 8). even . . herb,^a alluding to the primitive grant made in Gen. i. 29. (4) flesh . . life,^f *i. e.*, the blood of the animal must be shed before it can be used for food; blood is not to be an article of diet. which . . blood, the vital fluid.

The law of nature.—Look at the law — I. For the propagation of life, and increase of inhabitants on the earth — "be fruitful, and multiply." The institution of marriage same as before the flood. II. For the security and preservation of life. 1. Man's dominion over the creatures is to rest mainly on fear and dread; 2. Man's dominion over his fellow-man. The power of the sword is instituted, and is given into the hands of the magistrate. III. For the support or sustenance of life. Animal food is allowed to be eaten, under certain restrictions. The former fertility of the earth, found before the fall, is somewhat restored. — *Candlish.*

Man's power over the animal creation.—During the Sepoy rebellion in India a party of British soldiers were being towed up the Indus on flats by a steamer. From time to time they stopped, landed, cooked a meal, and rested for a short time. On one of these occasions two of the men were walking

along a narrow path, with high, thick, jungly grass on each side. As they proceeded, it came into the mind of one of them that where they were was a suitable resort for tigers. Scarcely had the thought crossed him, when there emerged from the grass, and faced them, an immense tiger. He cried, and ran. The other, by a sort of stupid fascination, stared at the animal. This stare was probably their deliverance. Making off from them, the magnificent fellow leaped over a party of soldiers at cards, snapped up a dog, and left the neighborhood. — *Bib. Treas.*

5-7. (5) **blood . . lives,**^a the law of retaliation (*lex talionis*) is here proclaimed; life for life; blood for blood. **at . . beast,** a beast which slew a man should be destroyed, a custom yet generally followed. Bush asserts that it has a fuller meaning and "at the hand of," as often, signifies "by means of"; not only should the shedding of human blood be avenged by man, but also by beast. The whole creation is armed against him who has taken human life. **hand . . brother,**^b every man to regard every other man as his brother. (60) **whoso . . blood,** wilfully, unwarrantably. Two exceptions: accidental death and judicial death. **by . . shed,**^c in way of legal retribution, not private revenge. **for . . man,**^d man is to represent his Creator in exercising authority and administering justice; "to destroy man's life has in it the sin of sacrilege . . . to destroy the life of such a one is to cut short his time of probation, to abridge his day of grace, to step in betw. him and his moral Governor, to frustrate, as far as may be, God's purposes of love and mercy to his soul." — *Spk. Com.* (7) **and . . you, etc.,** instead of taking away human life, increase it, fill the world with it.

Blood for blood. — An English tourist came upon an Indian village, in centre of which a number of youths were playing. Provoked in play, one lost his temper, and suddenly seizing a knife, struck his opponent in the neck. The wound, though not dangerous, bled profusely, and a cry was immediately raised. A young chief came forth from his hut — inquired the cause — and, having ascertained the culprit, started in pursuit of him. Soon overtaken, the guilty youth was dragged to where the wounded one lay. After carefully examining the depth, extent, etc., of the wound, the young chief took a knife and made precisely the same incision in the offender's neck. Both were then taken to their huts. This Indian chief was the "Goel;" *i. e.*, the avenger of the injured. — *Adamson.*

8-11. (8) **Noah . . him,** the sons to share in the father's blessing and duty. (9) **covenant,** Heb. *berithi*, usually a "mutual compact," here a "solemn promise." (10) **and . . you, etc.,** the prom. made to N. covers all that was given to him. **from . . earth,** "not only those preserved in the ark, but all other animals are to be interested in this promise." (11) **and . . flood,** in the region peopled by yourselves and descendants. **neither, and in addition. flood . . earth,**^e in any part of it whatever. This appears to be a repetition of viii. 21; supposed, according to the higher critics, to be an evidence of two documents used in making up the narrative of the flood.

The triumphal arch of summer (vss. 8-16.) — The text shows us, concerning the rainbow, that it — I. Is a token, or pledge of God's fidelity to His word. II. Is an emblem of the covenant of redemption. III. Is an apt emblem of union and harmony in the midst of diversity. IV. Well represents man's present state of probation and discipline. V. Is a striking emblem of human hopes. VI. Affords us a glimpse of the magnificence of the heavenly world, and the glory of God. — *Hitchcock.*

The Rainbow. —

When thou dost shine, darkness looks white and fair;
Forms turn to music, clouds to smiles and air,
Rain gently spends his honey-drops and pours
Balm on the cleft earth, milk on the grass and flowers.
Bright pledge of peace and sunshine, the sure tie
Of thy Lord's hand, the object of His eye.
When I behold thee, though my light be dim,
Distant and low, I can in thine see him,
Who looks upon thee from His glorious throne,
And minds the covenant betwixt all and One. — *Vaughan.*

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Blood is the *life*. Hence in all the sacrifices the blood was poured out before the Lord; and in the sacrifice of Christ, He shed His blood, or poured out His soul unto death. — *Fuller.*

law concerning human life

a Ps. ix. 12.

b "At the hands of the man who shall spill his bro.'s blood will I require the soul (or life) of man." — *Ch. Ver.* The Goel was the nearest relation of a murdered person, whose duty it was to avenge his kinsman's death with his own hand. — See *Cities of Refuge*; De. xix; also *Michaelis, Com. on Law of Moses*, ii. 195.

c "With witnesses by the sentence of the judges shall his blood." — *Ch. Ver.* d Ge. i. 27.

No life ever yields comfort to its possessor until it is conformed to the idea which He had for it who originally gave it. — *Thomas.*

there shall be no more flood

e Ps. cxlv. 9.

f *Speaker's Com.* wh. adds, "From wh. we can hardly fail to infer that the destr. of the lower animals was confined to a certain district, and not general throughout the earth."

g 2 Pe. iii. 6, 7; Is. liv. 7-10.

"That are of light,
Born of the shower,
and colored by the sun;
"Which spans the heavens when April skies are bright."
J. C. Prince.

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the rainbow

a Nu. xiv. 4. "Let us make (i.e. appoint) a captain, etc." see also 1 K ii. 35.

"To the spiritual mind, all natural phenomena are God's revelation of Himself; each one of them answering to some other truth of His. — *Hom. Com.*

the sons of Noah

See McCausland, *Adam and the Adamite*; and the works of Pritchard, Smith, Pickering, Knor, Lawrence, etc.

God's mind is to teach His church by visible signs as well as by His word. — *Hughes*.

Noah's drunkenness

b Pr. xx. 1; xxiii. 31, 32; Ec. vii. 20; 1 Co. x. 12.

c "Leaving all this in uncertainty, let us learn fr. N.'s intemperance how foul and detestable a vice drunkenness is." — *Calvin*.

d Pr. xxx. 17; 1 Cor. xiii. 6.

"The son would never have derided his father in his shame, had he not first banished fr. his mind that reverence and deference wh. by God's command should be in children towards their parents." — *Luther*.

e Ex. xx. 12; Ga. vi. 1; 1 Pe. iv. 8.

12-17. (12) **token**, "some appointed object put before two parties for the purpose of causing them to remember." — *Hom. Com.* for . . generations, a sign as lasting as nature, whose laws produce it: must therefore endure to the end of time. (13) **set**, Heb. *nathatti*, give, often trans. with sense of "appoint" or "constitute." a **bow . . cloud**, the rainbow. It is not to be inferred that this is the first time that the bow appeared, but that it is now appointed as a sign, of the covenant. **token . . earth**, the reminder of a promise to God and man. (14) **bring . . earth**, Heb. "in clouding a cloud," denoting intensity; a thick, dense, threatening cloud. Reference to the violent storms of the East. (15) **remember**, this in condescension to us, an anthropomorphism. He would never forget his word though there was no token. (16) **I . . it**, let us think of that when we look upon and admire the rainbow. (17) **God . . Noah, etc.**, this *vs.* the summing up of the whole. Jarchi, the Jewish commentator, thinks that for the confirmation of Noah's faith God suddenly overspread the western sky with clouds, causing the rainbow to appear.

The covenant sign. — The native account of the last martyrdom in Madagascar concludes in these touching words: "Then they prayed, 'Oh Lord, receive our spirits, for Thy love to us hath caused this to come to us; and lay not this sin to their charge.' Thus prayed they as long as they had any life, and then they died—softly, gently; and there was at the time a rainbow in the heavens which seemed to touch the place of the burning." — *Old Testament Anecdotes*.

18, 19. (18) **sons**, see on *vs.* 32. **Ham**, *heat*, perh. so named in all. to the hot regions wh. his desc. were to inhabit. **Canaan**, Heb. *Kēnaan*, fr. rt. *Kāna*, to humble, depress: perh. prophetic of his posterity. (19) **them . . overspread**, the whole race deriv. fr. these three.

Noah's sons. — We have here those effective powers which have been at work throughout the whole course of history. I. Religion. This is represented by Shem, which signifies "the name," i.e. the name of God with all its fullness of meaning for man. The knowledge of that name was to be preserved through Shem, for without it the race must fail to reach its highest perfection. II. The spirit of work and enterprise. This is another factor which enters into the culture of the human race. It is represented by Japheth, which signifies "enlargement." There was in him an energy by which he could overcome obstacles and expand his empire over the world. III. The power of evil. This is represented by Ham, who is the picture of moral inability — of one who knows his duty, but is unable to perform it. Still, our great hope for the race is that evil is not the strongest power in it. — *T. H. Leale*.

20-23. (20) **Noah . . husbandman**, under N. the earth begins again to be cultivated and man returns to primitive occupations. **he . . vineyard**, prob. the art of vine-cultivation known bef. the flood. (21) **drank . . drunken**,^b N. has been excused on the ground that he was ignorant of the strength of the wine and on account of old age: but prob. the abounding prosperity, and guarantee of safety, induced a culpable laxity.^c **he . . tent**, drunkenness has a tendency to sensuality. (22) **Ham . . father, etc.**^d prob. told them mockingly and with malignant pleasure. (23) **garment**, poss. the one thrown off by N. and . . **backward, etc.**^e their conduct indicating profound grief, and respect for a father, even in that deplorably fallen state.

Noah's drunkenness, and his son's sin. — From the text (*vss.* 20, 23), we learn — I. That in even the best of lives some fault may be found. II. That a sinful act on our part will generally lead to some equally sinful, or even worse act, by another. III. That virtue will at all times meet with its proper reward. Shem and Japheth were rewarded by the blessing of their outraged father. — *F. Ward*.

Drunkenness the way to ruin. — One fine summer evening a man was trying to make his way through the lanes and cross-roads that led to his village home. He was so drunk that it was impossible for him to find his way home. Quite unable to tell where he was, at last he uttered a dreadful oath, and said to a person going by, "I've lost my way. Where am I going?" The man thus addressed was an earnest Christian. In a quiet, sad, solemn way he answered: "To ruin." The next day the effect of the drink had passed away, but those two little words, tenderly and lovingly spoken did not pass away. "To ruin! to ruin!" the poor man kept whispering to himself. "It's true, I'm going to

ruin! Oh, God, help me and save me!" Thus he was stopped on his way to ruin. By earnest prayer to God he sought the grace which made him a true Christian. — *Adamson*.

24-29. (24) **knew**, finding a different garment over him, he doubtless inquired about the whole matter, and was informed. **what . . son, lit.**, his little son; little in dignity and honor. (25) **said . . Canaan,** the second curse pronounced upon a human being. The curse is directed against Canaan prob. because he of all Ham's sons was following in his father's sinful ways; or perhaps bec. he first saw the nakedness of Noah and told his father, Ham. **servant . . brethren**, "The curse, as a matter of world-hist., has more or less foll. all the Hamite races." — *Alford*. (26) **Blessed, etc.,** the prophecy assumes the form of thanksgiving. "If Jehovah is the God of Shem, then is Shem the recipient and the heir of all the blessings of salvation which God, as Jehovah, procures for humanity." — *Keil*. Abraham and the Jews desc. fr. Shem. (27) **God . . Japheth**, whose name sig. *enlargement*; enlarge in progeny and territory, which has proved to be the case. **shall . . Shem,** "The chief Jewish authorities, with others, make Elohim the subject of the verb, and with sufficient reason, as there is no necessity for a new grammatical subject. It is more natural to interpret the words as describing two acts of God. He (God) will enlarge Japheth, but He will dwell in the tents of Shem. This view gives a more spiritual significance to the prophecy. Shem was the *habitation* of God. A merely political interpretation fails to satisfy so high a conception." — *Hom. Com.* (28, 29) **Noah . . died**, Noah was born upwards of 80 yrs. bef. *Enos* (9th son of Adam) died: and lived upwards of 120 yrs. aft. *Terah* (the father of Abraham) was born.

Predictions respecting the sons of Noah.—Notice the agreement between these predictions and the great outlines of history. Look at the descendants of—1. Ham, and their servitude; 2. Shem, and their privileges; 3. Japheth, and their enlargement. — *B. S. Hollis*. *God shall enlarge Japheth.*—This enlargement is the most striking point in the history of Japheth, who is the progenitor of the inhabitants of Europe, Asia, and America, except the region between the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, the Euxine, the Caspian, and the mountains beyond the Tigris, which was the main seat of the Shemites. This expansive power refers not only to the territory and the multitude of the Japhethites, but also to their intellectual and active faculties. — *Murphy*.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1-5. (1) **generations**, origins, genesis, or development given, not in order of age, but of theocratic importance. (1) *The Sons of Japheth*: **Gomer** (*complete, perfection*); **Magog** (*region of Gog*); **Madai** (*middle land*); **Javan** (*clay*); **Tubal** (*a flowing forth*); **Meshech** (*a drawing out, possession*); **Tiras** (*desire*). (3) *Sons of Gomer*: **Ashkenaz** (?); **Riphath** (*a crusher*); **Togarmah** (*a breaking bones*; ? *Armenian tribe*). (4) *sons of Javan*: **Elishah** (? *perh. adapted fr. Elis or Hellas*); **Tarshish** (*a breaking, subjection*); **Kittim** (?); **Dodanim** (*leaders*). (5) *isles . . Gentiles*, prob. those parts of Europe and A. Minor, to wh. the inhabs. of the E. had access only by sea, not necessarily islands as we understand such, but rather maritime countries.

Table of descendants of Japheth, and their countries. — I. **GOMER**, fr. whom the *Cimmerians*, N. coast of Black S. From these—1. *Ashkenaz*, *perh. betw. Armenia and Black Sea*; 2. *Riphath*, *Riphcean mts.*; 3. *Togarmah*, *Armenia*. II. **MAGOG**, the *Scythians*. III. **MADAI**, the *Medes*. IV. **JAVAN**, the *Ionians* or *Greeks*, fr. whom—1. *Elishah*, *Hellenes proper*; 2. *Tarshish*, *Tartessus in Spain*; 3. *Kittim*, *Cyprians, Macedonians*; 4. *Dodanim*, the *Dodonei in Epirus*. V. **TURAL**, the *Tibarenti*, in *Pontus*. VI. **MESHECH**, the *Muscovites, i. e., the Moschi of the Moschian mts. betw. Iberia, Armenia, and Colchis*. VII. **TIRAS**, *prob. the Thracians*.

6-12. (6) *The sons of Ham*: **Cush** (? *black*); **Mizraim** (*bulwark*); **Phut** (*afflicted*); **Canaan** (*servant*). (7) *The sons of Cush*: **Seba** (? *man*); **Havilah** (*terror*); **Sabtah** (*striking*); **Raamah** (*a trembling*); **Sabtechah**, as *Sabtah*. *Sons of Raamah*: **Sheba**, as *Seba*; **Dedan** (*low ground*). (8) **Nimrod** (*a rebel*). **began . . earth**, became a conqueror and king; descriptive of character

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the curse on
Canaan
death of
Noah

a De. xxvii. 16; Ju.
i. 28.

b Origen mentions
as a trad.
among the Jews,
that Canaan first
saw the shame
of his g. father
and told it to
his father.
Hence C.
inherited the curse.
This solves the
diff. that is found
in H. sinning and
C. being cursed.
This view is now
adopted by many
(see *Speaker's
Commentary*).

c Is. lx. 3-5; Mal.
i. 11; Ep. ii. 19.

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the sons of
Japheth

Note the similarity
of name, Japheth and Japetus,
whom the Gks. and
Roms. regarded as
the first of human
race. Gomer is
traced in the
Cimmerians of
Gomer, and in the
Welsh *Cymri*. Madai
is traced in the
Medes. Javan is
identified with the
Ionian race.

the sons of
Ham

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a Gen. xi. 9; Mi. v. 6.

b The Arabs still call the principal mounds of ruins *Nimrod*.

Nimrod, "a hunting giant," LXX. "a terrible tyrant," Arab.; "a warlike giant," Syr. "He was a hunter of the children of men in their languages, and he said unto them, depart for the religion of Shem, and cleave unto the institutes of *Nimrod*." — *Jerus. Targ*

"Proud *Nimrod* first the bloody race began, A mighty hunter — and his prey was man."

"When a man stands in no awe of the disgrace which attends bad actions, and has no concern for his character, there is no way of transgression in which that man may not walk. With a countenance clothed in shamelessness and audacity, he easily and naturally proceeds from one bad action to the most profligate attempts." — *Procopius*.

"Man is a jewel robbed of its precious stone, with only the costly setting left, and even of that we must exclaim, How is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!" — *Henry Gill*.

the sons of Shem

'A wise man shall not be deprived of pleasure even when death should summon him; forasmuch as he has attained the delightful end of the best life — depart-

and actions rather than of bodily stature. (9) **mighty** . . Lord, *etc.*, not the pursuit of game in the forest, but the violent invasion of the persons and rights of men. (10) **beginning**, foundation, nucleus. **kingdom**, *lit.* ruling, rather than territorial limits. **Babel**,^a see on xi. 9. **Erech** (*length*) prob. the *Orcha* of Ptolemy, now *Wurka*; 82 ms. S.; 43 ms. E. fr. Babylon on the Euphrates. **Accad** (*fortress*), site, as yet undetermined. **Calneh** (*fort of god Anu*), prob. the mod. *Niffer*, ab. 60 ms. SSE. of Babylon. **Shinar**, see on xi. 2. (11) **Out** . . **Asshur**, *lit.* "he [prob. *Nimrod* is meant] went out into Assyria." **Nineveh**,^b (*habitation of Nin or Ninus*), the capital of Assyria, opposite Mosul, on the Tigris, afterwards became the largest and most flourishing city of the ancient world (Jon. i. 1, 3, iv. 11). **Rehoboth** (*wide places*), prob. now *Rahabeh malik*. **Calah** (*old age*), site uncertain. (12) **Resen** (*a bridle*), perh. now *Selamiyeh*. **same** . . city, perh. it included Nineveh, Rehoboth, Calah, and Resen, as four places contiguous and called under one name — **Nineveh**. — *Knobel*.

Nimrod. — *Nimrod* was — I. A great hunter. This he began with, and for this he became famous. By this he became a prince. II. A great ruler. "The beginning of his kingdom was Babel." III. A great builder. He built **Nineveh**. — *M. Henry*.

Table of descendants of Ham and their countries. — I. CUSH, the Ethiopic and mid-Southern Arabs; fr. whom — 1. *Nimrod*, first K. of Shinar; 2. *Seba*, Meröe; 3. *Havilah*; the Chaulotæi in S. Arab.; 4. *Subtha*; Sabota in S. Arab. 5. *Ragma*; Rhegma in S. E. of Arabia, or Pers. Gulf, fr. whom — (1) *Sheba*, a tribe in S. Arab.; (2) *Dedan*, island in Pers. Gulf; 6. *Sabtecha*: E. of Ethiopia. II. MIZRAIM, the Egyptians; fr. whom — 1. *Ludim*; and 2. *Ananin*; African tribes; 3. *Lehabim*, Libyans; 4. *Naphtuchim*, on Lake of Sirbo; 5. *Pathrusim*, Pathros; 6. *Cashuhim*, the Colchians, fr. whom — (1) *Philistim*, Philistines; (2) *Caphthorim*, Cretans. III. *Phut*, the Mauritians. IV. CANAAN: fr. Sidon to S. end of Dead Sea; fr. whom — 1. *Sidonians*, Phœnicia; 2. *Hittites*, S. of Jerusalem; 3. *Jebusites*, in and around Jerus; 4. *Amorites*, E. and W. of Dead S.; 5. *Girgasites*; 6. *Hivites*, valleys of Lebanon; 7. *Arkites*; foot of Lebanon; 8. *Sinites*, country of Lebanon; 9. *Arvadites*, Isle of Aradus; 10. *Zemarites*, town of Sinyra; 11. *Hamathites*, town of Epiphania.

13-20. (13) *Ludim* (fr. *strife*); *Ananaim* (*responding waters*); *Lehabim* (*flames*); *Naphtuhim* (*border people*). (14) *Philistim* (*strangers*); *Caphthorim* (*chaplets*). (15) *Sidon* (*fisher*); *Heth* (*fear*). (16) *Jebusite* (*thresher*); *Amorite* (*mountaineer*); *Girgasites* (*dwellers in loamy soil*). (17) *Hivites* (*villagers*); *Arkite* (*fugitive*); *Sinite* (*dwellers in the marsh*). (18) *Arvadite* (*wanderer*); *Zemarite* (*hill man*); *Hamathite* (*fortress dweller*). afterwards . . abroad, they first dwelt in the neighborhood of Sidon. (19) **border**, inhabited region. **Sidon**, their first possession. **Gerar** (*a lodging place*), see on xx. 1, 2. **Gaza** (*the strong*). **Sodom** (*burning or vineyard*); **Gomorrha** (*submersion*); **Ahmah** (*red earth*); **Zeboim** (*roes*); **Lasha** (*fissure*). (20) **these** . . nations, *i. e.* those included in vss. 6-20.

A mighty hunter. — I have thought if it is such a grand thing and such a brave thing to clear wild beasts out of a country, if it is not a better and braver thing to hunt down and destroy those great evils of society that are stalking the land with fierce eye and bloody paw, and sharp tusk and quick spring. I have wondered if there is not such a thing as Gospel archery, by which those who have been flying from the truth may be captured for God and heaven. The archers of olden times studied their art. They were very precise in the matter. But how clumsy we are about religious work. How little skill and care we exercise. How often our arrows miss the mark. — *Talmage*.

the sons of Shem

21-23. (21) **Shem** . . **Eber**, *i. e.*, the Hebrews. **Shem's** great honor that he was the ancestor of the Abrahamic race. **brother** . . **elder**, ambiguous; but prob. it is "Shem, the elder bro. of Japheth." (22) *The children of Shem*: **Elam** (*age*); **Asshur** (*a step*); **Arphaxad** (*stronghold of the Chaldees*); **Lud** (*strife*); **Aram** (*high region*). (23) **Uz** (*fertile land*); **Hul** (*circle*); **Gether** (*gregs*); **Mash** (*drawn out*).

Table of the descendants of Shem and their countries. — I. ELAM, Persians. II. ASSHUR, Assyrians. III. ARPHAXAD, N. part of Assyria; fr. whom *Shelah*; fr. whom *Eber* (fr. whom the Hebrews); from him (1) *Peleg* and (2) *Joktan*, fr. him the Arab tribes of vss. 26-29. IV. LUD, prob. Ethiopia.

V. ARAM, Syria and Mesopotamia; fr. whom — 1. *Uz*, N. of Arabia Deserta; 2. *Hul*, prob. Cælo-Syria; 3. *Gether*, unknown; 4. *Mash*, part of Gordioean Mts. (Mons. Masius), N. of Nisibis.

24, 25. (24) *Salah* (*sending forth*); *Eber* (*passing over*); prob. these were the first to cross the gt. rivers on way to Mesopotamia, and thence to Canaan. (25) *Peleg*^a (*division*), for . . divided, he was born at the time that the Shemites divided and occupied their dif. lands; hence his name. Some hold that the division here spoken of was the dispersion when tongues were confused at Babel, others (Delitsch) hold that it was an earlier division. *Joktan* (*who is made small*). He is prob. identical with the *kahtan*, father of the Arabians.

Man the subject of circumstances.—It is a painful fact, but there is no denying it, the mass are the tools of circumstances: thistle-down on the breeze, straw on the river, their course is shaped for them by the currents and eddies of the stream of life, but only in proportion as they are *things*, not men and women. Man was meant to be not the slave, but the master of circumstance; and in proportion as he recovers his *humanity*, in every sense of the great *obsolete* word,—in proportion as he gets back the spirit of manliness, which is self-sacrifice, affection, loyalty to an idea beyond himself, a God above himself, so far will he rise *above* circumstances, and wield them at his will. —*Kingsley*.

26—32. (26) *Almodad* (? *extension*); *Sheleph* (*selected*); *Hazamaveth* (*court of death*); *Jerah* (*the moon*). (27) *Hadoram* (*noble honor*); *Uzal* (? *wanderer*); *Diklah* (*palm-tree*). (28) *Obal* (*bare of leaves*); *Abimael* (*father of night*). (29) *Ophir* (*abundance*); *Jobab* (*a desert*). these . . *Joktan*, fr. vs. 26-29. (30) *Mesha*, the seaport *Musa* or *Muza*; ^b or else the island *Mesene*.^c *Sephar*, now *Zafâr* or *Dhafari*.^d (31) These . . nations, i. e. those included in vs. 22-30. (32) These . . nations, i. e. those included in vs. 1-31. and . . flood, as explained by the tables under vs. 1-23.

Man is the central figure in Scripture.—The Bible differs, in one important feature, from the sacred books of other nations. They lose themselves in endless theories and speculations concerning the origin of the material universe. They have minute and elaborately-detailed systems of cosmogony, geography, and astronomy. But the Bible commits itself to no detailed description of the laws and phenomena of nature. One short chapter in it is deemed sufficient to tell us that God made the heavens and the earth. The world is only considered as it is, a habitation for man, and the platform on which the Supreme works out His great designs. Man is regarded in Scripture not merely as part of the furniture of this planet, but as lord of all. Everything is put under his feet. Hence the sacred records describe a God of men rather than a God of nature. They give a history of man as distinct from nature. Infidels have made this characteristic of revelation a matter of reproach; but all who know how rich God's purpose towards mankind is, glory in it. — *Leale*.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

1-4. (1) *one* . . speech, *lit.* of one lip and one (kind of) words. Many commentators have held that the primitive language of the Semites was Heb., but it is utterly untenable. Most recent researches in philology show that all the languages of the earth grew from a common stock to which the Hebrew bore a close affinity. (2) *they* . . east,^e eastward, *lit.* on the sides of the east. *Shinar*, (*land of two rivers*), *Babylonia*.^f (3) *brick*, the country rich in brick-making material, but no stone. and . . thoroughly, *lit.* burn them with a burning.^g *slime*, bitumen, asphalt.^h Layard ("Nineveh and Babylon") says the bricks have been so firmly united that it is impossible to detach one from the other. (4) *go to, lit.* give. Idiomatic expression. *city*,ⁱ under the influence of ambition, and dissatisfied with simple patriarchal life, they wished to found a great monarchy, of wh. this city was to be the capital. *tower* . . heaven, i. e. an exceedingly high tower,^j a hyperbolic expression. This interpretation exonerates them from that stupendous folly of attempting to scale the heavens. name, let us become famous, and found a political power. *lest* . . earth, wh. was the divine intention. The builders did not dread another flood, as Josephus states, but the execution of the Divine purpose intimated in vs. 9.

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ing like a guest full and well satisfied; having received life upon trust, and duly discharged that office, he acquits himself at departing."—*Ep-curus*.

a "He was called Phaleg, bec. he was born at the dispersion of the nations to their sev. countries; for Phaleg among the Hebrews, sign. division."—*Josephus*.

b Bochart.

c *Michaelis Rosenmüller, Gesenius, Kalisch*.

d In mod. Arabic-Isfor, a series of villages nr. shore of Indian Ocean, in prov. of Hadramant. Many ruins and a lofty mt. called *Esh-Shihir*.

"It is only our mortal duration that we measure by visible and measurable objects; and there is nothing mournful in the contemplation for one who knows that the Creator made him to be the image of his own eternity."

the tower of Babel

e If Armenia was their first home, they must first have journeyed S. E., and then have turned from the E. to Shinar.

f Described by Herodotus as a great plain.

g Usual method sun-drying; both kinds found in the ruins here.

h Anc. writers (*Pliny*, etc.) descr. a lake nr. Babylon, with bitumen wh. floated on the surface.

i Da. iv. 30; Ps.

xlix. 11-13.

j De. ix. 1.

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"There, doubtless, is something of rebellion against God's purposes implied in their determination. He would have them spread over the whole earth, while they resolved to be gathered in one spot."—*Alford*.

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the confusion of tongues

a "We are not to suppose locomotion in Him who is Omnipresent; but by such sentences as these, in which the Holy Spirit condescends to man's weakness, He teaches us that God does not punish without examination."—*Wordsworth*.

b Ps. ii. 1; xxxiii. 10; ii. 4.

c Ps. xcii. 9; Lu. i. 51.

d Acc. to the Gks. the city was named aft. *Behus*, its mystic founder. Sinners sometimes imagine that God is far from the world, but there are times when the conviction is forced upon them that He is near.—*Hom. Com.*

the line of Shem

e Note the alteration in length of life bef. and aft. the flood.

f "Many of the names in these genealogies are significant, and were prob. given to their bearers late in life, or even historically aft. their death."—*Speaker's C.*

the line of Eber

g Ge. x. 21, 24, 25; Nu. xxiv. 24; i. Ch. i. 18, 19, 25. Lu. iii. 35. LXX. and Lu. iii. 35.

The tower of Babel.—Here we observe: (1) Self-reliance; (2) A desire for self-preservation; (3) Ambition—a city, a tower, and a name. Several practical thoughts are suggested by these words. I. Carefully examine the quality and meaning of every new plan of life. II. Beware of the sophism that heaven helps them that help themselves. III. Regulate ambition by the divine will. IV. If we make great plans let us make them in God's name, and carry them out in God's strength. See the folly of planning without God. V. Learn what is meant by all the unfinished towers that we see around us.

—*Parker*.

One language.—A Hindu and a New Zealander met upon the deck of a missionary ship. They had been converted from their heathenism, and were brothers in Christ; but they could not speak to each other. They pointed to their Bibles, shook hands, and smiled in each other's faces; but that was all. At last a happy thought occurred to the Hindu. With sudden joy, he exclaimed: "Halleluia!" The New Zealander, in delight, cried out "Amen!" These two words, not found in their own heathen tongues, were to them the beginning of "one language and one speech."—*Anec. illus. of Old Test.*

5-9. (5) Lord . . see,^a anthropomorphic; after the manner of men, and an accommodation to our conceptions. which . . men, some have inferred that this has reference to the sons of Ham, as distinguished from the pious descendants of Noah, but it is hardly probable that such a distinction is limited at, when we read the narrative as a whole. (6) this . . do, this is the beginning of their doings. now . . them, nothing will be unattempted, though its nature pronounce it wrong, if they are allowed to succeed here. (7) and . . language,^b and so destroy this political conspiracy. This refers to families and nations, not to individuals. The latter interpretation would make society impossible. (8) Lord . . earth,^c made their dispersion unavoidable. they . . city, they were no longer one people: prob. they were overwhelmed with fear also. This does not preclude the possibility of the Babylonians having finished the city. (9) Babel,^d (confusion).

The confusion of tongues.—Here we have—I. A record of a past event. 1. Ambition satisfying itself; 2. Ambition justly punished. II. A lesson for the present. 1. Are there no towers that you are building, no plans that you are forming without God? Take care, for such will be overthrown. 2. Is there no wrong ambition in your heart? Crush it at once, lest punishment come upon you.—*H. J. Browne*.

God's inspection.—Almighty God Himself came down to see what the children of men were doing, and when He comes down (a phrase which is used to accommodate Himself to our methods of expression), nothing can escape the penetration of His eye. He looks at our day-books, ledgers, and memorandum books, to see how we are building the tower of our life; He visits our country residences and palatial buildings for the purpose of trying their foundations; He looks into all the building of our fortune, that He may see whether our gains have been honestly secured.—*J. Parker*.

10-13. (10) these . . Shem, etc., family tree, etc. carried down to Abram: and including duration of life.^e Here we seem to have evidence of another document in a measure duplicating x. 21, ff. (11) Arphaxad . . flood, the first-born of Shem aft. the flood. "After the flood" may = aft. the begin. of flood. (12, 13) Salah,^f = extension. Acc. to Knobel there is a place of this name in N. E. Mesopotamia.

Bad men unfitted for service.—During the course of my life, I have acquired some knowledge of men and manners, in active life, and amidst occupations the most various. From that knowledge, and from all my experience, I now protest that I never knew a man that was bad, fit for any service that was good. There was always some disqualifying ingredient mixing with the compound, and spoiling it. The man seems paralytic on that side: his muscles there have lost their tone and natural properties, they cannot move. In short, the accomplishment of anything good is a physical impossibility in such a man. He could not if he would, and it is not more certain than that he would not if he could, do a good or virtuous action.—*Burke*.

14-19. (14) Eber,^g or Heber,^h whence the name,—Hebrew. (18) Reu (friend, i. e. of God), or Ragau,ⁱ traceable in Roha, the Arab name of Edessa in N. W. Mesopotamia.

Difference in men.—The difference of men is very great; you would scarce think them to be of the same species; and yet it consists more in the affections than the intellect. For, as in the strength of the body two men shall be of an equal strength, yet one shall appear stronger than the stronger, because he exercises and puts out his strength, while the other will not stir nor strain himself:—so it is in the strength of the brain; the one endeavors, and strains, and labors, and studies; the other sits still and is idle, and takes no pains, and therefore he appears so much the inferior.—*Selden.*

20-26. (20) *Serug* (*shoot, branch*) or *Saruch*.^a There is a place called by the Arabs *Sarug*, ab. a day N. of Haran. (22) *Nahor*^b (*snorting*) or *Nachor*. (24) *Terah* (*station*), who dwelt at *Ur*, and said to have been an idolator.^c (26) *Abram* (*father*), not the eldest, but named first bec. of superior dignity.^d *Nahor*, not *Nahor* of vs. 22. Fr. this N. came *Rebekah*, *Leah* and *Rachel*. *Haran* (*mountaineer*), the father of *Lot*, *Milcah*, and *Iscah*.

Race of man.—The human race may be compared to an immense temple ruined, but now rebuilding, the numerous compartments of which represent the several nations of the earth. True, the different portions of the edifice present great anomalies; but yet the foundation and the corner-stone are the same. All spring from the same level, and all should be directed to the same end. The walls of the building have been thrown down, and the stones scattered by a great earthquake; yet a mighty Architect has appeared, and His powerful hand is gradually raising the temple walls. The only difference between one side of the edifice and the other is, that here the restoration is somewhat further advanced, while there it is less forward.—*Merle d'Aubigné.*

27, 28. (27) these . . *Terah*, the hist. now passes to T., since his descs. have to be dealt with. *Lot* (*covering, veil*), nephew of *Abram*. (28) *Ur* . . *Chaldees*, Heb. *be-Oor Kasdim*. Site of *Ur* (*light*) uncertain; by some^e said to be *Edessa*, i. e. the mod. *Orfah*: by others^f *Mugeyer* or *Umghier*, where there are yet ruins. *Chaldea* was the S. part of *Babylonia*.

The Messiah's ancestry.—God calmly and resolutely proceeds with His purpose of mercy. In the accomplishment of this eternal purpose He moves with all the solemn grandeur of long-suffering patience. One day is with Him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Out of *Adam's* three sons He selects one to be the progenitor of the seed of the woman. Out of *Noah's* three sons He again selects one. And now out of *Terah's* three is one to be selected. Among the children of this one He will choose a second one, and among his a third one before He reaches the holy family. Doubtless this gradual mode of proceeding is in keeping with the hereditary training of the holy nation, and the due adjustment of the Divine measures for at length bringing the fullness of the Gentiles in the covenant of everlasting peace.—*T. H. Leale.*

29-32. (29) *Sarai* (*my princess*), half-sister to A.^h i. e., dau. of *Terah* by ano. wife, and 10 years younger than A.ⁱ *Milcah* (*queen*), g.-mother of *Rebekah*.^j *Iscah* (? *covering*), acc. to Jewish trad. ano. name for *Sarai*, one borne before she left *Chaldea*, the other after. This would seem to be corroborated by the following verse. The whole matter, however, is conjecture. (30) *Sarai*, etc., now stated to prepare for following hist. (31) and . . *Chaldees*, A. received the call in *Ur*,^k and seems to have persuaded his father, etc., to accom. him. . . to . . *Canaan*, this the Divine intention; prob. A. knew not the destination at this time.^l *Haran* (*parched, dry*), or *Charran*.^m (32) *Terah* . . *Haran*, prob. ab. 60 yrs. aft. A. set out thence for *Canaan*.—*Alford.*

How far men may go in the way to Canaan, and yet, like Terah, die in Haran.—1. We may be visited with many convictions, and even with great terrors, and yet fall short of a state of grace. 2. We may be conscious of tender religious emotions—sorrow, desire, joy—and yet fall short of real grace. 3. We may form many good resolutions, and yet be dwelling in *Haran*. 4. We may actually enter on the work of reformation, and proceed a certain length in it, and yet fall short. Nothing will avail without a change of heart—"a new heart" must be given us, "a new spirit" put within us.—*H. Gray.*

Abraham.—St. Paul tells us that *Abraham* went forth "not knowing whither he went." Here it is stated that the "land of *Canaan*" was the

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^a Lu. iii. 35. Suidas and others ascribe to him the deification of dead benefactors of mankind.

^b There was ano. N., i. e., *Abram's* bro., the g.-son of this N.

^c Lu. iii. 34.

^d Jos. xxiv. 2, 15

^e cf. vs. 32, with xli. 4.

Terah and Haran

^f Stanley, *Jewish Ch.* i. 7; also anc. trad.

^g Rawlinson. The name of *Uruk*, a king (230 B. C.), has been found on the bricks. The temple was dedicated to the moon-god *Hurki*; hence perh. its name.

Abram leaves Ur

^h Ge. xx. 12. mar. with ur. relatives was usual in *Terah's* fam., xxiv. 3, 4; xxviii. 1, 2.

ⁱ Ge. xvii. 17.

^j Ge. xxii. 20, 23.

^k Ge. xv. 7; Ne. ix. 7; Ac. vii. 2.

^l Ac. vii. 3; He. xi. 8.

^m Ac. vii. 2, 4, said to be the *Carrae* of the Greeks where *Crassus* fell, defeated by the *Parthians* (*Plut. Vic. Cras.*)

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Long and silent trials are often the portion of the greatest saints. — *Hom. Com.*

object and purpose of this migration. So it was in the Divine destination, but not as a definite resolve of their own. The historian evidently writes from the standpoint of subsequent facts. They went forth under the leading of Providence, having just light enough for each successive portion of the journey—the end not yet revealed. Faith asks not to see the whole of its course spread before it, but only light enough to take the next step. He who gives that faith will take care of the whole course, and secure the success of the end. *They came to Haran and dwelt there.* Broken down with fatigue, Terah halts for a season at Haran to recruit his wasted powers. Filial piety, no doubt, kept Abram watching over the last days of his venerable parents, who, probably, still clung to the fond hope of reaching the land of his adoption. Hence, they all abode in Haran for the remainder of the five years from the date of Abram's call to leave his native land. — *Murphy.*

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CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

Abram and Lot leave Haran

a Lu. xiv. 26, 33.

b Ge. xxii. 16-18; Mi. vii. 20; Ga. iii. 14.

c Ac. iii. 25, 26; Ga. iii. 8.

d He. xi. 8-10.

"The life of some men is very much like a day in November, foggy, chilly, and damp until the afternoon, when it clears off, becomes bright and pleasant, and the sun sets without a cloud, throwing his golden light over the broad expanse of the heavens; an evidence that he is shining on though beyond the ken of mortals this side of the globe." — *John Eate.*

The blessed life is that into which God only can lead us. — *M. G. Pearse.*

The call to religion is not a call to be better than your fellows, but be better than yourself. Religion is relative to the individual. — *Beecher.*

1-4. (1) now . . Abram, in Ur. see on xi. 31. get . . kindred,^a Heb. "go for thyself," go for thine own advantage. This call to A. alone, did not prevent the others fr. going with him. unto . . thee, A. knew not the land when he set out. It was a superb act of faith to go thus ignorantly forward, depending entirely upon God. (2) I . . thee,^b abundant increase or multiplication of favors. and . . great, no man is more universally honored in the East. Christians, Mahomedans and Gentiles revere the memory of the old Patriarch. thou . . blessing, not only was Abram to be blessed, but he was to be a source of blessing. The Lord here grants to him the delightful prerogative of dispensing good to others; through the Jews we have a Bible, a Saviour, the Gospel, etc. (3) thee . . blessed,^c the ref. is to Xt., altho rationalistic writers, like Knobel, say it is absurd to find here a ref. to Xt. (4) departed : i. e. fr. Haran, the force of the old call still operating on him. Lot, "God had not intended that Lot should join Abram on his journey. This is sufficiently manifest from his later history. But God allowed it, probably, from condescension to Abraham's attachment to his family." — *Kurtz.* Abram . . Haran,^d an old man with his childless wife setting fr. home, and walking by faith.

Conversion of Abraham. — A legend comes down to us of the story of Abraham's conversion which is very beautiful, and certainly may be true — that as he lay upon the mountain height amidst his flock at night, there rose a star so brilliant and beautiful in the great arch of heaven that Abraham was filled with the glory of it, and said : "This is my god ; this will I worship." But, lo ! as the still hours of the night passed by, the star sank down and was gone. And he said : "Of what avail is it that I worship my god if it die out in the darkness and I see it no more?" Then above the hills there rose the moon and flooded all the earth with silvery light, and quenched the stars. And Abraham hailed it, saying : "Thou art fairer and greater than the star, thou art my god, for thou art worthier." But lo, it too hastened away and sank in the darkness. And Abraham cried : "If my gods forsake me, then am I as others that do err !" Soon rose the sun, in radiant splendor. It scattered the darkness and his doubts. And he said : "Thou, thou art my god, greater than moon and star. I will worship thee." But at even the sun sank, and like the moon and star, it too was gone. Then was Abraham alone ; but as he gazed into heaven there came the thought of One behind the star, the moon, the sun — the Maker of them all. And Abraham cried : "O my people, I am clear of these things ; I turn my face to Him who hath made the heavens and the earth ; He only is my God." — *Mark Guy Pearse.*

5-7. (5) souls . . Haran, they must have been here many yrs. Perh. *Eliezer* was one of these souls (see on xi. 32). Children born ; servants hired. (6) and . . through, traveling S. *Siehem*, the place aft. so called, prob. the Sychar of aft. times, now Nablous fr. the Gk. *Νεαπολις*, i. e., new city). unto . . Moreh, *lit.*, to the oak (or terebinth) of Moreh. M. was perh. the name of a person, the owner of the land. The rugged and mountainous nature of the country forbids the idea of a plain there. *Canaanite . . land*, this fact exalts an idea of A.'s faith ; an anticipation of the character of Israel's future enemies. (7) unto . . land,^e the Almighty gradually unfolds His plan ; first He *shows* ; now He *gives*. and . . Lord, evidence of faith and gratitude ; thus he formally took possession.

Abram enters Canaan

e Ge. xxviii. 13; Ga. iii. 16; Ge. xvii. 8; xxvi. 3; xv. 8.

"A. reigned in Damascus, being come with an army fr. the country beyond Babylon called the land of

The first halting-place in the Holy Land. — Abram had now to leave Mesopotamia, and to cross the "Great river," the Euphrates. This separated him entirely from his old home, and hence the Canaanites gave to him the name of the "Hebrew" — the man who had crossed the river — the emigrant from Mesopotamia. He now passed through the great Syrian desert; and, though his route is not mentioned in the sacred narrative, we may credit the tradition that he tarried at Damascus, since Eliezer, "the steward of his house," was a native of that place. Quitting Damascus, Abram crossed the Jordan, and, entering the Holy Land, passed into the valley of Shechem or Sichem. Thus Sichem became his first halting-place in the Holy Land. — *Smith's O. T. Hist.*

8-10. (8) removed . . mountain, *lit.*, he plucked up (his tent pegs, and went mountainwards, not to any particular mountain. Beth-el, *i. e.*, house of God, called at this time *Luz*; ^a now *Beitan* : ab. 18 ms. S. of Sechem. Hai, a royal city in Canaan, the first taken by the Israelites after entering the promised land, then called Ai. (9) Abram . . south, going through the length of the land. (10) famine, another trial of faith. Egypt, the great granary of anc. times.^b sojourn not, to live there.

Lessons from Abraham. — 1. Faith maketh souls dwell in tents here below, and be still movable for heaven. 2. Faith causes souls to adhere unto and make profession of the true religion of God in all places. 3. Faith maketh saints true sojourners below, to be still taking up their stakes at God's beck. 4. To all points, east and west and south, God orders the motions of the saints to leave some savor of His truth everywhere. — *G. Hughes.*

Mountain devotions. — In a meeting to pray for the president's recovery, one of his class-mates rose and said, "Twenty-six years ago to-night, and at this very hour, our class were on the top of Greylock to spend the night of the fourth of July. As we were about to lie down to sleep, Garfield took out his pocket Testament and said, 'I am in the habit of reading a chapter every night at this time with my mother. Shall I read aloud?' All assembled; and when he had read, he asked the oldest member of the class to pray. And there, in the night, on the mountain top, we prayed with him for whom we have now assembled to pray." — *Dr. Prime.*

11-13. (11) Egypt, despotic government, licentious people. said . . Sarai, as she lived to 127 yrs. and was now 60, she was in middle life. fair . . upon, light in complexion, and therefore marked among the dusky people of Egypt, who would be thus attracted to her. (12) say . . wife, *etc.*, "the Arab life of A. naturally made him wary of danger." (13) sister, she was indeed his step-sister, but this was an untruth since it was intended to convey the impression that she was nothing more than a sister. It is well for us to remember that Abram is not to be measured by 19th cent. standards. The deception in this case might have been intended to protect his wife's chastity (see ff.) soul . . thee, *i. e.*, my life shall be spared when it is seen that I am only thy brother. "No defense can be offered for a man who, merely through dread of danger to himself, tells a lie, risks his wife's chastity, puts temptation in the way of his neighbors, and betrays the charge to which the Divine favor had summoned him." — *H. Dylkes.*

Double-mindedness. —

See the professor laboring, but in vain,
The world and cross together to sustain :
The globe is in his right hand dexterous found,
His left the cross, drags sluggish on the ground.
In vain for him appears the narrow way,
The world has led him from the path astray:
In vain for him shines forth the heavenly light,
The world has risen and obscured his sight;
Two minds he has, both he may call his own,
Sometimes they lead him up, and sometimes down;
Like doubtful birds, that hop from spray to spray,
His will is never at one certain stay;
Too late he learns with deep regret and pain,
He loses both who more than one would gain. — *W. Holmes.*

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the Chaldeans. But not long after leaving this country with his people, he migrated into the Land of Canaan, wh. is now called Judaea." *Nicholaus of Damascus (Hist. Bk. iv.),* quoted by *Josephus*, who adds, "that the name of A. was, even in his days, famous in the country of the Damascenes."

Abram leaves Canaan for Egypt

^a Ge. xxviii, 16.
^b See on Ac. xxvii. 5-8.

Our life is nothing but, as it were, a web woven with interminglings of wants and favors, crosses and blessings, standings and fallings, combat and victory; therefore there should be a perpetual intercourse of praying and praising in our hearts. — *Sibbes.*

Abram's counsel to Sarai

^c Ge. xxvi. 7; xx. 11; Pr. xxix. 25; Ecc. vii. 20; Je. xvii. 7.

"We see in the conduct of Abr. an instance of one under the influence of deep religious feeling and true faith in God, but yet with a conscience imperfectly enlightened as to many moral duties, and when leaning to his own understanding suffered to fall into great error and sin." — *Speaker's Com.*

R. P. Buddicom, Friend with God, i. 306; N. Alexander; Hist. Eccles., i. 368; Dr. Kitto, Bibl. Ill. i. 188.

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Sarai introduced to Pharaoh

"Happiness is not the end of life; character is. This world is not a platform where you will hear Thalberg piano playing. It is a piano manufactory, where are dust and shavings and boards, and saws and files and rasps and sand-papers. The perfect instrument and the music will be hereafter."—*Beecher*.

Live so that when death comes you may embrace like friends, not encounter like enemies.—*P. Quarle*.

Pharaoh sends Abram away

a Ps. cv. 13, 14.

"The candor of the historian is shown by his exhibiting in such strong relief, the dissimulation of Abram, as contrasted with the straightforward integrity of Pharaoh."—*Speaker's Commentary*.

"God had reproved Pharaoh, and now Pharaoh reproves Abram. It is a sad thing that saints should do that for which they should justly fall under the reproach of the wicked."—*Trapp*.

Abram returns to Canaan

b Ge. xxiv. 35; Ps. cxli. 1-3; De. viii. 18; Pr. iii. 9-10; x. 22.

c Ps. cxlv. 18; xxvi. 8; cxvi. 2, 17.

"Wherefore doth the Lord make your cup run over, but that other men's lips might taste the liquor?"—*T. Secker*.

14-16. (14) beheld . . fair, A.'s suspicions were correct. (15) princes, lords of the court. Pharaoh, not a prop. name, but a title as *Cæsar* among the Romans, or *Czar* among mod. Russ. woman . . house, with the intention of making S. one of the occupants of his harem; whether or not the plagues (vs. 17) stayed his purpose we cannot say. (16) entreated . . sake, etc., to compensate him for the loss of his sister. But how worthless all his gifts compared with her whom Pharaoh had taken from him.

Abram's sin.—Consider —I. The temptation is no ordinary one. Pharaoh was powerful; Abram was weak. II. He sins through unbelief—want of trust in God. III. His scheme avails him but little. His policy overreaches itself. IV. God interferes at last to deliver him.—*Candlish*.

Talmudic story about Abraham.—The Talmudists say that Abraham, in traveling to Egypt, brought with him a chest. At the custom-house the officers exacted the duties. Abraham would have readily paid them, but desired they would not open the chest. They first insisted on the duties for clothes, which Abraham consented to pay; but then they thought by his ready acquiescence that it might be gold. Abraham consents to pay for gold. They now suspect it might be silk. Abraham was willing to pay for silk, or more costly pearls—in short, he consented to pay as if the chest contained the most valuable of things. It was then they resolved to open and examine the chest; and, behold as soon as the chest was opened, that great lustre of human beauty broke out which made such a noise in the land of Egypt—it was Sarah herself! The jealous Abraham, to conceal her beauty, had locked her up in this chest.

17-20. (17) plagues, *lit.*, strokes, blows. We know not the nature of this chastisement or how Pharaoh apprehended its cause: Josephus says the cause was revealed to him by one of his priests. because . . wife, God preserves whom men distress. (18) Pharaoh, the suddenness and unusual nature of the plagues led P. to connect them with S. (19) I . . wife, hence we learn that he had not. therefore . . wife, there was something honorable about Pharaoh's conduct, due perh. to the fact that great deference was paid in early Egypt to marriage vows. (20) and . . him,^a that A. might not be molested in any way. and . . had, including P's presents.

Abraham's sin.—The very manner of the deliverance is a rebuke to Abram himself. The man of whom he thought so ill has fairly the advantage of him, both in reproving and in requiting him. The dignified remonstrance of Pharaoh, speaking as one wronged—and in this particular instance, whatever might be his own sin, he was wronged, by the distrust which had been felt and the deceit which had been practiced—is fitted deeply to humble the patriarch. And when he saw the king so reasonable now—nay, when he even learned that if he had been told the truth at first he would have been as reasonable then—well might the patriarch be ashamed of his unnecessary and unprofitable falsehood, his weak and well-nigh fatal act of unbelief.—*Candlish*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-4. (1) up, to the Jew the direction toward Jerusalem from any quarter was always up. south, not toward Ethiopia, which lay S. of Egypt, but to a region in Canaan called "the South." (2) rich,^b "He has now to experience some of the dangers and evils of prosperity;" (3) journeys, encampments: he traveled like the nomads of the desert. Bethel, etc., see on xii. 8. (4) altar, the altar and the tent go together. there . . Lord,^c *i. e.* re-establishing public worship.

The wealth of Abraham.—As Abraham was very rich in silver and gold, as well as cattle, he was able to procure the luxuries of life as well as the modern Arab princes. This might partly be done by an exchange of articles as well as by purchase, for both of which purposes he had many opportunities. Dr. Russell tells us that the people of Aleppo are supplied with the greater part of their butter, their cheese, and their cattle for slaughter by the Arabs, Rushwans, or Turcomans, who travel about the country with their flocks and their herds, as the patriarchs did of old. The patriarchs doubtless supplied the ancient cities of Canaan in like manner with these things. Hamor expressly speaks of their trading with his people (Ge. xxxiv. 21).

5-7. (5) **Lot**, *etc.*, partook of A.'s prosperity; advantage of association with people of God. (6) **land**, impoverished by recent famine. **bear**, nourish, sustain. **so . . together**, they needed wider pasturage; a moral inability of the respective herdsmen to agree is also implied. (7) **strife . . cattle**, over zeal of servants in their master's interests. **Perizzite**, prob. nomads; villagers; as contrasted with Canaanites, who lived in walled cities. **dwelled . . land**,^a making fodder more dif. to obtain, and union more needful.

Avoiding quarrels. — When the Indian hurled his tomahawk unexpectedly in a moment of passion against the white man's breast, the surrounding red and white men did not think their white friend had incurred disgrace as, with astonishing agility, he stepped aside, caught the shining knife by its haft as it passed, and hurled it into the lake on whose borders they were standing. Abraham was no coward in disgrace when he avoided the contention as unseemly, untimely, and unnecessary. — *Adamson.*

8-13. (8) **Abram**, to whom the whole land belonged, and who might have exercised despotic sway. **let . . herdsmen**, love of peace. **for . . brethren**,^b the best of all reasons for peace. (9) **is . . thee?** *etc.*, he magnanimously waives his right to make the first selection. (10) **Lot . . Jordan**, with a look of greed: this is the first mention of Jordan, the only river in that region which flows thro. the entire summer. **watered**, important to pastoral people. **even . . Lord**, so called on acc. of its surpassing beauty and fruitfulness. **like . . Egypt**, whose fruitfulness is the result of the annual overflow of the Nile. **Zoar** (*smallness*), **Bela**,^c called Zoar by anticipation. Houbigant translates this verse: "Before the Lord had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, it was all, as thou goest to Zoar, well watered, even as the garden of the Lord, and as the land of Egypt." (11) **Lot . . east**, satisfied with his choice; his future trouble growing out of his covetousness. (12) **Abram . . Canaan**, in this case comprising the mountainous country extending from the rim of the Jordan valley to the Mediterranean. **Lot . . Sodom**,^d approaching the evil place, step by step. (13) **wicked . . exceedingly**,^e implying the most abominable, the vilest, the most unblushing wickedness.

Lot's choice. — I. His motive. 1. Not the expectation of better religious advantages. 2. Not the hope of benefiting others. 3. Evidently to advance his worldly interests. III. What he gained. A home in Sodom. IV. What he lost. 1. The helpful influence of Christian fellowship. 2. Moral tone in character. 3. His happiness. 4. His property; first in war, then by fire. 5. All of his adherents, and part of his own family, in the final destruction of Sodom. — *Hom. Review.*

Pitching our tents towards Sodom. — Alypius, a friend of St. Augustine, had a great horror of the bloody combats of gladiators, one of the favorite amusements of that age. Being urged by his companions to be a spectator of these brutal sports, he obstinately refused, and they drew him to the amphitheatre against his will. All took their seats, and the games began. Alypius resolutely shut his eyes that he might not witness the horrible spectacle. "Would to God," said Augustine, "he had also stopped his ears!" Hearing a piercing cry, curiosity got the better of him, and he incautiously opened his eyes to see what had happened. One of the gladiators had received a dreadful wound; but no sooner had Alypius discovered the bloody stream issuing from the wretch's side, than his finer sensibilities were blunted, and he joined in the shouts and exclamations of the noisy mob about him. From that moment he was a changed man — changed for the worse; not only attending such sports himself, but urging others to do likewise. — *J. N. Norton.*

14-18. (14) **after . . him**, a divine friend in a heathen land: a friend that sticketh closer than a brother: A. is the sole possessor. (15) **and . . ever**,^f a more correct rendering, in that A. never saw this promise fulfilled (Acts vii. 5), would be "To thee will I give it, even to thy seed." (16) **and . . earth**, *etc.*,^g Divine promises not scarcely but abundantly fulfilled. (17) **arise . . thee**, not to be understood literally, but that A. might survey his inheritance with the assurance that it was his. (18) **plain . . Mamre**, oak, or, oak-grove of Mamre, the Amorite, A.'s friend and ally.^h **Hebron**,ⁱ (*alliance*), also called *Kirjath-arba*,^k the city of *Arba*, the progenitor of the Anakim, a place 22 miles south of Jerusalem, on the way to Beersheba, a town of great antiquity (see Num. xiii. 22). Here A. and Sarai died.

Tent and altar. — Tent and altar still together! I. The altar is as essential

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the strife among the herdsmen

^a Ne. v. 9; Ph. ii. 14, 15.

"The writer would intimate that notwithstanding the check which the vicinity of these heathen tribes ought to have given to the spirit of dissension, it still broke forth."
— *Bush.*

Abram's generosity

^b Ma. v. 9; Ro. xii. 10-18; 1 Jo. iii. 18.

^c Ps. cvii. 33, 34; 1 Jo. ii. 15.

^d Ge. xiv. 2, 8; prob. at N. end of Dead Sea, and on E. side, and nr. Sodom.

^e Ps. xxvi. 5; 1 Co. xv. 33.

^f Ez. xvi. 49; 2 Pe. ii. 7, 8.

"Peace is love reposing. It is love on the green pastures, it is love beside the still waters. It is unclouded azure in a lake of glass; it is the soul which Christ has pacified, spread out in serenity and simple faith, and the Lord God, merciful and gracious smiling over it,"
— *Dr. J. Hamilton.*

the promise to Abram renewed

^g Ac. vii. 5.

^h Ge. xxii. 17; xxviii. 14; xxxii. 12; xv. 5; Is. xlviii. 18, 19; Ja. xxxiii. 22; He. xi. 12; Re. vii. 9.

ⁱ Ge. xiv. 13.

^j Nu. xlii. 22

^k Ge. xxiii. 2; Jos.

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xiv, 15; Ju. i. 10; now called *el-Khulil*, 22 ms. S. of Jerus., pop. 7000, of whom 700 Jews. A mile up the valley is a vast oak, said to be the tree of Mamre, under wh. A. pitched his tent.

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the rebellion of the kings of Siddim

a In LXX. called *Thargal* = great chief.

The Moham-medans have a custom of inscribing texts from the Koran upon their sword blades. They do their missionary work with this emblem of civil power.

the battle in the Vale of Siddim

b "These were the aboriginal inhabs. of Bashan, and prob. of the greater pt. of Canaan."—Porter, *Giant Cities*, ii. But *Miss Corbeaux* identifies them with the shepherd race that once held dominion in Egypt.

c Elevated desert track, now called *et-Tih*, which extends fr. wilderness of Shur in the W., to ridge of *Jebel-et-Tih* in S.

the capture of Lot

d Asphalt: hence the Dead S. was called *Lacus Asphaltites*, *i. e.*, Sea of Asphalt. *e* Fr. xlii. 20; Re. iii. 19.

to the man's soul as the tent to his body. The good man neglects neither body nor soul; his life shows how possible it is to have both tent and altar. II. Even Divine promises do not supersede individual worship. III. A man needs his altar as much after receiving the promises as before.—*Parker*.

The greatness of Abraham lay in this one thing, that he suffered God to show him the path of life. Each had land, but by the very method of procuring it the one gave up that which abideth, and the other secured it. The one man set the land first, and lost all. The other found all in God. Lot came out of Sodom stripped of his goods, and the man himself more empty and blind than when he had gone into it. This is the great lesson of this Book—that whilst we think of making a living, God is thinking of what our living makes us.—*M. G. Pearse*.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1-4. (1) and . . pass, after the separation of A. and Lot. *Amraphel* (? guardian of the gods). *Shinar*, see on xi. 2. *Arioch* (lion-like). *Ellasar* (the heap of Assyria), prob. *Larsa* or *Larancha*, betw. Ur and Erech; now *Senkereh*. *Chedorlaomer* (handful of sheaves). "Upon the bricks recently found in Chaldea there occurs the name of a king—*Kudurmapula*—which *Rawlinson* thinks may be the same, and especially as he is further distinguished by the title of 'Ravager of the West.' The latter part of the name—*laomer*—presents the difficulty; but this may be the Semitic translation of the original Hamite term *Mapula*."—*Jacobus*. *Elam* (? age, eternity), S. of Assyria, E. of Persia prop., down to and along Pers. gulf. *Tidal* (fear, veneration), nations, sev. nomad tribes. (2) *Bera* (? son of evil), *Birsha* (son of wickedness). *Shinab* (father's tooth). *Shemeber* (lofty flight). (3) *Siddim* (a depression full of stones), perh. the S. end of Dead S. (4) rebelled, perhaps refused to pay tribute, the usual sign of subjection.

The level of the Dead Sea.—As to the exact level of the Dead Sea, that is now satisfactorily ascertained by Captain Winslow's survey. On the 12th of March, 1865, the depression was found to be 1,292 feet below the level of the Mediterranean; but at some periods of the year it rises two feet six inches higher. He also learned from inquiry amongst the Bedouins, that during the early summer the level is lower by at least six feet. Everybody has heard how buoyant and how nauseous are the waters.—*Stoughton*.

5-9. *Rephaims* (? giants). *Ashteroth-Karnaim* (*Ashteroth* of the two horns, horned *Astarte*). *Zuzims* (restless). *Ham* (noisy, multitude). *Emims* (terrible men). *Shaveh Kiriathaim* (plain of *Kiriathaim*) *Kiriathaim* = double city. (6) *Horites* (dwellers in caves). *Seir* (bristly) Mt. range fr. S. of Palestine to head of Elanitic gulf of Red S. *El-paran* (the oak of *Paran*). *Paran* = cavernous region. (7) *En-mishpat* (fountain of judgment). *Kadesh* (sacred). *Amalekites* (a people that licks up), betw. Palestine, Idumea, and Mt. Sinai; on plateau now called *er-Rakhmah*. *Harzeon-tamar* (pruning of the palm), anc. name of *En-gedi*. (9) four . . five, these kings can have been little more than wild Arab chiefs.

Kenath.—We spent the afternoon, and some hours of the next day in exploring *Kenath*. Many of the ruins are beautiful and interesting. In no other city of Palestine did I see so many statues as there are here. Unfortunately they are all mutilated; but fragments of them—heads, legs, arms, torsos, with equestrian figures, lions, leopards, and dogs—meet one on every side. A colossal head of *Ashteroth*, sadly broken, lies before a little temple, of which probably it was once the chief idol. The crescent moon which gave the goddess the name *Carnaim* ("two-horned"), is on her brow. I was much interested in this fragment, because it is a visible illustration of an incidental allusion to this ancient goddess in the very earliest historic reference to Bashan. We read here that the kings of the East, on their way to Sodom, "smote the *Rephaims* in *Ashteroth-Karnaim*." May not this be the very city?—*Porter*.

10-12. (10) slime-pits, *i. e.* bitumen-pits; fell, were defeated. they . . mountain, *i. e.* to the mountainous country; of whom the K. of Sodom was one, vs. 17. (11) went . . way, laden with spoil. (12) Lot . . departed. the effect of companionship with the wicked.

The capture of Lot. — An example of the bitter fruits of war. 1. War is sometimes justifiable in its origin and objects. 2. Victory does not always favor those who seem to have the best cause. 3. Disastrous and terrible are the usual concomitants of war. 4. When war arises the innocent largely suffer with the guilty. — *Pul. Com.*

To the mountains for refuge. — People retired to the mountains anciently when defeated in war: they do so still. We find that those that remained of the armies of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled to the mountains, in the days of Abraham; so d'Arvieux tells us that the rebel peasants of the Holy Land, who were defeated while they were in that country by the Arabs, in the plain of Gonin, fled towards the mountains, whither the Arabs could not pursue them at that time. This flying to hills and mountains for safety is frequently alluded to in Scripture. — *Harmer.*

13-16. (13) one . . escaped, prob. of Lot's retainers. Hebrew (*the man from beyond*). First occurrence of the word Hebrews, undoubtedly meant for a patronymic, not as a descriptive term. Eshcol (*cluster*). Aner (*exile*). (14) brother, kin, relative. armed, R. V., "led forth." trained, catechised, instructed: prob. in ref. to sacred things.^a born . . house, the children of his own followers. three . . eighteen, wh. implies that he had a following of some 1,000 or more men, women, and children. Dan (*judge*), anc. Laish:^b nr. Paneas on way to Tyre; nr. the mound now called Tell-el-Kady. (15) divided . . night, divided his forces into two sections, so as to attack them from different quarters. Hobah (*hiding place*). left hand, i. e., to the N., that point being to the left of one who looks towards the sunrise. Damascus, the metropolis of Syria, having a population to-day of 150,000. (16) brought, etc., Abraham, the friend of God is a friend to man. A friend in need is a friend indeed.

The patriarch-warrior. — Consider: I. The causes of the expedition, which Abram headed, being fitted out. Love to Lot, his nephew. He returns evil for good. What a lesson is this to us. II. The manner of its conducting. Abram shows himself a prince in war, as he is a prince in peace. III. The success that crowned it. Lot is released. Learn — (1) War may sometimes be lawful; (2) God helps those who help themselves; (3) All success should be attributed to Him. — *Heathcote.*

Arab mode of attack. — Chardin tells us, "that the manner of their making war, and pillaging the caravans, is to keep by the side of them, or to follow them in the rear, nearer or farther off, according to their forces, which it is very easy to do in Arabia, which is one great plain, and in the night they silently fall upon the camp, and carry off one part of it before the rest are got under arms." He supposes that Abraham fell upon the camp of the four kings, that had carried away Lot, precisely in the same Arab manner, and by that means, with unequal forces, accomplished his design and rescued Lot. Gen. xiv. 15, he thinks, shows this. — *Harmer.*

17-20. (17) king . . return, Bera, or his successor, see on vs. 10. Shaveh (*a plain*) . . dale,^c a valley N. of Jerus. (18) Melchizedec^d (*king of righteousness*). "Everything combines to show that Melchizedec was a Canaanitish king who had retained the worship of the true God, and combined in his own person the offices of king and priest." — *Alford.* Salem,^e (*peace*), whether title or place not known, more prob. the former. priest, Heb. Cohen, the first use of the word. (19) blessed, in his function as priest.^f most . . God, Heb. El-Elion. This name for God occurs here for the first time. El signifies "strength." Perh. this describes the name of the Supreme Being as Melchizedec worshiped him. (20) which . . hand,^g he piously gives the praise to the God of battles. gave . . all,^h i. e., of all the spoil he had recovered; as a tribute of piety to God.

Melchizedec. — The typology connected with Melchizedec does not require that he himself should be regarded as any superhuman person, but merely exalts the human circumstances under which he appears into symbols of superhuman things. Everything combines to show that Melchizedec was a Canaanitish king who had retained the worship of the true God, and combined in his own person the offices of priest and king. It is to be observed that there is not used regarding him, nor does he use, the title of Jehovah, but that of the High God, a title found also in the question addressed (Mic. vi. 6) by the Moabitish king Balak to his prophet Balaam; but that Abram, in

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Lot, the man of God, would have his portion with the wicked in their prosperity, and now he must share in their calamities. — *Hom. Com.*

the rescue of Lot

a Ge. xviii. 19.

b Ju. xviii. 29.

"Not one solitary habitation is there [at Laish.] The fountain still pours forth its river of delicious water; but herds of black buffaloes wash and wallow in its crystal pools. You cannot even examine the site with satisfaction, so dense is the jungle of briars, thorns, and thistles which have overspread it." — *Thomson.*

Small force of man and great faith in God may do mighty things. *Hughes.*

Melchizedec meets and blesses Abram

c 2 S. xviii. 18.

d He. vii. 1-3.

e Ps. lxxvi. 2.

f 1 Ch. xxiii. 13 Nu. vi. 23, 27.

g Ps. cxlv. 1.

h He. vii. 2-4; Ge. xxviii. 22.

"Lo, here an instance of the communion of saints; Melchizedec doth all good offices to Abram (a believer, though a stranger), not of courtesy only and humanity, but of charity and piety." — *Trapp.*

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Abram
refuses any
share of the
spoil

a Da. xii. 7; Re.
x. 5, 6.

It was no strange
event when the
king of Sodom
prostrated himself
at Abram's feet.
And if all of God's
children were like
Abram, the world
would pay still
greater honor to
the Church of the
living God. The
saints are the
world's nobility.

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God appears
to Abram in
a vision

b Is. xli. 10; Ma. x.
28.

c Ps. xxvii. 1; Pr.
xxx. 5; Ps. xcl. 4;
v. 12; cxix. 114;
lxxxiv. 9, 11.

d The LXX. reads,
"Thy reward shall
be exceeding
great."

e Ac. vii. 5; Ps.
cxxxvii. 3.

"If Abram came
into Palestine by
the way of Da-
mascus. It is not
unlikely that he
should have taken
his principal retainer
from that
place."—*Spk. Com.*
The soul is surely
cased in peace
when it is folded
in the arms of
Jesus.—*De an*
Law.

His promise
to Abram
renewed

f He. xl. 12; De. x.
22.

g Ga. iii. 6; Ro. iv.
3-23; Ja. ii. 23.

answering the King of Sodom, probably in his presence, affirms the identity of his covenant-God Jehovah with the High God, possessor of heaven and earth, of whom Melchizedec had spoken. — *Alford*.

21—24. (21) give . . thyself. (22) lift. . Lord, *i. e.* I swear : anc. form of oath-taking : "form of solemn attestation in all nations." the . . earth, all I have belongs to Him. (23) take . . shoe-latchet, a proverbial expression signifying that he would not take for himself the most trivial thing. lest . . say, Abram could not condescend, as did Lot, to take anything from the impious men of Sodom. (24) save . . eaten, of the victuals rescued (*vs.* 11). let . . portion, A. will not enforce his rule on others ; liberty of conscience.

The believer's superiority to the world. — Manifested — I. By refusing to insist upon lawful rights and privileges. 1. When it brings them into dangerous association with the world ; 2. When they might appear to countenance sin. II. By refusing to acknowledge the world as the source of true greatness. III. By showing that they stand on a different footing and have better hopes than the children of this world. — *Hom. Com.*

Soldier and servant. — In olden days of feudalism and chivalry, stood a noble Saxon castle. One of the retainers was attracted by cries of distress towards a cliff, at whose base foamed a river. A glance disclosed to him a human form contending helplessly with the waters. Springing from rock to rock, the nimble forester reached the stream, where a stately tree bent half over its waters. Creeping along its trunk, he stooped down, caught and rescued the sinking man. Having brought him to the bank, he succeeded in restoring life to the rescued man, who turned out to be a neighboring baron. The baron gratefully offered a handful of gold to his deliverer. Drawing himself up, the manly forester pointed with his finger to the lordly castle where his lord dwelt, saying : "My master is able to reward me." Abram was the soldier and servant of the living God, and to him he looked for recompense — a stranger's wealth he could not accept. — *Adamson*.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

1—4. (1) word . . Lord, first occurrence of this remarkable phrase. vision, *Chaldee*, "in a prophecy." Prophets in the early ages were called seers. fear not, *b* timely encouragement ; might not the defeated kings rally ? shield, *c* protection. thy . . reward, *lit.* "thy reward exceeding abundantly." *d* Good works, wh. are of faith, have their reward. (2) childless, notwithstanding thy promise. steward . . Damascus, *lit.* the heir of my house, etc., Eliezer (*God his help*) : tho' a member of his household, he was a Gentile, as is implied by his native city. (3) behold, etc., my property and the covenant will descend not to a son, but to a dependent. (4) word . . came, etc., *e* Divine condescension : doubts removed : promise re-affirmed : a son and no other, the heir.

God a shield. — In the winter of 1873, there was a terrible explosion of a steam boiler in the city of Pittsburg. A number of persons were killed, and many more wounded. But there was one life preserved in a very singular way, as if on purpose to show how God can make use of anything He pleases, in order to shield His people from harm. This singular circumstance occurred to the wife of one of the men who was working in the mill where the explosion took place. She was in her own house, busy with her usual household duties, when she heard the noise of the explosion. All at once, she felt an unusual desire to pray. In a moment she fell on her knees and began to pray. While she was thus engaged, a large piece of the boiler which had just exploded, weighing about two hundred pounds, came crashing through the room, and passed directly by the place where her head would have been if she had not been kneeling down in prayer. That prayer saved her life. Surely, He may well be called the best shield, who can protect the lives of His people in such strange ways as this ! — *R. Newton*.

5—7. (5) brought . . abroad, out of the grove into open glade. look, waking vision, *vs.* 1. so . . be, *f* countless and wide-spread as the stars. (6) believed, faith rests on the promise. It, *i. e.* his faith. righteousness, *g* or justification, "an acceptable, excellent, praiseworthy act." — *Bush*. (7) I . .

Chaldees,^a the same who then called thee, is now with thee to fulfil his promise. to . . it, the purpose for wh. the call was first given is not forgotten.

Faith in God is man's only righteousness.—1. Man has no righteousness of and from himself. 2. Man cannot attain righteousness by obedience to the works of the law. 3. Man can only possess righteousness by the gracious act of God.—*T. H. Leale.*

Faith takes the righteous character of its object.—Just as the hand of a dyer that has been working with crimson will be crimson; just as the hand that has been holding fragrant perfumes will be perfumed; so my faith, which is only the hand by which I lay hold on precious things, will take the tincture and fragrance of what it grasps.—*A. Maclaren.*

8-12. (8) **whereby, . . know,**^b not doubting, but requesting a sign to confirm his faith: he may have thought of his posterity. (9) **take me, i. e. take and offer to me. three . . old,** "the perfection of their species."—*Kalisch.* (10) **divided . . midst,**^c cut ea. animal in half, longitudinally. **birds . . not,** as aft. prescribed by law.^d (11) **fowls . . carcasses,** birds of prey. (12) **deep sleep,**^e Heb. *tardamah*, Gk. *εκστασις*; i. e. supernatural trance or ecstasy, **horror . . darkness, lit.** a horror, a great darkness, overwhelming awe, wh. deepens with increasing darkness and silence.

Patriarchal worship.—What it taught—1. The Divine claims on man; 2. Man's guilt and peril. 3. The interposition of God's mercy and grace; 4. The Scriptural way of coming to God; 5. The coming of the great Sacrifice.—*Burns.*

Abrahamic covenant.—This very solemn form of ratifying a covenant is again particularly mentioned in Je. xxxiv. 18. It consisted in cutting the throat of the victim, and pouring out its blood. The carcass was then divided, lengthwise, as nearly as possible into two equal parts, which being placed opposite to each other at a short distance, the covenanting parties approached at the opposite ends of the passage thus formed, and meeting in the middle took the customary oath. The practice was by no means peculiar to the Hebrews. Traces of it may be found in the Greek and Roman writers, and in the accounts of travelers.—*Bush.*

13-17. (13) **stranger . . their,** chief ref. is to Egypt, but their sojourn in Canaan, where they also lived as strangers, is here too implied, **four . . years,** in round numbers; or more precisely 430 yrs.^f (14) **nation, Egypt. judge,** punish. **with . . substance,** great riches. (15) **go . . fathers,**^g a hint of of immortality. **peace,**^h by a peaceful death. **in . . age, lit.,** in a good hoary age. (16) **fourth . . again,** thus Caleb was fourth fr. Judah: and Moses fr. Levi; so prob. of many others. **for . . full,** God foresaw that they would add sin to sin. It was for their sins they were cut off. The term Amorites includes all the Canaanites. (17) **behold . . furnace,**ⁱ an oven of smoke. **and . . lamp,** flame or tongue of fire. **that . . pieces,** token of a present God ratifying the covenant.

The vocation of the aged saint.—Aged saints—I. Render peculiar assistance to the church. By—1. Their prayers; 2. Their counsels; 3. Their influence. II. Furnish signal examples of the power of Divine grace. Divine grace is seen—1. To be sufficient for saints in every period, and under all circumstances. III. Attest much of the character of God. A long life of faith and labor shows that God is—1. An abiding source of help and joy.—*R. A. Griffin.*

Ratification of a covenant by a burning lamp.—Roberts says: "It is an interesting fact that the burning lamp or fire is still used in the East in confirmation of a covenant. Should a person in the evening make a solemn promise to perform something for another, and should the latter doubt his word, the former will say, pointing to the flame of the lamp, 'That is the witness.'"—*Bib. Ill.*

18-21. (18) **made . . saying, lit.** cut the covenant. **from . . Egypt,** prob. the *Wady-el-Arisch*, wh. is called the stream of E.^k; or it might be the Nile. "It is true that the domain of Israel never reached exactly to the river Nile. But nothing between them and the Nile was independent of them. Virtually this was the extent."—*Jacobus.* (19) **Kenites, (smiths or dwellers in a nest)** prob. S. and S. W. of Pales. **Kenizzites, (hunters),** **Kadmonites, (orientals)** prob. E. of Pales. (20) **Hittites,** "the descendants of

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^a Ne. ix. 7, 8; Ge. xii. 1; xi. 31.

^b "When I gazed into these stars, have they not looked down on me as if with pity from their serene spaces, like eyes glistening with heavenly tears over the little lot of man!"—*Carlyle.*

the promise ratified by a covenant

^c Ju. vi. 17; Lu. i. 18.

^d Je. xxxiv. 18, 19.

^e Le. i. 17.

^f Ge. ii. 21.

Abram leaned on "the Lord." It was not the promise, but the promiser that was truly the object of Abram's trust.—*Maclaren.*

the smoking furnace and burning lamp

^g Ex. xii. 40; Ps. cv. 23, 25.

^h De. vi. 22; Ex. xii. 36; Ps. cv. 37, 38.

ⁱ Is lvii. 1, 2; Job v. 26.

^j Ps. xxxvii. 37.

^k Ex. xix. 18; He. xii. 29.

the terms of the covenant

^l Is xxvii. 12; 1 K. iv. 21.

"What a chimera is man! what a

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confused chaos! what a subject of contradiction! a professed judge of all things, and yet a feeble worm of the earth! the great depository and guardian of truth, and yet a mere huddle of uncertainty! the glory and the scandal of the universe! — *Pascal*.

"If a man is not rising upward to be an angel, depend upon it he is sinking downward to be a devil. He cannot stop at the beast. The most savage of men are not beasts: they are worse, — a great deal worse." — *Coleridge*.

Heth (*vide* ch. x. 15); identified with the Kheta and Katti of the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments, and supposed by Mr. Gladstone to be the Kheteians of the 'Odyssey'; a powerful Asiatic tribe who must have early established themselves on the Euphrates, and spread from thence southward to Canaan and Egypt, and westward to Lydia and Greece, carrying with them, towards the shores of the Ægean Sea, the art and culture of Assyria and Babylon, already modified by the forms and conceptions of Egypt." — *Pulp. Com.* Perizzites, *see* xiii. 7. Rephaims, *see* xiv. 5. (21) Amorites, *see* x. 16. Canaanites, including other unspecified tribes. Girgashites . . Jebusites, *see* x. 16.

The profit of godliness. — There dwelt an old and prosperous couple near London, of whom a charity was asked, to which the wife replied, "Why, sir, we have lost a deal by religion since we first began: my husband knows that very well. Have we not, Thomas?" After a solemn pause, Thomas answered, "Yes, Mary, we have. Before I got religion, Mary, I had an old slouched hat, a tattered coat, and mended shoes and stockings; but I have lost them long ago. And, Mary, you know, that, poor as I was, I had a habit of getting drunk, and quarrelling with you; and that you know I have lost. And then I had a hardened conscience, and wicked heart, and ten thousand guilty fears; but all are lost, completely lost, and, like a millstone, cast into the deepest sea. And, Mary, you have been a loser too, though not so great a loser as myself. Before we got religion, Mary, you had a washing-tray, in which you washed for hire; but since then you have lost your washing-tray. And you had many an aching heart concerning me at times; but these you happily have lost. And I could even wish that you had lost as much as I have lost; for what we lose for religion will be an everlasting gain."

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

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Sarah gives Hagar to Abram

a Ga. iv. 24.

b Ge. iii. 17.

c *cf.* xli. 4; xvi. 16; xvii. 17.

"Do the duty which lies near thee, which thou knowest to be a duty! Thy second duty will already have become clearer." — *Carlyle*.

Hagar flees from Sarai

d Pr. xxx. 21-23.

e 1 Pe. iii. 7.

Hagar and the angel

f "First mention of 'angel of Jehovah.' In several places it appears that this emissary of Jehovah is none other than an appearance, carrying the power of the Divine presence." — *Alford*.

g 1 Pe. ii. 18.

1—3. (1) Egyptian, who prob. foll. S. fr. Egypt. Hagar (*flight*) or Agar,^a the name doubtless derived from her flight. (2) Lord . . bearing, a childless wife owning God's Providence. go . . her, though A. was to be the father, it was said that Sarai was to be the mother of the promised seed. Abram . . Sarai,^b "the faith of both was defective, not indeed with regard to the substance of the promise, but with regard to the method in which they proceeded." — *Calvin*. (3) after . . years, A. being 85; and S. 75 yrs. of age.^c gave . . wife, as inferior wife, or concubine.

Faith and patience. — Both Abram and Sarah had long been waiting for the fulfilment of God's promise. They were sorely tried by the delays of Providence, for they were both far gone in the vale of years and the promised blessing had not come. Their hearts grew sore with hope deferred. In their impatience they seek by methods of their own to fulfil God's word — to anticipate His time and purpose. They attempt to cross the ways of Providence with the lines of their own wisdom, and frantically to hasten their destination. This was their weakness; for God has his appointed time and way. Man's duty is calmly to wait. — *Hom. Com.*

4—6. (4) her . . eyes,^d the maid elevated to rank of wife (?) becomes insolent. (5) wrong . . thee, you are the cause of the insult. Lord . . me, in other words, may God defend the right. (6) behold, *etc.*,^e the vexed husband is gentle. Hagar is still S.'s servant, altho' she has been exalted to be a wife. do . . thee, should he not have stood betw. the maid and his incensed wife? dealt . . her, acts of oppression are meant. fled . . face, having no protector in Abram.

Lessons from Sarah and Hagar. — 1. Nothing more proud than a beggar set on horseback, and a very ape, if you place him up aloft, begins to bridle the matter and take upon him marvelously. 2. It teacheth that adversity is better borne than prosperity of many a one. 3. It showeth the end of evil counsel, Sarah is beaten with her own rod. — *Bp. Babington*.

7—12. (7) angel,^f Heb. *Maleach* = one sent; a messenger. fountain, *see* vs. 14. Shur, Hagar was directing her flight to Egypt. (8) Hagar, called her by name. maid, does not recognize her as Abram's wife. whence . . thou? fr. a pious house. and . . go? to a heathen land. (9) Return,^g *etc.* duty oft. calls us to suffer in the way of obedience. submit, this in Heb.

means *humble*, and is the same word that in *vs.* 6 is trans. "dealt hardly with." (10) *I will*, etc. Who is this who says "I will?" The angel claims to be God. (11) *son*, a daughter was not considered of much value by Orientals. *Ishmael* (*God heareth*). because . . *affliction*, God knows, compensates, sanctifies our trials. (12) *wild man*, *lit.* "wild ass among men;" ref. to wild, free, roving life. *hand* . . *him*, this cannot refer to an individual, but to a race, and exactly desc. Arabs, who are descen. fr. *Ishmael*. *dwell* . . *brethren*, or, "to the east of all his brethren."^a

The beautiful man. — A little boy, the only child of a poor woman, one day fell into the fire by accident, during his mother's absence from the cottage, and was so badly burned that he died after a few hours' suffering. The clergyman of the parish did not hear of the accident until the child was dead. He went, however, to try and console and comfort the mother. To his great surprise he found her very calm and patient and resigned. After a little conversation she told him how that God had sent her wonderful comfort. She had been weeping bitterly as she knelt beside her child's cot, when suddenly the boy exclaimed, "Mother, don't cry; don't you see the beautiful man who is standing there waiting for me?" She told the clergyman that she thought it must have been the Lord Jesus. The angels in heaven care for, wait upon, and minister unto Christ's people below." — *Bib. III.*

13-16. Lord . . *her*, who app. in angelic form. *Thou*, etc.,^b Heb. "Thou art the God of vision, or visibility, who dost cause thyself to be seen, dost manifest thyself." — *Hom. Com.* (14) *Beer-lahai-roi*,^c "The well of life of vision; *i. e.* where life remains after vision of God,"^d between . . *Ber-ed*, site of neither place known.^e (15) *Abram*, etc., he having heard of words of angel fr. Hagar. (16) *was* . . *old*, 14 years were yet to elapse before Isaac should be born.

Belief in the Divine omniscience the foundation of a true and earnest life. — This text may be regarded as — I. The basis of a living creed. II. An incentive to a useful and beautiful life. III. A restraint upon a sinful course. Let these words, "Thou God seest me," preserve you from — 1. Unhallowed thoughts; 2. Selfish motives, 3. Formalism and hypocrisy; 4. Despondency and unbelief. — *J. R. Goulty*.

God's presence. — In a lone room at the top of one of these houses the agent met with an aged woman, whose scanty pittance of half-a-crown a week was scarcely sufficient for her bare subsistence. He observed in a broken teapot that stood in the window, a strawberry plant, growing and flourishing. "Your plant flourishes nicely; you will soon have strawberries upon it." "Oh, sir," replied the woman, "it is not for the sake of the fruit that I grow it." "Then why do you take so much care of it?" he inquired. "Well, sir," was the answer, "I am very poor, too poor to keep any living creature; but it is a great comfort to me to have that living plant; for I know it can only live by the power of God; and as I see it live and grow from day to day, it tells me that God is near." — *Bib. III.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-5. (1) *Abram* . . *nine*, *i. e.* 13 years aft. last named event. *I* . . *God*,^f Heb. *El Shaddai* = mighty. God all-sufficient. Abraham might need to be now reminded of this. *walk* . . *me*,^g live as in my sight. *perfect*,^h upright, sincere. (2) *make*, *lit.* give, not the usual Heb. word *wh.* is trans. "to cut a covenant." It was not betw. *equals* who could *make* a cov., but God, on the one side, *gave* it. (3) *fell* . . *face*, profound humility, and adoration. (4) *as* . . *me*, the originator of the covenant is here made prominent. *thou* . . *nations*,ⁱ multitude of nations, which was realized as the Jews, Arab tribes, Ishmaelites, Keturah's descendants and the dukes of Edom all sprang from him. (5) *Abram*, high father (*ab*, father; *ram*, high). *Abraham*, high father of a multitude.

Perfection requires time. — The acorn does not become an oak in a day; the ripened scholar was not made such by a single lesson; the well-trained soldier was not a raw recruit yesterday; it is not one touch of the artist's pencil that produces a finished painting; there are always months between seed-time and harvest; even so the path of the just is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. — *J. Nichol*.

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a Rosenmüller, Delitzsch, cf. Job i. 3; Nu. xxi. 11; Jos. xv. 8; Zech. xiv. 4.

"He who was himself a father, should have been more respectful to him who was his father." — *M. Henry*.

"True joy is only hope put out of fear." — *Ld. Brooks*.

Beer-lahai-roi

b Ps. cxxxix. 7; Pr. v. 21.

c Ge. xxiv. 62; xxv. 11.

d Rowlands thinks he has found it at Moulahhi, ab. 10 hrs. S. of Ruheibeh. Moi, water; being = to Beer, well.

e Ge. xxi. 20.

Blessed is the man who has chosen his share of Abraham's faith; he and his children after him shall have their share of Abraham's blessing. — *C. Kingsley*.

Abram's name changed

f Ex. vi. 3; Jo. i. 18.

g Ge. v. 22; vi. 9; Job i. 1; 1 K. ii. 4; 2 K. xx. 3.

h Ep. iii. 20; Ma. v. 48.

i Ge. xii. 2; xiii. 16; xxii. 17.

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Canaan
promised to
him

a Matt. i. 6-11.
b He. xi. 16; Lu.
i. 54, 55; Ge.
xxvi. 24; xxviii.
13; Ro. ix. 7-9;
De. xiv. 2; xxvi. 18.

An unbelieving
soul treads upon
the promise, as a
man upon ice; at
first going upon it
he is full of fears,
lest it should
crack. — *W. Gur-*
nall.

circumcision
instituted

c Ps. ciii. 17, 18.

d Ro. iv. 11; ii.
28, 29; 1 Co. vii.
19; Ph. iii. 3;
Col. ii. 2; Ga. v. 6.

e Le. xii. 3; Lu.
ii. 21; Ph. iii. 5.

"Children have
more need of
models than of
critics." — *Joubert.*

Experience is the
most eloquent of
preachers, but
she never has a
large congrega-
tion.

Sarai's name
changed

f Jo. viii. 56; Ps.
iv. 7.

"True joy is a
sober and serene
motion; and they
are miserably out
that take laughing
for rejoicing."

— *Seneca.*

"What is joy?
A sunbeam betw-
een two
clouds." — *Mde.*
Deluzy.

promise of a
son, to be
called Isaac

g Ro. ix. 8; Ga.
iv. 28.

h Ge. xvi. 11.

i Ge. xxv. 12-16.

j Ge. xxi. 2.

k The angel of God

6-8. (6) **kings** . . thee, this lit. fulfilled.^a (7) **for** . . covenant, *lit.* cove-
nant of eternity, *i. e.*, of indefinite duration. (8) **land** . . stranger, land of
thy sojournings. I . . God,^b the object of their worship, and the source of
their prosperity.

Abraham. — From him were descended the chiefs of the twelve tribes of the
Hebrews, and after their separation, the kings of Judah, as well as the kings
of Israel. From him sprang the ancient monarchs of Edom, and the Saracen
kings in Arabia, Babylon and Egypt, trace back their origin to him. If we
pass from the literal to the spiritual fulfilment of the prediction, we find the
heavenly Messiah, the king of kings, descending from the same stock, and not
only so, but all true Christians, his seed by faith, made 'kings and priests unto
God,' Rev. i. 6." — *Bush.*

9-14. (9) **keep**,^c faithfully observe thy duty in relation thereunto. (10)
this, *i. e.*, the outward sign of, etc. **circumcised**,^d Heb. *yimmol*, "shall be
cut round about." (11) **token**, sign, evidence of faith on the one part,
reminder of promise on the other. (12) **eight days**,^e child then old enough to
bear the operation. "Tho. not administered to both, the symbol was ordained
for the sake of both sexes." — *Calvin.* (13) **born**, *etc.*, children of thyself, or
servants. **he** . . money, bondsman. (14) **cut off**, "it is pretty certain that
death in some form is intended." — *Spk. Com.* "We believe the true sense of
the phrase to be that the individual who transgresses the condition or sign of
the covenant thereby resigns his connections with the Hebrew community,
and ceases to belong to it." — *Kalisch.*

Sacramental signs. — 1. Are outward and visible. They impress the senses.
2. They teach spiritual truths. Circumcision was a teaching ordinance; so
are baptism and the Lord's Supper. 3. They are the appointed channels of
spiritual blessings. Though God is not tied to them, yet He promises grace to
the worthy in their use. 4. They serve as perpetual reminders of God's grace,
and of our own duty and responsibility. — *Hom. Com.*

Securing obedience. — The first rule of the order which St. Francis founded
was implicit submission to the superior. The legend says, that one day a monk
proved refractory, and must be subdued. By order of St. Francis, a grave
was dug deep enough to hold a man: the monk was put into it; and his
associates began to shovel in the earth, while the superior looked on, stern as
death. When the mold reached the knees of the stubborn monk, St. Francis,
stooping down, asked him, "Are you dead yet? is your self-will dead? do
you yield?" There was no answer. In the grave there seemed to stand a
man with a will as iron as his own. The burial continued, to the middle, to
the shoulders, to the lips. Once more St. Francis bent down to repeat his
question, "Are you dead yet?" The suffocating monk saw no relenting in
the stern countenance of his superior. Resistance was useless. A few mo-
ments more, and the earth would cover him. Then the iron will was broken:
the funeral was stayed, and the submissive monk replied, "I am dead."

15-17. (15) **Sarai**, *my princess*. **Sarah**, *princess*. "Her limited pre-
eminence is to be unspeakably enlarged." Formerly she was Abram's prin-
cess only; henceforth, she was to be recognized as a princess generally. (16)
she . . nations, *lit.* shall be to nations; *i. e.*, shall become nations. This
is the first declaration that Sarah is to be the mother of the promised
seed. (17) **fell** . . face, in adoration. **laughed**,^f Alford regards Abraham's
feeling as one of mingled incredulosity and reverence.

Sarai and Sarah. — Her name always one that indicated dignity. Consider
— I. Her old name, "my princess," limited. Sarai to live for her husband
only. II. Her new name, "princess," in wider sense. He, the father of the
faithful; she, the mother. Now stands in a historical relation to the church.

18-22. (18) **O** . . thee, still somewhat incredulous, and so he desired the
prosperity of Ishmael and his descendants. (19) **Isaac**, Heb. *yitzhek*, he shall
laugh. Thus the laughter of astonishment and doubt would be changed for
the laughter of joy. I . . covenant,^g already made, and several times
reaffirmed. (30) **heard**, prob. all to meaning of Ishmael.^h **twelve** . . beget,
lit. fulfilled.ⁱ (21) **but** . . Isaac, ref. to the Messiah. **this** . . year, at
this very time next year.^j (22) **left** . . him, for this occasion. **God** . .
up, to heaven.^k

Philip Henry's promise. — The following remark of Rev. Philip Henry

after he had been engaged in ardent prayer for two of his children, that were dangerously ill, is so expressive of the *simplicity* and *tenderness* of Christian faith and love, as to recommend itself to the hearts of those who walk with God: "If the Lord will be pleased to grant me this my request concerning my children, I will not say as the beggars at our doors used to do, 'I'll never ask anything of Him again,' but, on the contrary, He shall hear oftener from me than ever; and I will love God the better, and love prayer the better as long as I live."—*Cheever*.

23-27. (23) *Abraham, etc.*, without the least delay.^a Perh. ordered it to be done. In later times (Ex. iv. 25) we see a mother performing it; but in modern times it is usually performed by an experienced person, who is held in high honor. (24) *Abraham . . nine*, did not plead age as an excuse for avoiding a *new* and *painful* duty. (26) *selfsame . . son*, as prompt to exact as to yield obedience. (27) *all the men, etc.*,^b the command was obeyed without any limitation.

The safety of obedience.—A pointsman in Prussia was at the junction of two lines of railway, his lever in hand for a train that was signalled. The engine was within a few seconds of reaching the embankment, when the man, on turning his head, perceived his little boy playing on the rails of the line the train was to pass over. "Lie down!" he shouted to the child; but, as to himself, he remained at his post. The train passed safely on its way. The father rushed forward, expecting to take up a corpse; but what was his joy on finding that the boy had at once obeyed his order! He had lain down, and the whole train passed over him without injury. The next day the king sent for the man, and attached to his breast the medal for civil courage.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1-5. (1) *Mamre, see on xiii. 18, xiv. 13, plains* = oak grove. *sāt . . day*, the intense heat in eastern climes makes it still necessary to refrain from toil in the middle of the day. (2) *three men*, angels in the appearance of men. One of the three is recognized as Jehovah.^c *stood, etc.*, their appearance sudden. *ran . . them*, eager to tender hospitality. This is the habit in the East when a notable personage approaches. *bowed, etc.*, saw a dignity in them, yet knew not who they were.^d The word bowed is elsewhere translated *worshipped*. (3) *Lord*, Heb. *Adonai* (plural of excellence). This word is usually used by the Jews for God; often also for men of high distinction. One prob. appeared more dignified than the others. (4) *water . . feet*,^e walking in sandals made this custom necessary.^f *rest, lit. lean: i. e. recline*. (5) *comfort . . hearts, lit.* support your hearts; *i. e.* refresh all the vital powers and spirits. *after . . on*, he will entertain, but not hinder. *for . . servant*, in other words they have not come to receive his gifts; but unconsciously, by the direction of the Lord, they have come to give him this opportunity.

Hospitality.—Consider this virtue in—I. Its source; a kind and generous heart. II. Its attendant qualities. 1. Prompt; 2. Unsparring. III. The esteem in which it is held. It is—1. Pleasing to man. 2. Approved of by God. IV. The reward which it brings. An angel may be entertained unawares.—*J. H. Jones*.

Eastern hospitality.—Abraham's dwelling was a tent, probably of dark-brown camel's hair cloth, like the tents of his dependents. His repast was spread for him before the tent door, beneath the shade of some friendly tree. The most usual articles of food were *leben*, or sour coagulated milk (which is still the chief dish of the Syrian Arab) and unleavened cakes baked upon the hot hearth. To these might be added on festive occasions, or when strangers were to be entertained, the roasted flesh of a kid or of a calf. Hospitality to the passing traveller ranked among the most sacred and imperative of all duties, as is usually the case wherever public places of rest or entertainment do not exist.—*Dykes*.

6-8. (6) *measures, lit. seahs*. A *seah* = ab. 2½ galls. *of . . meal*, finest flour. *cakes . . hearth*, thin cakes placed on ground fr. wh. fire has been removed; and then covered with the hot embers. (7) *Abraham, he* himself made the selection. *young man, i. e.*, a servant. *dress, cook, prepare for food*. (8) *butter*, "the word, as used in the Bible, implies butter

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went up"—*Arab*.
"The glory of the Lord went up"—*Chal. i. e.* "The visible majesty of Jehovah, the Shekinah, the symbol of the Divine presence."—*Bush*.

Abraham's household circumcised

a Ps. cxix. 60.

b Ro. iv. 20, 21.

"Fr. this circumstance the Arabian, and other descendants of Ishmael, and indeed all the followers of Mohammed, defer circumcision till the age of thirteen."—*Bush*.

Abraham visited by three angels

c cf. vs. 22; xix. 1.

d He. xiii. 2.

e 1 Pe iv. 9.

f Ge. xix. 2; xxiv. 32; Ju. xix. 21; 1 Ti v. 10.

"Often has my mind reverted to the scene of the good old patriarch sitting in the door of his tent in the heat of the day. When the sun is at the meridian, the people may be seen seated in the doors of their huts, to inhale the breezes, and to let them blow on their almost naked bodies."—*Roberts*.

he entertains them

Bread, dif kinds, and mode of prep.

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aration. — *Topics*,
ii. 22-26.
Butter, *Robinson's*
Res., i. 180.
"Let not the
emphasis of hos-
pitality be in bed
and board; but
let truth and love
and honor and
courtesy flow in all
thy deeds." —
Emerson.

they renew
the promise
of a son

a Ge. xvii. 17;
Ro. iv. 18-28; He
xi. 11, 12, 19.

"The father
laughed, when a
son was promised
to him, from
wonder and joy;
the mother
laughed when the
three men
renewed the prom-
ise, from doubt-
fulness and joy.
The angel re-
proved her, be-
cause, though that
laughter was from
joy, yet it was
not of full faith."
— *Augustine*.

b Lu. i. 37; Je.
xxxii. 17, Ma. iii.
9; xix. 26.

"Of what conse-
quence is it that
anything should
be concealed
from man? No-
thing is hidden
from God: He is
present in our
minds and comes
into the midst of
our thoughts.
Comes, do I say?
— as if He were
ever absent!" —
Seneca.

the angels go
towards Sodom

c "There is a trad.
that he went as far
as *Caphar-berucha*
fr. wh. the Dead
Sea is visible
through a ravine."
Speaker's Com.

d De. xxxii. 46; iv
9, 10; vi. 7; Jos.
xxiv. 15; Ps. cxix.
9; Pr. vi. 20; Ep
vi. 4.

e Ez. xvi. 49, 50;
Ja v. 4.

f Je. xlii. 10; He.
iv. 13.

g Mal. iii. 1; Is
ix. 6, LXX.

and cream in various states of consistence." — *Bush*. milk, as a beverage, most commonly the milk of goats and sheep. stood . . tree, *i. e.*, waited upon them and served them.

Position of females in the East. — When we had finished our meals in the family in which I resided at Deir-el-Kamr, and were risen, the mother, daughter, and daughter-in-law, who had been waiting at the door, came in and partook of what remained. Thus it is in Syria, and thus it has been, probably, ever since Abraham, "a Syrian ready to perish" (Deut. xxvi. 5), traversed these regions, dwelling in tents; when Sarah, having prepared an entertainment for three heavenly strangers, did not present it, that being Abraham's office; but stood at the tent door, which was behind him. — *Jowett*.

9-12. (9) Sarah, their visit concerned her. This question must have excited surprise, as it is very unusual, sometimes considered a downright insult, in the Orient to inquire about wife and family. tent, the tent assigned to her, the woman's apartment, (10) according . . life, *lit. acc.* to the living time. Note the change to the first person. "A singularly ambiguous phrase, upon which a great variety of interpretations has been grafted. The most probable of these, we think, is that of the Persic version, 'According to the time of that which is born, or the birth;' *i. e.* according to the time necessary for the production of a living child, or at the end of nine months. This is perhaps confirmed by ch. xxi. 1, 2, 'And the Lord visited Sarah as He said; for Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.'" — *Bush*. lo . . son, A. must have begun to perceive who his guest was. which . . him, she was out of sight. (11) ceased . . women, past the time of child-bearing. (12) laughed, being incredulous, not knowing the speaker. within herself, silently.

The position of woman. — I. In ancient times: "behind the door." Position of woman subordinate: waited at table; stood behind her lord and master. This is still the case in heathen and eastern lands. II. In modern times: Christianity recognizes her rightful station, brings her from "behind the door," and places her by her husband's side as his friend, helpmeet, and counselor.

13-15. (13) Lord, one of the three who appeared to A. is Jehovah. laugh, His knowledge must have shown A. who He was. (14) Is . . Lord, *lit.* "Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?" (15) denied, prevaricated, under cover of not having laughed aloud. afraid, recognizing One who knew her altogether. nay . . laugh, a mild rebuke for such a sin.

Sarah rebuked. — It seems to have been a signal mercy to her thus to have had her secret sin detected and reprov'd. From this time we hear no more of her unbelief; on the contrary, the rebuke administered to her was effectual for the confirming and establishing her faith. In the account given of the most eminent saints who were distinguished for their faith, Sarah herself is mentioned; and her faith is said to have been instrumental to the accomplishment of that very purpose, which in the first instance she had disbelieved. And how many have found similar reason to bless God for the fidelity of their friends, or for the inward rebukes of their own consciences. — *Bush*.

16-22. (16) looked, sign of their intention. went . . way, both fr. courtesy and respect. (17) said, a soliloquy. thing . . do, that I have proposed to do. (18) seeing, *etc.*, A. had been permitted to enter the counsel of God, and should God now fail to acquaint him with this fact? (19) know, *etc.*, the disclosure of Sodom's doom will not make him reckless through fear; he will make good use of the knowledge afforded him, and impress it upon his household as the consequences of transgression. command, *etc.*, A.'s obedience paved the way to the greatness ref. to in vs. 18. (20) cry, see on iv. 10. great, calls aloud for punishment. grievous, heavy. (21) altogether, whether they have filled up the measure of their sins. and . . know, *Targ. Onk.* "But if they repent I will not take vengeance." (22) men, the two angels. Lord, the third. "The messenger of the covenant."

The secret of the Lord with Abraham. — God communicates Himself, and the knowledge of His ways and designs, to His faithful ones. There was a special propriety for this mode of dealing with His servant Abraham. Consider this — I. As one of the privileges of God's friendship with Him. Communication of secrets is one of the special privileges of friendship. II.

As depending upon His destiny and character. Abraham was not only a saint, but also a representative man, through whom God intended to convey great blessings to mankind. He was the human foundation upon which God's most gracious purposes concerning the race were to be erected. — *T. H. Leale*

Christian example. — The Christian parent ought to be a living exemplification of Christianity. His house, his habits, his associates, his pursuits, his recreations, ought all to be so regulated as to evince that religion is, indeed, the parent of order, the inspirer of good sense, the well-spring of good humor, the teacher of good manners, and the perennial source of happiness and peace — *Bp. Jebb.*

23-26. (23) *near*,^a not simply locally, but spiritually. *destroy* . . *wicked*,^b in this world the righteous often suffer through the wicked. (24) *fifty*,^c with the largest charity A. does not suppose there are more than these in wicked Sodom. (25) *that*, *etc.*,^d "There is no grander testimony on record to the majesty of the moral sense in man." — *Alford.* (26) *spare* . . *sakes*,^e of how much blessing to the world are the righteous in it!

The power of intercession. — I. A man's praying power is not an arbitrary thing, but the result of long antecedent spiritual processes. Suppose that Lot had been made acquainted with Jehovah's purpose, could he have interceded like Abraham? No; he was not prepared to do so. II. The praying power of a man is conditioned upon the circumstances by which he surrounds himself. III. Even when God vouchsafes to visit man, how much of its spiritual blessing depends upon his own character and circumstances. Lot receives divine guests, but how? In the midst of one of the most hellish night scenes recorded. What a contrast this to Abraham. Conclusion — What a moral sublimity there is in the character of a man like Abraham. — *H. Allon.*

The eye of God. — Lafayette tells us that he was once shut up in a little room in a gloomy prison for a great while. In the door of his little cell was a very small hole cut. At that hole a soldier was placed day and night to watch him. Day and night, every moment when he looked up, he always saw that eye. Oh! he says, it was dreadful! There was no escape, no hiding: when he lay down, and when he rose up, that eye was watching him. How dreadful will the eye of God be upon the sinner, as it watches him in the eternal world for ever! — *J. Todd.*

27-31. (27) *dust*, *etc.*,^f dust in my origin, ashes in my end.^g (28) A. is emboldened by the success of his first petition. *if I find*, *etc.*, A. gains this concession too. (29) *spake*, and is heard once more. (30) *thirty*, fr. five A. comes to ten; but he leaves off adding "wilt thou destroy," etc. (31) *twenty*, A. takes off another ten.

God irresistible. — As you stood some stormy day upon a seacliff, and marked the giant billow rise from the deep to rush on with foaming crest, and throw itself thundering on the trembling shore, did you ever fancy that you could stay its course, and hurl it back to the depths of ocean? Did you ever stand beneath the leaden, lowering clouds, and mark the lightning's leap, as it shot and flashed, dazzling athwart the gloom, and think that you could grasp the bolt, and change its path? Still more foolish and vain his thought, who fancies that he can arrest or turn aside the purpose of God, saying, "What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? Let us break His bands asunder, and cast away His cords from us." Break His bands asunder! How He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh! — *Guthrie.*

32, 33. (32) *oh let*, *etc.*,^h he trembles for himself as he proceeds. *ten*, to so few are the fifty reduced. *I will not*, *etc.*, so *ten* righteous people would have saved the city! A. could ask no further than this. (33) *Lord* . . *way*, better trans., "departed;" this implies that God was one of the three. *and* . . *place*, his home beneath the oaks at Mamre.

Abraham pleading for Sodom. — From this interesting record we learn. I. That God holds inquest upon the moral condition of a city. II. That God is accessible to human appeal. III. That the few can serve the many. Abraham, one man, can save Sodom; ten righteous men can save a city. IV. That human prayer falls below Divine resources. If Abraham had said "for my sake," who knows what great answer God might not have given? — *J. Parker.*

Where is God not? — During the American war a British officer, walking out at sunrise, observed at some distance, an old man, whom he supposed

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"Confidence in another man's virtue is no slight evidence of a man's own." — *Montaigne.*

Abraham intercedes for Sodom

a Je. xli. 1; Ez. xxi. 3; He. x. 22.

b Nu. xvi. 22; 2 S. xxiv. 17.

c Je. v. 1.

d Job viii. 20; Is. i. 10, 11; Ps. lvi. 11; Job xxxiv. 17; Ro. iii. 6, Is. lvii. 1.

e Ez. xxii. 30.

"If once we are sure God hath done a thing, there is no room left to dispute its equity." — *Halyburton.*

"How different is the ready hand, tearful eye, and soothing voice, from the ostentatious appearance which is called pity." — *Jane Porter.*

f Lu. xviii. 1.

g Ge. iii. 19; Is. v. 8; Lu. v. 8; Job. iv. 19.

"Pity and forbearance, and long suffering and fair interpretation, and excusing our brother and taking in the best sense, and passing the gentlest sentence, are certainly our duty." — *J. Taylor.*

h Ju. vi. 39; Is. lxv. 8; Ja. v. 16.

"Pity is a sense of our own misfortunes in those of another man; it is a sort of foresight of the disasters which may befall ourselves. We assist others in order that they

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may assist us on like occasions; so that the services we offer to the unfortunate are in reality so many anticipated kindnesses to ourselves." — *La Rochefoucauld*
 "It is easy to condemn; it is better to pity." — *Abbott*.

two angels
visit Lot in
Sodom

a He xiii. 2.

b Lu. xlv. 23.

"The houses of holy men are full of these heavenly spirits whom they owe not; they choose their tents ours, and visit us when we see not." — *Bp. Hall*.

the sin of
Sodom

c Ro. i. 24-27; Ju. xix. 22; Jude 7; Is. lii. 9; Le. xviii. 22.

d Ro. iii. 8.

"Use sin as it will use you; spare it not, for it will not spare you; it is your murderer, and the murderer of the world; use it, therefore, as a murderer should be used." — *R. Baxter*.

the men of
Sodom
struck blind

e Ex. ii. 14. f 2 K. vi. 18; Ac. xlii. 11.

g "with fatuity of vision" — *Chal.*
 "with illusions" (*Syr.*)

"If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought

to be taking aim at some game. When come up to him, the officer took him by the arm, and said, "What are you about?" The old man made no reply, but waved his hand expressive of his desire for him to stand at a distance. This not satisfying the inquirer, he repeated the question, when the native again waved his hand. At length, somewhat astonished, the officer said, "You old fool, what are you about?" To which he answered, "I am worshipping the Great Spirit." The question was then asked, "Where is he to be found?" To which the old man replied, "Soldier, *where is he not?*" and with such energy of expression as made the officer confess he should never forget it to his dying day.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1—3. (1) **and . . . angels**, two of the three spoken of in former chapter. The angel of Jehovah remained with A. **gate**, gates of anc. cities of E. were used as public promenades, markets, courts of justice, etc. (2) **and he said, etc.**, no inns in those days. Strangers depended on private hospitality. **street**,^b *lit.* "the broad open place." Not an unusual thing to spend the night in open air. Warm climate. **and . . . nay**, not according to best E. etiquette to comply on first invitation, it was a testing of Lot's sincerity. (3) **he . . . greatly**, realizing the danger of remaining outside amid so much wickedness. **feast**, *lit.* banquet, *i. e.* more than an ordinary meal.

Lot's hospitality. — Lot would fain have been as hospitable as Abraham. Deeper in his nature than any other consideration was the traditional habit of hospitality. To this he would have sacrificed everything; the rights of strangers were to him truly inviolable. But Lot had by his choice of a dwelling made it impossible he should afford safe and agreeable lodging to any visitor. He did his best, and it was not his reception of the angels that sealed Sodom's doom, and yet what shame he must have felt that he had put himself in circumstances in which his chief virtue could not be practiced. So do men tie their own hands and cripple themselves so that even the good they would take pleasure in doing is either wholly impossible or turns to evil. — *M. Dods*.

4—8. (4) **before . . . down**, they had not long been there. **men . . . quarter**, *i. e.* from every extremity of the city. (5) **bring . . . them**, a well-known euphemism for a foul crime which derives its name from this infamous place. (6) **shut . . . him**, both that his guests might be safe, and not hear of the insults proposed. (7) **and said, etc.**, gentle expostulation. (8) **behold**,^d *etc.*, an infamous proposal; proposing one sin to avoid another. Mixed character of good men. **therefore . . . roof**, on condition that their persons should be safe.

Character of Lot. — In the first few hours of his last night in Sodom there is much that is admirable and pathetic in Lot's conduct. But when we have said that he was bold and that he hated other men's sins, we have exhausted the more attractive side of his character. He had no feeling. He was cold-blooded, calculating, keenly alive to his own interest, with all his wits about him to reap some gain to himself out of every disaster; the kind of man out of whom wreckers are made, who can with gusto strip gold rings off the fingers of doomed corpses; out of whom are made the villains who can rifle the pockets of their dead comrades on a battle-field, or the politicians who can still ride on the top of the wave that hurls their country on the rocks. — *M. Dods*.

9—11. (9) **stand back**, *lit.* "come near, farther off." **this . . . sojourn**, wh. was indeed Lot's great mistake. **judge**,^e this prob. not the only instance (see 2 Pet. ii. 7. 8). (10) **men**, *i. e.* the angels, who knew all, and heard the commotion. **pulled . . . door**, rescued the old man. Kindness repaid. (11) **and . . . blindness**,^f Heb. *bassanverim*, dazzled blindness.^g

The scriptural signs that the judgment is near (on vs. 9-14). — I. That God abandons men or communities to outbreaks and presumptuous sins. II. That warnings and chastisements fail to produce their effect, and especially that the person grows harder under them. III. That God removes the good from any community; so before the flood, so before the destruction of Jerusalem. IV. The deep security of those over whom it is suspended. — *A. Gosman*.

Effects of sin. — We might illustrate the evil of sin by the following comparison: "Suppose I were going along a street, and were to dash my hand through a large pane of glass, what harm would I receive?" You would be punished for breaking the glass." — "Would that be all the harm I should receive?" — "Your hand would be cut by the glass." — "Yes; and so it is with sin. If you break God's laws, you shall be punished for breaking them; and your soul is hurt by the very act of breaking them." — *J. Inglis.*

12-14. (12) here . . besides?^a in the city, other than in this house: any connected by marriage. The angels here announced their mission. bring . . place, better had he never entered it. (13) for, etc.,^b shows God's view of the sin of Sodom. (14) Lot . . out,^c he believed the warning, and warned others. which . . daughters, Chal. "who were about to take." On the whole, the more probable view seems that there were husbands of married daughters living in the city, whereas his two virgin daughters lived with their father at home." — *Alford.* but . . law,^d men of Sodom. His warning too strange to be true.

Lessons. — 1. While God blinds the wicked, He maketh way for His servants to escape. 2. Sweet is the providence, and solicitous is the care of God by His angel over His saints to save them. 3. Sons and daughters fare the better with God for being related to holy parents. 4. God calleth His, and all that are near and dear to Him, out of the place upon which vengeance is determined (Rev. xviii. 4). — *G. Hughes.*

Warnings disregarded by sinners. — What a chance (which never came again) the sons of Lot missed that evening! But do you know what they said? They said he was an alarmist! "The old man is in his dotage," laughed one, "and some one has been frightening him." "Never heed him," cried another, "he is ever thus, croaking about the wickedness of the place, and telling us we are all going to be destroyed. He has been saying it for years — and nothing has ever happened yet!" Ah, that's just where it is! "Nothing has ever happened yet!" And so, when the preacher warns the open sinner of his danger, and urges him to escape from his sin — to escape for his life — he is laughed at, and he is called an alarmist. But every one who has ever tried to press home a truth that has been unwelcome — to warn people of a danger that they would rather believe to be impossible — has been called an Alarmist. Noah was an "Alarmist." Lot was an "Alarmist." The prophets who foretold the destruction of Jerusalem were "Alarmists," and many a one who foresaw and foretold the Indian Mutiny of 1857 was called an "Alarmist." And so, at the risk of being called an "Alarmist," I would take up and echo this cry. Art thou living in a Sodom of wilful sin — a Sodom of uncleanness, or drunkenness, or not? — then "Escape for thy life." — *J. B. C. Murphy.*

15-17. (15) when . . arose, the dawn striking up, for the sun did not rise until Lot entered Zoar (vs. 23). then . . Lot,^e who was endangering himself by persuading others. take . . here, save whom you can, if you cannot save all you would. This expression seems to imply that some of his daughters were not with him, and consequently that they perished in the destruction. lest . . city,^f justice delays while you tarry. (16) lingered, not willing to leave any behind. Some hold that he had his eye on his property. they . . fourth,^g using a gentle and merciful violence. (17) life,^h lit. thy soul. plain, which he had once so coveted. mountain,ⁱ i. e., Mts. of Moab.

Escape for thy life. — I. You must escape for your life; you must be in earnest; you must sacrifice everything that stands in your way. II. Look not behind. He who has once left this sinful world ought to give up all thoughts of return. III. Stay not in all the plain. Delay not — 1. In hope of a better opportunity; 2. In reliance upon your good intentions; 3. Because you have begun to attend to religion; 4. For a more thorough conviction of sin. — *J. Day.*

Escape for thy life! — "For thy life!" Ah, brethren, were it only the life of your body that you knew to be in jeopardy, you would not hesitate. You would escape from a burning house, and leave all you have in the world behind you. A young officer in India went tiger shooting one day, "missed his mark," and soon found himself in the tiger's clutches. It was an anxious moment — few of his friends being at hand. As a sportsman of experience he knew well that his course was to lie quietly and sham death. The tiger sur-

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to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame." — *Confucius.*

"Punishment, that is the justice for the unjust." — *Augustine.*

Lot being warned warns his relatives

a Ma. xiii. 49, 50.

b 2 Pe. ii. 6-8.

c Lu. xvii. 28, 29; 1

Th. v. 3.

d Lu. xxiv. 11; Ex.

ix. 21.

When a crisis comes, men do not suddenly acquire an intelligence and insight they have not habitually cultivated. They cannot suddenly put forth an energy nor exhibit an apt helpfulness which only character can give. When the test comes, we stand or fall not according to what we would wish to be and now see the necessity of being, but according to what former self-discipline or self-indulgence has made us. — *Dods.*

"If thou hast fear of those who command thee, spare those who obey thee." — *Ben Azaï.*

Lot is pressed to leave Sodom

e Nu. xvi. 24, 26;

Re. xviii. 4.

f 2 Co. vi. 2.

g He. i. 14.

h Ps. xxxiv. 22;

La. iii. 22; Ro.

ix. 15, 16.

i Ma. xxiv. 16-18;

Re. xviii. 14, 15;

Lu. ix. 62; Ph. iii.

13, 14.

"Kill sin before it kills you; and though it kill your bodies, it shall not be able to kill your souls; and though it bring you to the grave, as it did

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your Head, it shall not be able to keep you there. — *Barter.*

Lot wishes to find a refuge in Zoar

a Ma. xvi. 22.

b "It was the custom in the E. to make supplication with the face to the ground; when the prayer was granted, the face was said to be raised." — *Sph. Com.*

c 1 S. xxvii. 1; Pr. iii. 5, 6; He. iv. 15; Ps. cxlv. 19.

d Ge. xiv. 2.

the fate of Lot's wife

e Ps. xi. 6; Jude 7; 2 Pe. ii. 6; Je. xx. 16; xlix. 18; Lu. xvii. 28-30; Ho. xi. 8; Am. iv. 11; Is. i. 9.

f Lu. xvii. 31, 32; He. x. 38, 39.

"There was a trad. wh. identified a pillar of salt nr. the Dead Sea with Lot's wife. — *Jos. Ant.* i. 11. Lynch found to the E. of Usdum, a pillar of salt 40 ft. high. It was prob. that to wh. *Jos.* refers.

"The essence of justice is mercy. Making a child suffer for wrongdoing is merciful to the child."

the cities destroyed but Lot saved

g Re. xviii. 9.

h De. xxix. 23; Is. xlii. 19; Je. xlix. 18; Jude 7; 2 Pe. ii. 6.

i Ge. viii. 1; Ps. cxlv. 20; 2 Pe. ii. 6-10.

veyed his prey, and set to work to make its meal. Taking the young officer's hand in his mouth he deliberately devoured it, and the arm was eaten to the elbow before help arrived. Had the victim moved, or uttered even a groan, the tiger would have put an end to his existence before going on with his repast. Of course the shattered arm had to be removed from the shoulder, but that brave officer lives, and holds at this present moment a post of honor under the Government. Now imagine the suffering endured by him whilst lying, quite conscious, in the power of a voracious "man-eater"! Why do I tell you this? To ask you what it was that strengthened him to such an act of heroism. It was love of life — it was "for his life"! — *J. B. C. Murphy.*

18—22. (18) Lot said, *etc.*^a he anticipated danger in Moab; as once he had hoped for safety in Sodom. (19) cannot . . die, apprehension lest the destruction might overtake him before he reached the mountains. (20) little one, "Lot's meaning was that since Zoar was the smallest of the cities of the Pentapolis, it would not be a great demand on God's mercy to spare it." — *Pulp. Com.* (21) see . . also, *lit.* I have lifted up thy face.^b (22) cannot . . thither,^c the wicked not to be punished till the righteous are safe. Zoar (*little*), formerly Bela.^d Site not known.

"Is it not a little one?" — Years ago there was not a single thistle in the whole of Australia. Some Scotchman thought it was a pity that Australia should be without that glorious symbol of his great nation. He therefore collected a packet of thistle seeds, and sent it over to one of his friends. Well, when it was landed, the officers might have said, "Oh, let it in; 'is it not a little one?'" Ah, yes, it was but a little one; but now whole districts of country are covered with it, and it has become the farmer's pest and plague. Happy would it have been if the ship that brought that seed had been wrecked. Take heed of the thistle seed; little sins are like it. — *Spurgeon.*

23—26. (23) sun . . earth, the day broke brightly; the last day for Sodom. The opening of the day in its glory confirmed them in their insensibility to peril. (24) rained . . fire,^e i. e. burning brimstone, marks of volcanic eruption, and sulphur still found in the neighborhood. (25) overthrew . . cities, many scientific explanations of this. The nature of the region is a present and lasting comment on the text. Beside Sodom and Gomorrah other cities were involved in the destruction, — Admah and Zeboim (*Deut.* xxix. 23; *Hos.* xi. 8), as well as all in the valley of Siddim, Zoar alone being excepted. Much of this country is now covered by the waters of the Dead sea, which travelers say is so dense that a bather in it feels as though he had been immersed in mud. (26) but . . back,^f in defiance or forgetfulness of the command *vs.* 17. and . . salt, not to be taken literally, but perh. as *Dods* says in the *Exp. Bib.*, supported by *Keil, Lange*, etc., "Unable to move, she is overtaken and involved in the sulphurous smoke, the bitter salts rise out of the earth and stifle her and encrust around her and build her tomb where she stands."

Looking back. — In the East, when men or women leave their house, they never look back, as "it would be very unfortunate." Should a husband have left anything which his wife knows he will require, she will not call on him to turn or look back; but will either take the article herself or send it by another. Should a man, on some great emergency, have to look back, he will not then proceed on the business he was about to transact. When they go on a journey they will not look behind, though the palankeen or bandy would be close upon them; they step a little on one side and then look at you. — *Roberts.*

27—29. (27) Abraham . . Lord, his faith prompted him. (28) looked . . plain, to see the fruit of Divine justice. smoke . . furnace,^g an awful type of the "lake that burneth with fire and brimstone."^h (29) "God . . Abraham, remembered his intercession, and extended his mercy to Lot. "The prayer of a righteous man availeth much." sent . . dwelt,ⁱ clearly implied that for safety he was indebted, under God, to Abraham.

The Cities of the Plain. —

"Get ye up from the wrath of God's terrible day!
Ungirded, unsandalled, arise and away!
'Tis the vintage of blood, 'tis the fulness of time,
And vengeance shall gather the harvest of crime."

The warning was spoken; the righteous had gone,
And the proud ones of Sodom were feasting alone;
All gay was the banquet; the revel was long,
With the pouring of wine and the breathing of song.

Hark! the growl of the thunder, — the quaking of earth!
Woe, woe to the worship, and woe to the mirth!
The black sky has opened, — there's flame in the air, —
The red arm of Vengeance is lifted and bare.

Down, — down on the fallen the red ruin rained,
And the reveller sank with his wine-cup undrained.
The foot of the dancer, the music's loved thrill,
And the shout and the laughter grew suddenly still. — *Whittier*.

30-35. (30) *mountain*,^a i. e. in the mountainous district E. of the Dead Sea in the land of Moab. **for . . Zoar**, fearing that the fires from the other cities would reach that, or that the rising waters of the Dead Sea might overflow it. **he . . cave**, one of the cavernous recesses in the mountains. (31) **and, etc.**, living in Sodom had corrupted them. (32) **come . . wine**,^b even this vile course was a tacit acknowledgment of their father's goodness, but sometimes weakness of character neutralizes all goodness, as in this case of Lot. (33) **made . . night**, Lot should not have consented so far as this. **and he, etc.**, yet is not a voluntary drunkard responsible for the sins he commits in his cups. (34) **first born said, etc.** It must be observed that it is not sensuality that prompts the sin of the daughters; they thought that perhaps this was the only way to perpetuate their family. (35) **drink . . also**, not a sin of ignorance, he had tested the strength of wine but the night before.

Lessons. — 1. Man's choice of rest and safety crossing God's command will not content him long. 2. Man, upon the failing of expected comfort in his own way, may be then moved to try God's. 3. Naturally man's own will maketh him move faster than the will of God. 4. Solitary and sad may be the peregrinations and habitations of the best families here below. 5. A cave or den in a mountain with God is a better habitation than a palace in a city of sin. — *G. Hughes*.

36-38. (36) **thus, etc.**, did he never perceive their condition, and inquire the cause? (37) **Moab** (*seed of the father*), son of incest and father of a wicked race. The Moabites originally inhabited the country N. E. of the Dead Sea, subsequently driven S. of the Arnon by the Amorites. (38) **Ben-ammi** (*son of my own kindred*). **children of Ammon**, Ammonites, "an unsettled people who occupied the territory between the Jabbok and the Arnon, from which they had ejected the Rephaims or Zamzummims (Deut. ii. 22), and in which they possessed a strong city, Rabbah (2 Sam. xi. 1); in their habits more migratory and marauding than the Moabites (Isa. xv., xvi.; Jer. xlviii.), and in their religion, worshippers of Molech, 'the abomination of the Ammonites' (1 Kings xi. 7)." — *Pulp. Com.*

Lessons from the life of Lot. — I. The duty and advantage of hospitality (Lot and the angels). II. The enormous depravity of wh. human nature is capable (Sodom). III. The care and favor with wh. God regards the good (Lot saved when Sodom was destroyed). IV. Those who are hastening to heaven should not be content to go alone (Lot tried to save his family). V. Sinners when most careless and secure are often nearest to danger (the day on wh. Sodom was destroyed broke brightly). VI. The need of personal exertion and persevering diligence to escape the wrath to come. (Haste thee. Look not behind.) — *Bush*.

Deceitfulness of sin. — It hath many secret ways of insinuating; it is like a Delilah; it is like Jael to Sisera. Sin is a sweet poison, it tickleth while it stabbeth. The first thing that sin doth is to bewitch, then to put out the eyes, then to take away the sense and feeling. As Joab came with a kind salute to Abner, and thrust him under the fifth rib, while Abner thought of nothing but kindness, so sin comes smiling, comes pleasing and humoring thee, while it giveth thee a deadly stab. — *Burgess*.

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"The martyrs to vice far exceed the martyrs to virtue, both in endurance and in number. So blinded are we by our passions, that we suffer more to be damned than to be saved." — *Colton*.

the sin of Lot's daughters

a Ja. i. 8.

b Pr. xxiii. 31-33; 1 Co. x. 12.

"All excess is ill, but drunkenness is of the worst sort. It spoils health, dismounts the mind, and unmans men. It is quarrelsome, lascivious, impudent, dangerous, and mad." — *W. Penn.*

Moab and Ammon

c De. ii. 9; Nu. xxv. 1-3; xxi. 29.

d De. ii. 19.

"The character of the reputed ancestors of some men has made it possible for their descendants to be vicious in the extreme, without being degenerate; and there are some hereditary strokes of character by which a family may be as clearly distinguished as by the blackest features of the human face." — *Junius*.

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Abimelech
takes Sarah
and is
warned

a Ge. x. 19.

b Ge. xxvi. 28.

c Kurtz remarks
that she had her
youth renewed
since the visit of
the angels, when a
son was promised.
d Ps. cv. 14; Ez.
xxxiii. 14, 15.

e 2 K. xx. 3; 2 Co. i. 12.

"The confusion
and undesigned
inaccuracy so
often to be ob-
served in con-
versation, espe-
cially in that of
uneducated per-
sons, proves that
truth needs to be
cultivated as a
talent; as well as
recommended as
a virtue." — Mrs.
Fry.

Abimelech
repeats the
warning

f Ge. xxxi. 7; Pr.
xxi. 1; Lu. xli. 48;
Ps. li. 4.

g 1 S. vii. 5; Job
xlii. 8; 1 Jo. v. 16;
Ja. v. 14, 15.

Prophet, Heb.;
Nabi. One who
speaks in behalf of
God.

Abimelech
reproves
Abraham,
who excuses
his conduct

h Ge. xxvi. 10.

i Ex. xxxii. 21.

j Ps. xxxvi. 1; Pr. xvi. 6.

k Ge. xi. 29; 1 Th. v. 22.

l Ge. xli. 1; He. xi.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH

1-5. (1) **thence**, Mamre. **from** . . south, he also went **S. Kadesh** (*sacred*) in the S. of Canaan. **Shur** (*a fort*), a desert in the S. W. of Canaan. **Gerar** (*a longing place*), nr. Gaza,^a and Beersheba;^b anc. cap. of Philistia; ruins now prob. at Khirbel-el-Gerar. (2) **sister**, strange that, with the memory of former experience in Egypt, he should resort to same dissimulation. **Abimelech** (*father king*), a title as Pharaoh. **sent** . . Sarah, into his harem; she was 23 or 24 yrs. older than when in Egypt.^c (3) **God** . . night, a revelation fr. God to a heathen. **thou** . . man, *i. e.*, "thou art in danger of death;" the sin of adultery merited death. (4) **had** . . her,^d providentially hindered. **Lord** . . nation, he trusted that his people would not suffer through his sin. Perh. vividly recalled the destruction of Sodom. (5) **integrity**, *etc.*,^e he did not regard concubinage or polygamy as a sin.

The exact truth. — Two young masons were building a brick wall. One of them, in placing a brick, discovered that it was a little thicker on one side than the other. "It will make your wall untrue, Ben," the other said "Pooh!" answered Ben; "you're too particular." "My mother," replied he, "taught me that ever so little an untruth is a lie." "Oh," said Ben, "that's all very well; but I'm not lying." "Very true; but you make your wall tell a lie, and it will show itself sooner or later." "I'll risk it in this case," answered Ben. The next morning they went to resume their work, when, behold, the lie had wrought out the result of all lies. The wall, getting a little slant from the untrue brick, had got more and more untrue as it got higher, and at last, in the night, had toppled over. Just so with ever so little an untruth in your character; it grows more and more untrue if you permit it to remain, till it brings sorrow and ruin. Tell, act, and live the truth. — *Bib. Ill.*

6-8. (6) **withheld** . . me, God helps the conscientious. **suffered** . . her,^f laid him under mental restraint, or physical illness. (7) **he** . . live,^g God had proved A.'s power as an intercessor. Intercession was a regular function of the prophets. **and if**, *etc.*, God thus marks His abhorrence of the sin of adultery. (8) **told** . . ears, he would teach the lesson he had learned; and acc. for his subsequent conduct. **men** . . afraid, when they heard how near destruction another's sin had brought them.

God's appearance to Abimelech. — Observe — I. The manner of the revelation — by a dream. II. The substance of the reply. 1. An admission of Abimelech's plea, or an acknowledgment of his integrity of heart; 2. An instruction to him to take notice of God's providence with regard to him.

— *Bp. Sanderson.*

He is a prophet. — God had raised His servant to be a "prophet." With him God held such intimate intercourse as was not granted to other men, even in an age when Heaven lay more open to the eye of earth than it does now. This constituted him a mediator through whom the Divine will and favor could reach his contemporaries. Quite recently it had emboldened him to stand as intercessor between the sinful towns and the justice of Heaven. Even Abimelech was to be indebted for the pardon of his unwitting fault to the prayers of the very man who had misled him into it. "He is a prophet," said the Voice in his dream, "and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live." — *Dykes.*

9-13. (9) **what** . . us?^h placed us in peril by thy deceit. A well-grounded reproach this on the injustice of Abraham in involving Abimelech in sin. **what** . . thee,ⁱ only a great injury could furnish a plea. **hast** . . sin?^j kingdoms suffer when kings are vile. **deeds** . . done, reproofs are the more terrible when a child of God is the subject of them at the hands of a worldling. (10) **what**, *etc.*? what motive hadst thou? didst thou see my people taking the wives of strangers and murdering their husbands? (11) **surely** . . place, beware of rash conclusions; or of hastily judging of men's moral character. The man judged was, in this case, better than the man judging. **slay** . . sake,^j those who do not fear God will have little regard for human rights. (12) **and yet**, *etc.*,^k he tries to exonerate himself, but it is not legitimate since his motive was to deceive. (13) **when** . . wander, *etc.*,^l The word Elohim is invariably joined with a singular verb. Prob. an accommodation to the polytheistic standpoint of Abimelech. **I** . . her, he screens Sarah while he explains his own conduct.

Individual character. — Take the full stretch of time required by the Almighty in working out His purposes, and then it will be seen that under all appearances there was something which made every man chosen to leadership in the holy kingdom the best man that could have been chosen for the purpose. You say that Abimelech was better than Abraham, but you know nothing about Abimelech but what is stated in this chapter. You have seen Abimelech at his best and you have seen Abraham at his worst, and then you have rushed to a conclusion! This is not the right way to read history; certainly not the right way to read the Bible. We are not to set act against act but life against life. Take life for life, spirit for spirit, character for character, through and through, and no man who is without Christ can compare for true and lasting dignity of soul with the least in the kingdom of heaven. — *J. Parker.*

14—18. (14) Abimelech . . . Abraham, perh. to propitiate the favor of Abraham for the wrong he had done him. In the case of Pharaoh, some 20 yrs. bef. gifts were bestowed for the sake of Sarah. (15) behold, etc., not unlike the former address of A. to Lot. (16) brother, a gentle reproof. a . . . silver, prob. the value of the sheep and oxen: not money in addition. behold, etc., a propitiatory gift, which will lead her and hers to overlook the wrong done her. (17) Abraham . . . Abimelech, he causes joy where he had caused sorrow. (18) for, etc., "God had visited all with incapacity, wh. visitation was now removed."

Supplementary note on vs. 16. — The meaning of the latter part of the verse is much disputed. Knobel renders, "It (the gift of 1,000 shekels) is to thee a covering of eyes (*i. e.* shall shut thine eyes that they see not, *i. e.* shall blind thee that thou care not for what has happened, *i. e.* shall reconcile and make amends to thee) in ref. to all wh. is with thee and with all (*i. e.* which has happened to thee and thy companions); thus thou art righted (thine injury atoned for)." Similarly Keil, Delitzsch, and Lange. I prefer this rendering. The LXX. gives it, "These shall be to thee for an honor of thy countenance, and to all the women that are with thee; and speak the truth in all things." The Vulgate, "This shall be to thee for a veil of the eyes to all that are with thee, and wheresoever thou shalt go, and remember that thou hast been detected." — *Alford.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1—5. (1) and . . . said,^b God never forgets His word. (2) bare . . . age,^c nothing too hard for God. at . . . time, see on xvii. 21. (3) Isaac,^d laughter; or there shall be laughter, *i. e.* joy in obedience to the divine command. (4) as . . . him,^e God's faithfulness suggestive of duty of obedience. (5) and,^f etc., "after all delays and difficulties the promised mercies of heaven come at last" Abraham waited 25 yrs. for the fulfilment of the promise.

Birth of Isaac and of Christ. — 1. Both births were announced long before. 2. Both occurred at the time fixed by God. 3. Both persons were named before their birth. 4. Both births were supernatural. 5. Both births were the occasion of great joy. 6. Both births are associated with the life beyond. — *T. H. Leale.*

Unchangeableness of God. — We have passed through one more year. Thank God, we are quit of it! One more long stage in the journey of life, with its ascents, and descents, and dust, and mud, and rocks, and thorns, and burdens that wear the shoulders, is done. The old year is dead. Roll it away. Let it go. God, in His providence, has brought us out of it. It is gone; or rather its evil is gone: its good remains. The evil has perished, and the good survives. And now we stand on the beginning of the next, the new, the present year. That God who has lifted us out from one into another out from one path into another, out from one experience into another, never forgot. He never did less, but always more than He promised. He has done exceeding abundantly more than we asked or thought. By His grace we have been what we have been; by His grace we have experienced what we have experienced, and by His grace we shall have our experience in days to come. — *H. W. Beecher.*

6—8. (6) God . . . laugh,^g *i. e.* made me to rejoice. Her laughter of a different character recorded in xviii. 12. (7) who . . . said, etc., who could have

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"Whenever anything is spoken against you that is not altogether true, do not pass it by or despise it because it is false; but forthwith examine yourself, and consider what you have said or done that may administer a just occasion of reproof." — *Plutarch.*

Abraham intercedes for Abimelech

a lit. "a thousand silverlings," very little known of coins of this period. Cattle used to represent money with pastoral people; hence the word pecuniary is fr. Lat. pecus, cattle; cattle forming the chief wealth of the Romans, some of whose coins had the figures of animals stamped upon them.

"To despise money on some occasions leads to the greatest gain." — *Terence.*

Isaac is born

^b Ga. iv. 23, 28; Ge. xvii. 19.

^c He. xi. 11.

^d Ge. xvii. 19; Jos. xxiv. 3; Is. liv. 1.

^e Ge. xvii. 10; Ac. vii. 8.

^f Ge. xvii. 1, 17.

With God nothing can occur out of season, or fall otherwise than at the appointed time. — *Leale.*

Isaac is weaned

^g Ps. cxlii. 9; Lu. i. 58.

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The children of faith, though they may have their time of weeping, will also have their time to laugh. — *Leale*.

anticipated, or believed the possibility of so strange an event. (8) **weaned**, Heb. *vayiggamel*, of wh. the idea is, *return, requital, restitution*. Weaning was often delayed until the child was 3 yrs. of age (2 Mac. vii. 27), and . . . **feast**, most likely a religious festival.

Abraham's feast. — It is probable that Abraham gathered his friends and servants around him at this feast. The "prophet" would not be likely to miss such an opportunity of discoursing upon God's special favor to himself, and exhorting his company to trust in God, and to the praise of His name. They were all interested in those gifts of the Divine goodness imparted to this distinguished man, in whose seed all the families of the earth were to be blessed. — *Leale*.

**Ishmael
mocks Isaac**

a Ge. xvi. 15.

b Ga. iv. 29.

c Gesenius thinks it was "playing and dancing gracefully," and so attracting the favor of the father, wh. moved the envy of Sarah.

d Ga. iv. 22-31.

"God's favorites are the world's laughing-stocks." — *M. Henry*.

"Levity of character is the bane of all that is good and virtuous." — *Seneca*.

**Hagar and
Ishmael are
sent away**

e Ro. ix. 7, 8.

f Ge. xvii. 20, 21.

g Leatheren bottle prob. made of skin of goat or kid

h Jo. viii. 35.

"Our conduct, in many occasions of private life, may admit of a certain courage being exercised, which is not inferior to the warrior's bravery; some occasions require even more perseverance and endurance." — *Cicero*.

**the water is
spent**

"Bless God that such merciful pro-

9—11. (9) **son**,^a Ishmael was now fr. 15 to 17 yrs. old. **mocking**,^b prob. deriding or teasing Isaac,^c sarcastic laughter. (10) **cast out**,^d etc., rather unfitting on the part of Sarah in view of the fact that she had given Hagar to her husband. (11) **grievous**, the father of both had a paternal regard for ea., he was perplexed and committed his way to the Lord. Moreover, Abraham could not forget that for many years he had looked upon Ishmael as the heir of the promise.

Isaac and Ishmael separated. — It only needs a glance beneath the surface to see that the future course of these two great branches of the Abrahamic blood was destined to be so divergent, that their currents could no longer mingle with advantage to either. 1. So far as Ishmael was concerned, the archer and huntsman whose home was to be the desert, with his bow for his best inheritance, it was well that he should be early trained to the hardships of a nomadic chieftain. For his own comfort, he could not be too soon compelled to forego all idle dreams of one day succeeding to his father's estate. It was the kindest thing for the youth to send him away from his father's tents. Let it be remembered that he was not sent away from his father's God. 2. For Isaac's sake, on the other hand, it was scarcely less advisable to "cast out" the bondswoman's son. His yielding disposition was ill fitted to withstand the influence or endure the hostility of his older and more impetuous brother. Besides, the people of the covenant needed to be from the outset a separated people, kept clear of Gentile alliances. Ishmael's mother was a pagan slave; out of her Egyptian home he married a pagan wife. From all such close contact with heathendom it was requisite to guard the selected family through which a purer faith was to be transmitted. — *J. O. Dykes*.

12—14. (12) **let . . grievous**, be no longer sad or perplexed. **Sarah . . voice**, her desire received Divine confirmation. **Isaac . . called**,^e a clear limitation of promises to descendants of Abraham in the line of Isaac. (13) **and . . also**, etc.,^f be assured that even Ishmael shall not be forgotten. "It seemed to be a specialty of Abraham's descendants to multiply into nations; the very fact of descent from him is alleged as a reason why Ishmael should become one." — *Alford*. (14) **early etc.**, prompt obedience. **bottle**,^g Heb. *hemath*, i. e. a sack. **shoulder**, the usual manner of carrying burdens to this day. **and . . away**,^h with as much kindness and generosity as the circumstances allowed. **child**, Heb. *yeled*, boy, lad, stripling. **Beer-sheba**, see on vs. 31, ab. m. S. of Hebron.

Expulsion of Hagar. — The conduct of Abraham, in this instance, seems cruel and unkind. But it must be noted — 1. That he acted according to the Divine commands. His duty was clearly announced, but the performance of it was painful to his feelings. 2. Hagar, by this act, obtained her freedom. 3. The mother and son were not hereby excluded from the covenant. Ishmael had been circumcised, and had the covenant promises. Nor were they excluded from intercourse with Abraham's house (ch. xxv. 9.) 4. In this early age it was not a difficult thing to find a livelihood in the course of such a journey. Food could be obtained without injury to anyone. Accordingly we find that Ishmael chose to dwell in the wilderness, where he became an archer. The subsequent history shows that Hagar was able to provide for herself and her son.

15. 16. (15) **water . . bottle**, a serious loss in that hot country. **cast . . shrubs**, exhausted by the journey and thirst she laid him there, leaving him fainting and prostrate, and turning away that she might not be compelled to look upon the sufferings of her son. A most pitiful picture is here presented.

(16) **bowshot**, *i. e.*, as far as an archer is accustomed to place the target (Keil). let . . child, she believed him to be dying, and could not endure the sight. **lift . . wept**, feeling her misery and helplessness.

Hagar in the desert. — Consider: I. The position of Abraham's servants. Hagar is called "a bond woman;" but she was no slave. Hagar was in reality lady's maid to Sarah. II. What brought Hagar into the wilderness? The cause of it was the combined sin and folly of Sarah, Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael. Sarah's presumption in giving Hagar to her husband; Abraham's weakness in yielding; Hagar's contempt of her mistress; Ishmael's mockery. III. Her condition when in the desert. IV. The relief which, though unseen, was at hand. The well was close by when the bottle was empty. — *R. Grant.*

A bowshot. — This is a common figure of speech in their ancient writings. "The distance of an **arrow**. So far as the arrow flies." The common way of measuring a short distance is to say, "It is a *call* off," *i. e.* so far as a man's voice can reach. "How far is he off?" "Oh, not more than three *calls*," *i. e.* were three men stationed within the reach of each other's voices the voice of the one farthest off would reach to that distance. — *Roberts.*

17-21. (17) **God . . lad**, "his suffering and perishing condition had in itself a 'voice' which called loudly upon the divine compassion, and which God could hear." — *Bush.* **the . . God**, *i. e.* the Angel-Jehovah. **for . . his**, ref. to *condition* as well as *place*. (18) **hold . . hand**, support, comfort him, do not desert him. **for . . nation**, he shall not die. (19) **God . . eyes . . water**, not that she had hitherto lacked the use of these organs of sense, but the well of water had thus far escaped her notice. **gave . . drink**, quenched the fever, and refreshed him. (20) **God . . lad**, blessed him in temporal respects. **grew**, to a vigorous manhood. **archer**, not only as a means of living, but acc. to prediction, a warlike man. (21) **Paran**, prob. that now called *El-Tih*, *i. e.* "the wanderings." and . . **Egypt**, custom then in the E. for mothers to choose wives for their sons.^b [The similarity in the narrative which closes here with that of the sixteenth chapter is used by the critics as an evidence of the theory that Gen. was not written by Moses, but compiled from various documents.]

Thirst. — A writer tells of a surveying party who were resting at noon in Florida, when one of the chainmen exclaimed: "I would give fifty cents a swallow for all the water I could drink." While the men were thus talking, the surveyor saw a crow put his bill into a cluster of broad, long leaves, growing on the side of a tall cypress. The leaves were those of a peculiar air-plant. The surveyor sprang to his feet with a laugh. "Boys," he said, "that old crow is wiser than every one of us." "How so?" they asked. "Why, he knows that there are a hundred thousand water tanks in this forest." "Where?" they demanded, in amazement. The surveyor cut an air-plant in two, and drained nearly a pint of pure cold water from it. So God satisfies the longings of thirsty men. And God also provides living water for thirsty souls, and those who feel in their hearts longings such as earth can never satisfy, may hear the voice of Him who cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink!" — *Bib. Ill.*

22-24. (22) **Pichol** (*the mouth of all*) prob. a title, like Abimelech, grand vizier. **God . . doest**, hence A. would be valuable as an ally, invincible as a foe. (23) **that . . ne**, *lit.* "if thou shalt lie unto me," usual form of oath in E. **according, etc.**, even a heathen sees that kindness should be returned. (24) **and, etc.**, one of the earliest treaties on record. Both sides were equally bound.

Eastern wells. — Abraham takes occasion to remonstrate with Abimelech about a well which his people had seized. Wells were extremely valuable in Palestine on account of the long absence of rain between the latter or vernal rain ending in March, and the early or autumnal rain beginning in November. The digging of a well was therefore a matter of the greatest moment, and often gave a certain title to the adjacent fields. Hence the many disputes about wells, as the neighboring emirs or chieftains were jealous of rights so acquired, and often sought to enter by the strong hand on the labors of patient industry. — *Murphy.*

25-28. (25) **reproved**, argued, expostulated. **well**, a most valuable property in such a land, among a pastoral people. (26) **and . . said, etc.**, he evidently admitted the justice of the reproof. (27) **and, etc.**, intended for sacri-

B. C. cir. 1898.

vision is made in the Gospel for the relief and comfort of necessitous creatures; and, above all, be thankful that you have been engaged to seek and to prize it, while so many are, as it were, dying for thirst in the midst of these overflowing streams." — *Doddridge.*

"There is in the heart of woman such a deep well of love that no age can freeze it. — *Bulwer Lytton.*

Ishmael
revives and
grows to
manhood

a Ge. xvi. 12.

b Ge. xxiv. 4, 55: Ex. xxi. 10.

Prayer. — A minister once said to a boy, "Can you pray? How did you pray?" He said, "Sir, I begged." — *Vaughan.*

Abraham
makes a
covenant
with
Abimelech

c Jos. ii. 12.

d Ge. xxvi. 28: 1 S. xxiv. 21; Zec. viii. 23.

"The reproof of a good man resembles fuller's earth; it not only removes the spots from our

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character, but it rubs off when it is dry."—*Wilkinson*.

Beer-sheba

a "12 hrs. S. of Hebron are the ruins of an ancient town called *Bir es Seba*, with two wells of water" *Robinson, B. R., i. 204.*

b Ps. xc. 2 De xxxiii. 27; 1 Ti. i. 17.
c *Alford, Ge. xxii. 6.*

"Public characters cannot always be accountable for the misdeeds of those who act under them. They had need take care, however, what sort of servants they employ, as while matters are unexplained, that which is wrong is commonly placed to their account."—*Fuller*.

fice; Abraham, as a "prophet" of God, provided the victims for this religious rite. (28) *and, etc.*, prob. to ratify preceding covenant.

Eastern compacts.—Mr. Bruce, relating the manner in which a compact was made between his party and some shepherds in Abyssinia, says, "Medicines and advice being given on my part, faith and protection pledged on theirs, two bushels of wheat and seven sheep were carried down to the boat"

29-34. (29) *what . . mean, etc.*, the *heathen* was not familiar with Hebrew customs. (30) *and, etc.*, their acceptance by Abimelech, an acknowledgment of Abraham's ownership of the well (31) *Beer-sheba*,^a ("well of the oath," "well of the seven.") (32) *they . . Philistines*, *i. e.* Abimelech and Pichol. (33) *grove*, or a tamarisk-tree. They grow to a great height and furnish a wide shade. *and . . God*,^b not only *publicly* made a covenant, but *privately* sought help to keep it: the expression "the everlasting God" is only found in one other place, "as the everlasting Vindicator of the faith of treaties, and as the infallible Source of the believer's rest and peace."—*Murphy*. (34) *and . . days*, in wh. Isaac grew old enough to carry the wood for the offering.^c

Beer-sheba.—This locality was discovered by Robinson in *Bir-es-seba*, in the Wady-es-seba, twelve miles to the south of Hebron, with two deep wells of excellent water. The great well has an internal diameter at the mouth of twelve feet six inches. The shaft is formed of excellent masonry to a great depth until it reaches the rock, and at this juncture a spring trickles perpetually. Around the mouth of the well is a circular course of masonry, topped by a circular parapet of about a foot high; and at a distance of ten or twelve feet are stone troughs placed in a concentric circle with the well, the sides of which have deep indentations made by the wear of ropes on the upper edges. The second well, about 200 yards farther south, is not more than five feet in diameter, but is formed of equally good masonry, and furnishes equally good water.—*Pulp. Com.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

B. C. 1872.

Abraham is commanded to offer up Isaac

d Ja. i. 12; 1 Pe. i. 7; De. xlii. 3; 1 Co. x. 13.

e Jo. iii. 16.

f 2 Ch. iii. 1.

g Ps. cxix. 60; Ma. x. 37; Lu. xiv. 26.

"In all temptations and trials, believe that God the Father doth govern your temptations; that the Holy Spirit doth, and shall assist you; that Jesus Christ was tempted to overcome in you; that the saints on earth pray for you—this will uphold and stay thee up though in the depth of troubles."—*Greenham*.

1-3. (1) *things*, events previously recorded, esp. former trials. *tempt*,^d try, put to the test. For A.'s good, not His own information. *and . . am*, "what is thy pleasure" (*Arab.*) (2) *take, etc.*,^e words that remind A. of the value of the sacrifice demanded. "That Abraham did not stagger on receiving this astounding injunction may be accounted for by remembering that the practice of offering human sacrifices prevailed among the early Chaldeans and Canaanites, and that as yet no formal prohibition, like that of the Mosaic code, had been issued against them."—*Pulp. Com.* *Moriah*,^f (*vision*), prob. the mt. on wh the temple was built.—*Josephus*. (3) *early*,^g prompt, as usual; though now the duty was most painful. *saddled*, ordered it to be done by his servants. *two . . men*, *i. e.*, his servants, see Gen. xiv. 24. *and . . wood*, provided ag. dearth of proper fuel in what might be a desert, mountainous region, or other hindrances to obtaining it *rose up*, set himself to the work.

A difficulty removed.—How could God command Abraham to sacrifice his son? We reply: God never intended the death of Isaac. The command was only a severe test of the absolute faith and unswerving obedience of His servant Abraham. In the Napoleonic wars, it is said that once the emperors of Austria and Russia and the king of Prussia were discussing the unquestioning obedience of their soldiers. Each claimed the pre-eminence, in this regard, for his own soldiers. They were sitting in a room in the second story. To test the matter, they agreed that each in turn should call up his sentinel at the door, and command him to leap out of the window. First the Prussian monarch called his man. "Leap out of the window," was the order. "Your Majesty," said the soldier, "it would kill me." He was then dismissed, and the Austrian soldier was called. "Leap out of that window," commanded the emperor. "I will," said the man, "if you really mean what you say." He was in turn dismissed, and the Czar called his man. "Leap out of that window," cried the Czar. Without a word in reply, the man crossed himself, and started to obey, but of course was stopped before he had reached the window. Were the sovereigns guilty of murder? Surely not, because their purpose was not to sacrifice their soldiers, but only to test their obedience.—*Bib. Ill.*

4-8. (4) **third day**, from Beersheba to Moriah (afterwards Jerusalem) is about 45 miles. Assuming that he started late on the first day, traveled the whole of the second, and reached it early the third, would not make it difficult to account for the seemingly long time taken in making the journey. **saw . . of**, the Jewish tradition is that the place was pointed out by a luminous cloud. (5) **abide . . ass**, wh. he would not have said if the mt. had been *very far* off. The attendants were left behind partly to watch the animal, but also bec. the sacrifice was too solemn for any but the eyes of God. **come . . you**, he seems to have had faith that both would return.^a Some hold he intended to deceive his servants as to his purpose. (6) **wood . . son**,^b Isaac must have been strong to carry enough to consume the sacrifice.^c **fire**, brand or torch: another proof that the place was not *very* distant. **knife**, A. forgets nothing. The sacrifice is already offered in intention and will. **they . . together**, A. in silence; Isaac in wonder. (7) **where . . lamb**, (1.) Isaac is ignorant of his father's purpose, (2.) He is familiar with the customary sacrifice, which shows that sacrifice is not of Mosaic origin. (8) **God . . provide**, A. has unlimited faith in God. Heb. *yirah lo hasseh*, will see for Himself the lamb. "Tho' evasive to Isaac, yet happily framed."

Abraham and Isaac.—

It was noon—

And Abraham on Moriah bowed himself,
And buried up his face, and prayed for strength.
He could not look upon his son and pray;
But, with his hand upon the clustering curls
Of the fair kneeling boy, he prayed that God
Would nerve him for that hour.

He rose up and laid

The wood upon the altar. All was done.
He stood a moment, and a deep flush
Passed o'er his countenance; and then he nerved
His spirit with a bitter strength, and spoke:
"Isaac! my only son!" The boy looked up,
"Where is the lamb, my father?"—Oh the tones,
The sweet, familiar voice of a loved child!
What would its music seem at such an hour!—
It was the last deep struggle. Abraham held
His loved, his beautiful, his only son,
And lifted up his arm, and called on God—
And lo! God's angel stayed him—and he fell
Upon his face and wept.—*N. P. Willis.*

9-12. (9) **altar**, of earth, or loose stones. **bound . . son**,^d who now must have known, and acquiesced in his father's purpose. **laid . . wood**, and he finds that the victim is provided. (10) **and, etc.**,^e what shall prevent the consummation of the act? (11) **angel . . Lord**,^f the angel Jehovah, the covenant God. (12) **for, etc.**,^g "the idea is simply that he knew by a new proof, by having actually made trial of him."^h

The crucial test.—I. There come times in human life when men must undergo a crucial test. II. The crucial test can only take place in reference to that which we love and value most. III. Abraham's answer, "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb," is the sum of all mediatorial history; it is the main discovery of love. After all, what has the world done but to find an altar? It found the Cross; it never could have found the Saviour.—*J. Parker.*

Timely succor.—God is wise to conceal the succors he intends in the several changes of thy life, that so He may draw thy heart into an entire dependence on His faithful promise. Thus, to try the metal of Abraham's faith, He let him go on till his hand was stretched forth, and then he comes to his rescue

13, 14. (13) **behind . . ram**, *i. e.*, in the background behind the things immediately present. **thicket**, in wh. some see a type of the crown of thorns. **offered . . son**, but Isaac was the true type of Jesus, and virtually offered. (14) **Jehovah-jireh** (*the Lord will see, or provide*), see on vs. 8. in . . **seen**, "the sense of the proverb will probably be expressed by understanding it to mean that on the mount of Abraham's sacrifice Jehovah would afterwards reveal himself for the salvation of his people, as he then interposed

B. c. 1872.

behold the
fire, but
where is the
lamb

^a He. xi. 17-19.

^b Jo. xix. 17.

^c Jos. makes Is. 25 yrs. of age; others 33, wh. was the age of Christ at the crucifixion.

"I know not whether that word, 'my father,' did not strike Abraham as deep as the knife of Abraham could strike his son."—*Bp. Hall.*

Abraham
prevented
from offering
Isaac

^d Ma. xxvii. 2; Is. liii. 7; Ph. ii. 8; Jo. x. 17, 18.

^e He. xi. 17-19; Ja. ii. 21-24.

^f 1 S. xv. 22; Mi. vi. 7, 8; Ep. ii. 10.

^g Ro. viii. 32.

^h *Bush*. "The original 'I have known,' denotes an eventual knowing, a discovering by actual experiment."—*Murphy.*

Jehovah-
jireh

"He that made that beast brings him thither, fastens him there. Even in small

B. C. 1872.

things there is a great providence."—*Bp. Hall*.

Abraham dwells at Beer-sheba

a He. vi. 13, 14.

b Lu. i. 72-75; Ga. iii. 7-16; Ac. iii. 25.

"Isaac had never been so precious to his father, if he had not been recovered from death; if he had not been as miraculously restored as given. Abraham had never been as blessed in his seed, if he had not neglected Isaac for God. The only way to find comfort in an earthly thing is to surrender it in a believing carelessness into the hands of God."—*Bp. Hall*.

the pedigree of Rebekah

c Ge. xi. 29.

d The land of Uz. The country of Job was prob. so called fr. Huz.

e Fr. whom perh the Chaldeans were derived."—*Kalisch*.

f R. was the dau. of Isaac's first cousin.

B. C. 1860.

the death of Sarah

g 1 Ch. xxix. 15; Ps. cv. 9-12; He. xi. 9, 10; Ac. vii. 5; He. xi. 13.

"A burial place is the first land that A. has in Canaan."—*Lightfoot*.

Death is the solemn thought of the world. Abraham, the chief example

for the help of Abraham—a prophecy which was afterwards fulfilled in the manifestation of the Divine glory given in the Solomonic temple and in the incarnation of Jesus Christ."—*Pulp. Com.*

15—19. (15) angel, the same as in vs. 11. (16) By . . sworn,^a He could swear by no greater. God's final promise to A., confirming all the rest. because, etc., A. inherits the reward of faith. (17) seed . . enemies, i. e., they shall subdue them. To possess a gate was to hold the city to wh. it pertained. (18) seed . . blessed^b (see on xii. 3), they shall find their happiness in thy seed, i. e., in the Messiah (19) they . . together, the Divine blessing resting on both.

The promise to Abraham.—Notice—I. Its certainty—"by myself." By—I. One who is able to perform His promises; 2. One who is willing to perform His promises; 3. One with whom nonfulfilment of His word is impossible. II. Its chief points. 1. Prosperity in worldly affairs; 2. Increase of number; 3. Extension of dominion; 4. Ability to lay the world under eternal obligations. III. Its lessons to us. If we have faith and obedience like Abraham, like him, we shall also be blessed.—*C. Johnstone*.

Perpetuated blessings.—It has been asked why the goodness of one man should extend to, and be rewarded in, successive generations, covering the remotest ages, and reaching to the close of our present economy. But is it not a fact that in the world of providence the very same thing occurs? Has not, for instance, such a character as Howard, the great philanthropist left a mark upon the world that cannot be obliterated, and bequeathed influences that live after he has gone up higher? Do not millions shine in the light, and are not thousands of hearts warmed by the fires that were kindled in the days of the great reformation by Luther, by Ridley, Cranmer, Knox, Calvin and others? The discovery of printing, steam, the electric telegraph, are also illustrations, all tending to show that beneficent discoveries made by fathers break in benediction upon their children.—*Cumming*.

20—24. (20) and, etc.,^c this is prob. intended to intro. the acc. of the mar. of Isaac. Isaac was not to marry among the heathen, but with one who descended from the same stock as he. (21) Huz^d (? light sandy soil). Buz (contempt). Kemuel (? assembly of God). (22) Chesed^e (gain). Hazo (vision). Pildash (? flame). Jidlaph (weeping). Bethuel (? man of God). (23) Rebekah (enchaining).^f Nahor . . brother, his elder bro. (24) concubine, secondary wife. Reumah (exalted). Tebah (executioner). Gaham (? sunburnt). Tahash (badger or seal). Maacha (oppression).

The genealogy here given is undoubtedly introduced in order to make way for the following account of Isaac's marriage to Rebekah, a daughter of the family of Nahor. It was contrary to the design of heaven that the family of Abraham should intermarry with the heathen races among whom he now dwelt, and to add to the recent tokens of the Divine favor, he is now cheered by the welcome tidings of the prosperity of his brother's house, in which he would not fail to perceive how kindly God was preparing the way for the higher happiness of His son and the further fulfilment of His promises.—*Bush*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

1—4. (1) Sarah . . old, S. the only woman whose age is mentioned in the Bible. Her son, Isaac, was now 37 yrs. old. (2) Kirjath-arba (city of Arba), the Jews interpret it, "city of the four," bec. Adam, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were buried there. "Here Abraham had resided, and, having been absent some forty years, had returned. This was a most ancient city, the earliest seat of civilized life, having been built seven years before Zoan, the oldest capital of Egypt (Num. xiii. 22). It is now a town of some prominence, but chiefly notable for the mosque built over the tomb of Sarah."—*Jacobus*. Abraham . . her, either A. was absent fr. home or prob. he went to Sarah's tent. (3) and . . dead, "Abraham must be thought of as 'weeping over the face' of Sarah (2 Kings xiii. 14), and he rises up from the face of his dead."—*Alford*. sons of Heth, elsewhere called Hittites. (4) I . . you,^g as a nomad chief he wandered ab. with his flocks. give . . you, first mention of a burial.

The purchased grave (on the whole chapter). — Look upon the purchase of the field of Machpelah in its connection with: I. Sarah; it is a token of respect to the dead. The body deserves such respect, because: 1. It has been the man's dwelling place; 2. It has assisted the soul to express itself; 3. It is destined for a higher and nobler service. II. Abraham himself. It shows that he prepared for death. III. The Jewish nation. It serves as a monument for their instruction. — *Jenkins Jones*.

Sarah. — She is the only woman in the sacred writings whose age, death and burial are distinctly noted. And she has been deemed worthy of higher honor; for Paul (Gal. iv. 22, 23) makes her a type of the church of Christ; and her faith is particularly celebrated in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. xi. 11). With Sarah the promise of the incarnation of Christ commenced, though a comparatively obscure prophesy of it had been delivered to Eve, and with Mary it terminated, having had its exact completion. Thus God put more honor upon those two women than upon all the daughters of Eve besides. — *A. Clarke*.

5-9. (5) saying, acc. to LXX., "Saying, not so." (6) lord, a title of respect like our *sir*. mighty prince,^a *lit.* a prince of God: in ref. to his wealth. choice, etc., either "the choicest of our," etc., or, "in any thou shalt choose." (7) and . . stood, in buying and selling, the traders sat down, and when the bargain was made they rose up and courtesied. (8) If . . mind, if this be your pleasure, if you are willing. Ephron (*fawn-like*). Zohar (*whiteness*). (9) give, sell, let me have, the intercession of mediators is a universal custom in the east. Machpelah,^b (*double cave*), either a cave having two cavities or two entrances. It was the custom to bury in caves, natural or artificial. for . . worth, a fair price. Heb. *bakkeseeph*, for full silver, the first money transaction on record.

Oriental politeness. — The politeness of Abraham may be seen exemplified among the highest and the lowest people of the East: in this respect nature seems to have done for them what art has done for others. With what grace do all classes bow on receiving a favor, or in paying their respects to a superior! Sometimes they bow down to the ground; at other times they put their hands on their bosoms, and gently incline the head; they also put the right hand on the face in a longitudinal position; and sometimes give a long and graceful sweep with the right hand, from the forehead to the ground. — *Roberts*.

10-16. (10) audience . . city, gate of city was the forum, place of justice, business, etc. (11) Lord . . give, etc., customary expressions of politeness, still com. in transacting business in the E. He had no desire to fix a price, but he desired an equivalent. (13) give . . field, A. insists on paying a fixed price for it. (15) four . . silver, as the word *shekel* = weight, the value of these 400 "weights" of silver not accurately known, but reckoning the shekel at about 60 cents, he paid about \$240. (16) current . . merchant, *lit.* silver passing with the merchant.

Arab politeness. — In making purchases from an Arab his politeness is almost amazing. When the price is asked, he replies, "Whatever you please, my lord." When pressed for a more definite answer, he says, "Take it without money." One cannot but remember, under any circumstances, Abraham's treaty with the sons of Heth for the cave of Machpelah. Our feelings of romance, however, are somewhat damped when we find that the price ultimately demanded is four or five times the value of the article. An Arab always tells you that his house is yours, his property is yours, he himself is your slave; that he loves you with all his heart, would defend you with his life, etc., etc. This all sounds very pretty, but it would be just as well not to rely too much on it, for fear of disappointment. — *Porter*.

17-20. (17) field, district, portion of land. sure, Heb. *yakom*, stood; i. e. were made stable, confirmed. (18) before . . city, the bargain was ratified in the presence of competent witnesses. "This also is true to life. When any sale is now to be effected in a town or village, the whole population gather about the parties at the usual place of concourse, around or near the gate where there is one." — *Thomson's "Land and Book"*. (19) and . . this, having secured and paid for the land. before Mamre, in the face of; or, E. of M. (20) were . . Abraham,^d *lit.*, "stood firm to Abraham."

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of strong and
unshattering faith,
weeps for his dead.
— *Leale*

Death only draws
up the veil and
reveals the glories
of heaven to the
emancipated soul
of the Christian.

Abraham
treats for
the cave of
Machpelah

a Ge. xiii. 2; xlv.
14.

b Robinson, B. R.
ii. 431; Thomson, L.
and B., 580; Stan-
ley, *Serm. in E.*,
append x.

Courtesy smooths
the business of
human life, and
even goes very far
towards taking
away the grossness
from things evil. —
Leale.

Abraham
buys the
cave

c In later times
the LXX. and
the N. Test. (Ma.
xvii. 24) identify
the shekel with
the didrachma,
wh. would make
the shekel nearly
 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. 220 grains
of our weight, or
a little less in
value than half
a crown of our
present money.
The field, there-
fore, would have
been purchased
for about £52 10s."
— *Spk. Com.*

the burial
of Sarah

d Ge. i. 13; Je.
xxxii. 10, 11; Ru.
iv. 7-10.

"It buries every
error—covers
every defect—

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extinguishes every resentment. From its peaceful bosom springs none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave of an enemy, and not feel a compunctious throb that he should have warred with the poor handful of dust that lies mouldering before him?" — *Washington Irving*. "The grave is the common treasury to which we must all be taxed." — *Burke*.

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Abraham sends his servant to find a wife for Isaac

a Ge. xxi. 5.

b Ge. xv. 2.

c Ge. xlvii. 29.

d Ge. xxvii. 46; 2 Co. vi. 14.

e De vii. 3.

"The homeliest services that we do in an honest calling, though it be but to plough, or dig, if done in obedience, and conscious of God's commandment, is crowned with an ample reward." — *Bishop Hall*.

f Ex. xxiii. 20; Ps. xxxiv. 7.

"God has set the type of marriage before us throughout all creation. Each creature seeks its perfection through being blended with another. Precious, excellent, glorious is that word of Holy Ghost, 'the heart of the husband doth safely trust in her.'" — *Luther*.

The cave of Macpelah. — A Mohammedan mosque is built over the cave, and ordinarily no Christian is allowed to enter the mosque. An exception was made for the Prince of Wales and his party in 1862, but not even the Mohammedans themselves attempt to enter the cave beneath. See an interesting account of the Prince of Wales' visit in *Stanley's Jewish Church*, vol. I. *appendix. Sarah's tomb.* — Only one European, Pierotti, an Italian architect in the service of the Sultan, has ever seen more than the floor of the upper chamber, with its six tawdry erections, placed there in accordance with a practice usual in Mahometan sepulchres. Pierotti, daringly pressing after the chief Sanon, or priest of the mosque, when he was entering the lower story on a special occasion, found the entry was by a horizontal door in the porch. First a carpet, then a grated iron door, was lifted; after which a narrow stair appeared, cut in the rock. Undeterred by blows and violence, he managed to descend this far enough to see into the lower cavern in a northern direction, and to notice sarcophagi of white stone; the true tombs of some of the illustrious dead, in striking corroboration of the statement of Josephus, that they were of fair marble, exquisitely wrought. There can be little doubt, indeed, that the remains of the three generations of patriarchs and their wives, Rachel alone excepted, still lie safely in this their venerable sepulchre. — *C. Geikie*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

1-6. (1) *old*,^c 137 yrs. at death of Sarah; and 140 at mar. of Isaac, who was then 40. (2) *servant*,^b prob. Eliezer of Damascus. *hand . . thigh*, form of adjuration mentioned only in one *other* place, where Jacob requires the same ceremony from Joseph.^c (3) *take . . Canaanites*,^d a licentious, heathen, doomed race. (4) *go . . country*,^e Mesopotamia, vs. 10, his people were the Shemites. (5) *will . . land*, a natural supposition, commendable caution. (6) *beware . . again*, not that I. ever lived there, but because he regarded him, tho' unborn, as coming out with him; or bec. he viewed himself and descendants as a whole.

How Isaac got his wife. — I. The careful father. 1. Abraham's godliness. 2. Abraham's steadfast faith in God's promises and God's providence. 3. Abraham's prudent precautions. II. The prayerful servant. 1. His prayer. 2. His patience. 3. His praise. 4. His prudence. III. The wished for wife. 1. Her beauty. 2. Her graciousness. 3. Her energy. 4. Her resoluteness. IV. The issue. 1. What Abraham desired. 2. What Eliezer prayed for. 3. What Isaac wanted. — *W. S. Smith*.

Marriage in the East. — Among the Jews the father of a family selects wives for his sons, and husbands for his daughters. If a son had a preference for any person as his wife, he asked the father to obtain her from *her* father. No young man thinks of making a marriage contract for himself. In case the father is dead, the eldest brother takes the father's place. Where the intended bride lives at a distance, the matter is sometimes intrusted to some faithful servant or agent, as was done by Abraham in relation to his son Isaac. — *Grant's Nestorians*.

7-9. (7) *The . . heaven*, Heb. *Jehovah, the God of heaven*. *he . . thee*,^f A. believes that his servant's way will be opened and all hindrances will be removed. *thou . . thence*, meaning his mission was to be successful. (8) *if . . thee, etc.*, the servant's responsibility ceased when he had done all he could. A. has no doubt of the issue. *only . . again*, on no acc. is the servant to promise his kindred to return and bring Isaac thither. (9) *master*, Heb. *adonai*, lord.

Bring not my son thither again. — "Bring not my son thither again" — I. Lest he fall into the habits of his kindred. II. Lest my own labors prove to have been in vain. III. Lest the promises made to me be annulled. IV. Lest thou thyself be ever troubled with the gnawings of an awakened conscience, and a sense of a non-fulfilment of thy duty to me. — *J. A. Woodhead*.

His angel. — Abraham was persuaded God would send His angel to bring the affair to a happy issue. And when we seem drifting toward some great upturning of our life, or when things seem to come all of a sudden and in crowds upon us, so that we cannot judge what we should do, it is an animating thought that another eye than ours is penetrating the darkness, finding for us a way through all entanglement and making crooked things straight for us. — *Dods*.

10-14. (10) **ten** . . **master**, to carry the presents, to maintain the dignity of his master, and carry back the bride and her attendants. **for** . . **hand**, implying that the camels were well laden; many servants also needed for protection. **unto** . . **Nahor**, Haran or Charran,^a (11) **kneel**, posture of camel resting. **time** . . **water**, *lit.* at the time of the going forth of the woman-drawers of water. "It is the work of *females* in the East to draw water both morning and evening; and they may be seen going in groups to the wells, with their vessels on the hip or on the shoulder."—*Roberts' "Oriental Illustrations."* (12) **send** . . **speed**, Heb. *hatereh*, cause it to happen. (13) **behold**, *etc.*, the season is opportune; all the industrious and healthy daughters of the people will come hither. (14) **and** . . **pass**,^b he seeks evidence of God's choice. **to** . . **say**, he would use his judgment in accosting the most likely. **let** . . **drink**, he would test her amiability by a simple request. **and she**, *etc.*, the sign fixed upon was the kindly disposition of the maiden. **let** . . **Isaac**, one of such a temper and so employed would be a suitable wife for a pastoral chief. **thereby** . . **master**,^c he thinks more of his master than of himself.

The wells.—A modern guide book could hardly furnish a truer picture of what occurs at the close of every day in the vicinity of Eastern villages than this description written so many thousand years ago. The wells exist almost universally just out of the town; those who draw water are women; they carry their pitchers upon their heads or shoulders; and often have to go down a flight of steps in order to reach the water. How vividly depicted in my mind are the scenes embodying these traits of oriental life. — *Hackett.*

15-20. (15) **before**, *etc.*,^d his fidelity rewarded by a prompt answer. *vs.* 45 shows that the prayer was not articulate, but offered "in his heart." **Rebekah**, *etc.*,^e see on xxii. 20. **shoulder**, a practice com. with the Hebs. (16) **fair** . . **upon**, not simply good-looking, but appearing good, *lit.* "good of countenance." **virgin** . . **her**, unmarried, chaste, modest. **neither** . . **her**, a repetition of former thought, by way of emphasis. **went** . . **well**, steps leading to it. (17) **ran**, *etc.*, his eagerness denotes his hopefulness. (18) **drink**,^f first pt. of required sign is met. **lord**, equivalent to our *sir*. If the servant was Eliezer, he was prob. an old man. (19) **said**, without being asked: last pt. of the sign. (20) **hasted**, alacrity in kindness.

Rebekah.—**Rebekah**—I. Came of good stock. II. Was trained in habits of industry. III. Had a virtuous character: looked good, was chaste, and modest—did not speak first to the servant. IV. Was courteous, "my lord." V. Was good-natured: cheerfully doing more than requested. Let maidens seek to be like Rebekah.

Drawing water.—Her response was prompt and cordial. She was bearing her pitcher upon her shoulder, as we suppose, and naturally let it down upon her hand. This civility and courtesy added to the already favorable impression. It happened somewhat differently with us. We came up to a cistern. hewn out of the limestone rock, and were very thirsty after a hot ride on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem. The cistern was well supplied with rain-water, covered over with green scum. Our dragoon let down his skin bucket or bottle by a cord, and drew up the water clear and cool from beneath the surface. He poured it into a cup and was handing it to one of our ladies, when an old sheikh, who had escorted us, seized the cup, demanding to be served before the lady. On his being stoutly refused by our dragoon, he mounted his beast in a surly mood and rode off immediately. —*Jacobus.*

21-25. (21) **wondering**, *etc.*, amazed; rapt in contemplation; attitude of expectancy. **held** . . **peace**, thinking perh. that her tongue would betray her. (22) **ear-ring**, *R. V.*, "a golden ring," prob. nose-ring: still worn in E. **bracelets**, *etc.*, what present more likely to succeed. (23) **whose** . . **thou**? he desired to know of her kindred, *vs.* 4. **is** . . **in**? by this he might judge of the size of the establishment. (24) **and**, *etc.*, her answer resolved his doubts, confirmed his hopes, filled him with joy.

Earring.—The thing really intended seems to be a ring or jewel for the nose; but our translators, having no knowledge of such an ornament, which seemed to them to imply an absurdity, have carefully avoided the true idea everywhere, except in Isa. iii. 21, the translator of which portion had probably gained some information, not possessed by the others, of this peculiarity of

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the servant
departs to
the City
of Nahor

^a Ge xxvii. 43; cf. xi. 31; Ac. vi. 2.

^b Ne. i. 11; Ps. xxvii. 5; Pr. iii. 5, 6; Ph. iv. 6.

^c Ju. vi. 17; 1 S. vi. 7; xiv. 10; xx. 7.

"Marriage is the best state for man in general; and every man in a worse man in proportion as he is unfit for the marriage state."

Johnson.—"When we are thoughtful, energetic and faithful in doing our own part, then we have the best reason for trusting in Providence."

Rebekah

^d Is. lxxv. 24; Da. ix. 28; Ps. xxxiv. 15.

^e Pr. xxxi. 27.

^f Pr. xxxi. 26; 1 Pe. iii. 8.

"If it is remembered that camels, though endowed in an almost marvelous degree with the power of enduring thirst, drink, when an opportunity offers, an enormous quantity of water, it will be acknowledged that the trouble to which the maiden cheerfully submitted required more than ordinary patience."—*Kalisch.*

Rebekah was a true mother of the Church, for it is the office of the Church to perform large and cheerful services for mankind.—*Hom. Com.*

**Rebekah's
kindness
and its
reward**

"It is sufficient if we have clear light for the next duty which lies before us. When Providence opens our way we should follow."

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"Kin^d less in woman, not her beautiful looks, shall win my love." — *Shakespeare*

Rebekah tells her mother

a Ge xxxii 10; Ps cxviii. 3.

"The good wife is none of our dainty dames, who love to appear in a variety of suits every day new. But our good wife sets up a sail according to the keel of her husband's estate; and, if of high parentage, she doth not so remember what she was by birth, that she forgets what she is by match." — *Fuller*.

"Take the daughter of a good mother." — *Fuller*.

Laban and Eliezer

b Ge. xxvii. 43-45; xxix. 1-30; etc.

c Pr. xix. 6. d Job xxiii. 12; Jo. iv. 34; Ep. vi. 5-8; Ma. vi. 33.

"There is no mean work, save that which is sordidly selfish; there is no irreligious work save that which is morally wrong; while in every sphere of life 'the post of honor is the post of duty.'" — *Chapin*.

"Whoso escapes a duty avoids a gain." — *Theo. Parker*.

Eliezer's address

e Pr. x. 22; xxii. 4.

"It is meet that we should plume ourselves rather on acting the part of a servant properly than that of the master, first, towards the laws, and next towards our elders." — *Plato*.

"The great high-road of human welfare lies along

Oriental ornament. Yet all their care could not preclude an occasional allusion to it, as in Prov. xi. 22, where it could not but be rendered "a jewel in a swine's snout." The extensive use of nose ornaments among the Arabian and other females of the East having now become known, modern translators render the present text "nose ring," as is done in the Arabic and Persian versions. — *Bush*.

26—28. (26) worshipped, thanking God for this happy termination of his journey. (27) Blessed, etc., if vocal, it was uttered while R. was running to the house. I . . way, one must be in the way of duty, obedience, providence, if he would have God to lead him. (28) ran, full of wonder at what she had heard; and joy, bec. of the presents she had received. her . . house, women's apartments or tents distinct fr. those of the men. A dau. in the E. is more familiar with her mother than her father. things, that a messenger had come from Abraham. Perh. the nose-ring and bracelets might tell their own story.

Mothers and daughters. — This relation should be marked by — I. Confidence on the side of the daughter. II. Sympathy on the side of the mother. Learn — (1) Happy the mother whose daughter withholds no secrets from her; (2) Happy the daughter whose mother is always ready to hear and advise.

"I being in the way." — That is the great thing, to get into the way. What is the way? It is doing what the Bible tells us; it is loving Jesus, and trusting Jesus, and doing things for His sake. It is trying to look on things as Jesus would look on them, and trying to do things as Jesus would do them. That is getting on the way. The way to Jesus is trying to be like Jesus. But how did this man keep the way? You know, many get on the right road at the first, but afterwards, when they come to cross-roads, and roads that lead out of roads, they often go astray. How did this man keep the right way? Because the Lord led him! "I being in the way, the Lord led me." Yes; and when we are on the way to the house of the Master's brethren, the Lord Himself goes with us, and leads us. — *J. Reid Howatt*.

29—33. (29) Laban^b (*white*), prob. a youth at this time. The supposition is, in view of the prominence of Laban in the transaction, that Bethuel was dead. (30) saw . . hands, etc., tho' seemingly disinterested, yet in view of the mercenary character of Laban as afterwards revealed, no doubt the sight of the jewels appealed strongly to his covetous mind. (31) come . . without? Laban influenced by customs of hospitality, and perh. also by his sister's presents, c for . . camels, Laban had ordered the servants to do this. (32) man . . house, i. e., A's servant. he . . camels, i. e., Laban. water . . feet, see on xviii. 4. (33) eat . . errand, d he had come a long journey, yet thinks more of his master's interests than his own gratification.

Duty and self-denial. — There is a beautiful legend illustrating the blessedness of performing our duty at whatever cost to our own inclination. A beautiful vision of our Saviour had appeared to a monk, and in silent bliss he was gazing upon it. The hour arrived at which it was his duty to feed the poor of the convent. He lingered not in his cell to enjoy the vision, but left it to perform his humble duty. When he returned, he found the blessed vision still waiting for him, and uttering these words, "Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled."

34—38. (34) and, etc., the master's name would at once intro. him. (35) greatly, e variously, abundantly. great, rich and powerful. flocks, etc., elements of wealth that would be well understood by these pastoral people. (36) Sarah, they would recall her name. son . . old, a hint that Isaac was now young. him . . hath, this young man, the sole heir. (37, 38) swear, see on vs. 8.

A faithful servant. — The Rev. S. W. Hanna says: "On the 10th of June, 1770, the town of Port-au-Prince was utterly overthrown by a dreadful earthquake. From one of the falling houses the inmates had fled, except a negro woman, the nurse of her master's infant child. She would not desert her charge, though the walls were even then giving way. Rushing to its bedside, she stretched forth her arms to enfold it. The building rocked to its foundation — the roof fell in. Did it crush the hapless pair? The heavy fragments fell indeed upon the woman, but the infant escaped unharmed; for its noble protectress extended her bended form across the body, and at the sacrifice of her own life preserved her charge from destruction."

39—41, see on vss. 5-8.

Eliezer's speech (vss. 34-49). — Eliezer's speech, the first in the Bible, considered as—I. The speech of a servant. II. The speech of a master. III. A speech which turns the heart to the master.

Examples of successful men. — Amos Lawrence said, when asked for advice, "Young man, base all your actions upon a principle of right; preserve your integrity of character; and in doing this, never reckon the cost." A. T. Stewart, the merchant-prince of New York, says, "No abilities, however splendid, can command success without intense labor and persevering application." Nicholas Longworth, the Cincinnati millionaire, says, "I have always had these two things before me: Do what you undertake thoroughly. Be faithful in all accepted trusts."

42—46, see on vss. 12-14.

Eliezer's piety (vss. 42-44). — Eliezer, the earthly messenger of Abraham, in the convoy of the heavenly messengers. A pious diplomat, accompanied by the Angel of the Lord. The love and truth of God is a foundation for love and truth among men. — *Lange*.

Women drawing water. — It is still the proper business of the females to supply the family with water. From this drudgery, however, the married women are exempted, unless when single women are wanting. The proper time for drawing water in those burning climates is in the morning, or when the sun is going down; then they go forth to perform that humble office, adorned with their trinkets, some of which are often of great value. Agreeably to this custom, Rebekah went instead of her mother to fetch water from the well, and the servant of Abraham expected to meet an unmarried female there who might prove a suitable match for his master's son. The young women of Guzerat daily draw water from the wells, and carry the jars upon the head; but those of high rank carry them upon the shoulder. In the same way Rebekah carried her pitcher; and probably for the same reason — because she was the daughter of an Eastern prince.

47—49. (47—48^a), see on vss. 22-26. *my . . daughter*, Rebekah was A.'s brother's grand-dau. A way Orientals have of mixing up relationships. It has its origin in the unity of the family, so strongly held by the ancient Hebrews. (49) *if . . master*, if you will respond to his wish. *that . . turn*, i. e. go elsewhere to fulfil my mission.

Eastern marriages. — The whole conduct of this affair is calculated to surprise an European reader. A servant is sent on a distant journey, with full powers to select a wife, and conclude a marriage for his master's son. The servant addresses himself to the lady's father and brother, and they agree to his proposals without consulting Rebekah. The agent makes valuable presents to the lady and her relations, and carries her away, and Isaac and Rebekah meet as man and wife without having ever seen each other before; but all this is most precisely analogous to uses which still prevail in the East, with some small diversity in different nations. — *Bush*.

50—54. (50) *Laban*, a bro. acting as joint guardian of his sister. *Bethuel*, who may have been aged and infirm. *The . . Lord*, this they knew fr. the details to wh. they had listened. *we . . good*, i. e. cannot say anything against the measure. (51) *behold, etc.*, acc. to custom the matter was settled by the guardians of R., analogous to usages still prevalent in the East. (52) *worshipped*,^b thanking God for the successful issue of his mission. (53) *jewels, etc.*, bridal gifts to confirm the contract. (54) *they . . drink*, the mission accomplished, he reclined to eat and drink. *send . . master*, this servant was no loiterer.

Calmness and resolution in duty. — There are few things more beautiful than the calm and resolute progress of an earnest spirit. The triumphs of genius may be more dazzling; the chances of good fortune may be more exciting; but neither are at all so interesting or so worthy as the achievements of a steady, faithful, and fervent energy. The moral elements give an infinitely higher value to the latter, while, at the same time, they bring it comparatively within the reach of all. Genius can be the lot of only a few; good fortune may come to any, but it would be the part of a fool to wait for it; whereas all may work with heartiness and might in the work to which they have given themselves. — *Tulloch*.

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the old highway of steadfast well-doing; and they who are the most persistent, and work in the truest spirit, will invariably be most successful; success treads on the heel of every right effort." — *S. Smiles*.

"The hand that hath made you fair, hath made you good; the goodness that is cheap in beauty, makes beauty brief in goodness; but grace being the soul of your complexion should keep the body of it ever fair." — *Shakespeare*.

"A virtuous mind in a fair body is indeed a fine picture in a good light, and therefore it is no wonder that it makes the beautiful sex all over charms." — *Addison*.

a Ps. xxxii. 8; xlviii. 14; Pr. iii. 6.

"We all originally came from the woods; it is hard to eradicate from any of us the old taste for the tattoo and the war-paint; and the moment that money gets into our pockets, it somehow or another breaks out in ornaments on our person, without always giving refinement to our manners." —

Whipple.

Laban and Bethuel consent

^b Ps. cxvi. 1, 2.

The Church promptly obeys the call of her Lord, and listens to no other voice. She is persuaded that in Him alone all her joy and prosperity are to be found. — *Hom. Com.*

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Rebekah consents

a Ge. xxxv. 8.

"It is the most momentous question a woman is ever called upon to decide, whether the faults of the man she loves are beyond remedy, and will drag her down, or whether she is competent to be his earthly redeemer, and lift him to her own level. — *Holmes*.
 "It is a mistake to consider marriage merely as a scheme of happiness. It is also a bond of service. It is the most ancient form of that social ministration which God has ordained for all human beings." — *Chapin*.

Isaac meets Rebekah

b Jos. i. 8; Ps. i. 2; lxxii. 12; cxix. 15; cxliii. 5.

"It is customary for both men and women, when an Emir or great personage is approaching, to alight some time before he comes up to them. Women frequently refuse to ride in the presence of men; and when a company of them are to pass through a town, they often dismount and walk." — *Thomson*.
 "Meditation is the soul's perspective glass, whereby, in her long removes, she discerneth God, as if he were nearer at hand." — *Feltham*.

Rebekah and Isaac are married

c Eph. v. 25, 28.

"When it shall please God to bring thee to man's estate, use great providence and circumspection in choosing thy wife. For from thence will spring all thy future good or evil; and it is an action of life, like unto a strategem

55—60. (55) **brother**, source of authority. **mother**, moved by affection. **let . . . ten**, R. was a good dau., of whom they were not anxious to be rid (56) **hinder, etc.**, he perh. is thinking of his master's anxiety for his return. (57) **inquire, etc.**, as to the time she preferred in departing. (58) **I will go**, it shall not be told Isaac that she was an unwilling bride. (59) **nurse**, as a female attendant and friend; one who by her relation was dear. Her name was Deborah. (60) **blessed, i. e.** invoked a blessing. **mother, etc.**, this is the form of an ancient solemn benediction. To be the mother of a great progeny was considered a great honor. **seed . . . gate**, see on Gen. xxii. 17.

Rebekah and her nurse. — How often have scenes like this led my mind to the patriarchal age! The daughter is about for the first time to leave the paternal roof: the servants are all in confusion; each refers to things long gone by, each wishes to do something to attract the attention of his young mistress. One says, "Ah! do not forget him who nursed you when an infant;" another, "How often did I bring you the beautiful lotus from the distant tank! Did I not always conceal your faults?" The mother comes to take leave. She weeps, and tenderly embraces her, saying, "My daughter, I shall see you no more. Forget not your mother." The brother enfolds his sister in his arms, and promises soon to come and see her. The father is absorbed in thought, and is only aroused by the sobs of the party. He then affectionately embraces his daughter, and tells her not to fear. As Rebekah had her nurse to accompany her, so at this day the *Aya* (the nurse) who has from infancy brought up the bride, goes with her to the new scene. She is her adviser, her assistant, and friend; and to her will she tell all her hopes and all her fears. — *Roberts*.

61—64. (61) **damsels**, perh. part of her dowry. (62) **Lahai-roi**, see on Gen. xvi. 14. (63) **meditate**,^b reflect or pray. **eventide**, the still hour. **behold . . . coming**, their forms catching the last rays of the setting sun. (64) **she . . . camel**, in token of respect to her future husband.

Isaac's meditation (on vs. 63). — Very admirable, was — I. His occupation. Meditation extracts the real nutriment from the mental food gathered elsewhere. II. The choice of place. In the field we have a study hung round with texts for thought. III. The season. The season of sunset, as it draws a veil over the day, befits that repose of the soul when earthborn cares yield to the joys of heavenly communion. — *Spurgeon*.

Meditation of Isaac. — The Hebrew word does not relate to religious meditation exclusively. The leading idea seems to be an anxious, a reverential, a painful, a depressed state of mind. "Out of the abundance of my meditation and grief have I spoken" (1 Sam. i. 16) are the words of Hannah to Eli. Isaac went out into the fields, not directly to pray, but to give ease to a wounded spirit in solitude. What was the occasion of this? One of the last things recorded to have happened before the servant went to Haran, whence he was now returning, is the death and burial of Sarah. What more likely than that her loss was the subject of Isaac's mournful meditation on this occasion? But this conjecture is reduced almost to certainty by a few words incidentally dropped at the close of the chapter; for having lifted up his eyes and beheld the camel's coming, it is added, "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent. . . and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death" (vs. 67). — *Blunt's Undesigned Coincidences*.

65—67. (65) **what . . . man, etc.**, half suspecting perh., since they were nearing their destination. **took . . . herself**, an early custom for the bride to veil herself in the presence of her betrothed. Still all but universal in the E. (66) **servant . . . done**, explaining who the veiled maiden was. (67) **Isaac . . . tent**, treating her with delicate attention. **and . . . wife**, the primitive marriage ceremony consisted merely of taking a woman in the presence of witnesses (see Ruth iv. 13.) **loved**,^c yet he had small acquaintance with her. **after . . . death**, implying that his mother had been a great comforter before. An interval of three years elapsed between the death of S. and the marriage of I.

Isaac's marriage. — This is the first mention of the social affections. It comes in probably because Isaac had not before seen his bride, and now felt his heart drawn towards her, when she was presented to his view. All things were evidently done in the fear of God, as became those who were to be the progenitors of the seed of promise. We have here a description of the

primeval marriage. It is a simple taking of a woman for a wife before all witnesses, and with suitable feelings and expression of reverence towards God, and of desire for His blessing. It is a pure and holy relation, reaching back into the realms of innocence, and fit to be the emblem of the humble, confident, affectionate union between the Lord and His people. — *Murphy*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

1-4. (1) *Keturah* (*incense*) called his concubine.^a Uncertain when he took her. (2) *Zimran* (*celebrated in song*). *Jokshan* (*a fowler*). *Medan* (*contention*). *Midian* (*strife*), ancestor of the Midianites.^b *Ishbak* (*leaving*). *Shuah* (*a pit*). The tribe to which Bildad, Job's friend, belonged. (3) *Sheba* (*an oath, or seven*). Prob. the Sabeans who plundered Job. *Dedan* (*low ground*). *Asshurim* (*steps*). *Letushim* (*the hammered*). *Leummim* (*peoples*). (4) *Ephah*^d (*darkness*). *Epher* (*a calf*). *Hanoch* (*initiating*). *Abidah* (*father of knowledge*). *Eldaah* (*whom God called*). children, descendants.

Abraham and Keturah. — We remark here the arising of new hopes in the declining years of Abraham. Sarah is dead; and when Abraham bowed himself before the sons of Heth his heart seemed buried in Sarah's grave. Isaac was married, and all Abraham's care seemed to centre in him. Yet here we find Abraham contracting a new alliance, busied about life, entering with energy into a fresh sphere of duties. We collect from that the imperishable nature of hope. No natural sorrow is eternal. When Paul and Barnabas parted, one would have thought that their hearts so violently torn asunder would have been long ere they had healed, but soon we find each twining round a new friend with as much warmth of affection as before. Out of the grave fresh hopes bloom; for our affections are not meant to rest in their objects, but to pass on from one thing to another. They are prospective. They exist here in training for nobler uses. They are perennial, and unless exhausted by misuse grow fresher and stronger to rest on God at last. — *Robertson*.

5, 6. (5) gave . . Isaac, made him his heir.^c (6) concubines, Hagar and Keturah, gifts . . lived, showing that all their expectations should then cease. unto . . country, Arabia.

Abraham's heirs. — Abraham established the right of primogeniture. He gives all that he had unto Isaac, gifts only to the rest. Two nations only among the ancients kept up the notions of family, the Romans and the Jews. In all other nations a man rested on his own title to consideration, on his own merits. In these two a man gathered family associations and national ones, as his race went on. The Jews said, we are Abraham's seed, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and there was an advantage in their feeling children of this long ancestry, because those who have a great past get out of self. They are pledged not to dishonor their ancestors. Many by the mere stirring of such a memory are dignified. They who have no past have a certain vulgarity; or uneasiness, or else personal pride differs from the dignity which knows whence it comes. And this, in a way is the Christian's advantage. We have a past. We stand upon a past; it is a righteousness not our own which has shed its lustre upon us. We do not make our own destiny or heaven. These are gifts given us, advantages and privileges, but we have no merit in possessing them. Hence the Christian's sense of dignity is humble, for it is not personal but derived. — *Robertson*.

7-11. (7) days . . years, "an impressive and appropriate expression for the computation of life." (8) gave . . died, the two verbs here mean the same; repetition belongs to the solemnity of the narrative. in . . age, as he had been promised 80 years before.^f was . . people,^g "this does not relate to burial, for this was not so: Abraham's 'people' dwelt at this time in Haran, and he was buried at Hebron. . . Nor is it a mere synonym for dying. . . The only assignable sense, therefore, is that of reference to a state of further personal existence beyond death; and the expression thus forms a remarkable testimony to the O. T. belief in a future state." — *Alford*. (9) sons . . Machpelah, they were now old men.^h which . . Mamre, see on Ge. xxiii. 17. (10) there . . wife,ⁱ the great patriarch by the side of his princess. (11) after . . Isaac: in how many cases the blessing seems to cease with the father's removal! Lahai-roi, see on Ge. xxiv. 62.

B. C. 1857.

of war; wherein a man can err but once. — *Sir P. Sidney*.

B. C. cir. 1853.

children of Keturah

a 1 Ch. i. 32.

b Ge. xxxvii. 28; Ex. ii. 15-21; iii. 1; Nu. xxii. 4.

c Perh. the Ashurites, nr. Gilead, 2 S. ii. 9.

d Is. lx. 6.

"Children sweeten labors, but they make misfortunes more bitter; they increase the cares of life, but they mitigate the remembrance of death." — *Baron*.

Isaac made sole heir

e Ge. iii. 29; He i. 2.

"He who sees his heir in his own child, carries his eye over hopes and possessions, lying far beyond his gravestone, viewing his life, even here, as a period, but closed with a comma. He who sees his heir in another man's child, sees the full-stop at the end of the sentence." — *Bulwer Lytton*.

death and burial of Abraham

f Ge. xv. 15.

g He. xii. 23.

h Isaac was 75 and Ishmael ab. 90. Jacob and Esau, aged 15, may have been present.

i Ge. xlix. 31; 1. 13.

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"Death brings those together who knew not how to associate together on any other occasion, and will bring us all together, sooner or later"—*Fuller*.

"Death is a commingling of eternity with time; in the death of a good man, eternity is seen looking through time."—*Goethe*.

descendants of Ishmael

a Fr. whom the Nabathæans, a famous Arab tribe. See *Kaïsch*.

b Song 1.5; Is. xlii. 11; lx.7; Ez. xxvii. 21; Ps. cxx. 5; Je. xlix. 28-33.

c Fr. whom perh. the *Masani* in Arabia Deserta.

d Fr. whom the *Sturæans*.

e A. M. 2231; 573 yrs. aft. flood; 48 yrs. aft. d. of Abraham, and when Isaac was 123 yrs. of age.

f 1S. xv 7.

generations of Isaac

g The plain or flat land of Aram, called "the field or plain of Aram."—Hos. xii. 12.

h 1 Ch. v. 20; 2 Ch. xxxiii. 13; Ez. viii. 23; Ps. cxlv. 19; Pr. x. 24; Ma. vii. 7.

i 2 S. viii. 14; Ro. ix. 12.

"He asked a child, and his prayer is answered by the gift of two sons, and thus Providence, often

Triumph in death.—John Wesley's death-scene was one of the most peaceful and triumphant in the annals of the Church. Prayer, praise, and thankfulness were ever on his lips. Many golden sentences worthy to be held in everlasting remembrance were uttered during his last hours. He sees only the shadow of his friends around his bed: "Who are these?" "We are come to rejoice with you: you are going to receive your crown." "It is the Lord's doing," he calmly replies, "and marvellous in our eyes. I will write!" he exclaimed, and the materials are placed within his reach: but the "right hand has forgot her cunning;" and "the pen of the once ready writer" refuses to move. "Let me write for you, sir," says an attendant. "What would you say?" "Nothing but that *God is with us*." "Now we have done all. Let us all go." And now, with all his remaining strength, he cries out, "The best of all is, God is with us!" And again, lifting his fleshless arms in token of victory, and raising his failing voice to a pitch of holy triumph, he repeats the heart-reviving words, "The best of all is, God is with us!" A few minutes before ten o'clock on the morning of the 2d of March, 1791, he slowly and feebly whispered, "Farewell, farewell!" and literally, "without a lingering groan," he calmly "fell on sleep, having served his generation by the will of God."—*H. More*.

12—18. (12) generations, posterity, family record, etc., forms the eighth document so commencing. (13) *Nebajoth*^a (*heights*). *Kedar*^b (*dark-skinned*). *Abdeel* (*miracle of God*). *Mibsam* (*sweet odor*). (14) *Mishma* (*a hearing*). *Dumah* (*silence*). *Massa*^c (? *patience*). (15) *Hadar* (*enclosure*). *Tema* (*south, desert*). *Jetur*^d (*enclosed camp*). *Naphish* (*recreated*). *Kedemah* (*eastward*). (16) towns, unvalled collections of houses or tents. *castle*, fortified encampments. *twelve* . . nations, twelve chiefs of tribes. (17) *was* . . people, there seems to be a hint here of his dying in the faith. Tho' recorded before the birth of Jacob and Esau it occurred after. Placed here by anticipation. (18) *they*, his descendants. *from Assyria*,^f prob. fr. Persian Gulf to Egypt. *died*, R. V. "*abode*."

The Abrahamites or children of Abraham.—I. Common characteristics, religiousness, spirituality, wide-spread, ruling the world. II. Distinctions: Arabian and Jew, Mohammed and Christ, Mohammedanism and the Christian world. — *Lange*.

The power of children.—As Alexander the Great attained to have such a puissant army, whereby he conquered the world, by having children born and brought up in his camp, whereby they became so well acquainted and exercised with weapons from their swaddling-clothes, that they looked for no other wealth or country but to fight; even so, if thou wouldst have thy children either to do great matters, or to live honestly by their own virtuous endeavors, thou must acquaint them with painstaking in their youth, and so to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.—*Cowdray*.

19—23. (19) generations, not only genealogy and history of his offspring, but also occurrences of his own life. (20) *Syrian*, etc., i. e. the Aramean of Padan-aram.^g (21) *intreated*^h . . wife, earnestly wrestled in prayer in her behalf. *barren*, as his mother Sarah had been; and whose subsequent hist. prob. encouraged him to hope and pray. This barrenness lasted 20 yrs. (22) *and* . . her, "the verb is expressive of a violent internal commotion, as if the unborn children had been dashing against one another in her womb. Cf. the story of Acrisius and Prætus, who quarrelled before birth about their subsequent dominion (Apollod., II. ii. 1.)"—*Pulp. Com.* if it be so, etc., i. e. if it be so that the Lord has heard our prayers, why this pain. *and* . . Lord, thro' secret prayer or thro' Isaac as a prophet. (23) *two* . . womb, i. e. the founders of two nations. *the one*, etc.,ⁱ this antenatal struggle was prophetic of the future enmity of the two brothers.

Jacob preferred before Esau.—I. God has a right to dispense His blessings according to His own sovereign will. II. He actually exercises this right. We may daily see this in—1. The dealings of His providence; 2. The dispensations of His grace. III. All, in whose favor this right is exercised, are bound to acknowledge it with most ardent gratitude. Impious indeed it would be to arrogate the glory to ourselves.—*Simeon*.

Generations of Isaac.—The ninth document here begins with the usual phrase, and continues to the end of the thirty-fifth chapter. It contains the history of the second of the three patriarchs, or rather indeed, as the opening

phrase intimates, of the generations of Isaac, that is, of his son Jacob. Isaac himself makes little figure in the sacred history. Born when his mother was ninety, and his father a hundred years of age, he is of a sedate, contemplative and yielding disposition. Consenting to be laid on the altar as a sacrifice to God, he had the stamp of submission early and deeply impressed upon his soul. His life corresponds with these antecedents. His qualities were those of the son, as Abraham's were those of the father. He carried out, but did not initiate; he followed, but did not lead; he continued, but did not commence. Accordingly the docile and patient side of the saintly character is now to be presented to our view.—*Murphy*.

24-28. (24) twins, more than Isaac asked for. (25) red, ruddy, hairy, *lit.* all of him as a mantle of hair. "The appearance of the child's body, covered with an unusual quantity of red hair, was 'a sign of excessive sensual vigor and wildness' (Keil)." — *Pulp. Com.* Esau (*hairy*). (26) Jacob (*supplanter*). (27) cunning, skilful, expert. man . . field, who ranged the wilds. plain man, Heb. *ish tam*, a perfect, upright man, his gentleness set over against Esau's wildness. (28) and . . Esau, *i. e.* loved him especially. because . . venison, "not perhaps the sole reason for Isaac's preference of Esau, though mentioned here because of its connection with the ensuing narrative. Persons of quiet and retiring disposition, like Isaac, are often fascinated by those of more sparkling and energetic temperament, such as Esau; mothers, on the other hand, are mostly drawn towards children that are gentle in disposition and home-keeping in habit." — *Pulp. Com.* but . . Jacob, for above mentioned reason (note the mischief that arose fr. this domestic favoritism).

Jacob and Esau. — These children were most unlike in their characters and dispositions. They seem as if they belonged to different races altogether. There was an antipathy between their characters even before birth. Tendencies develop themselves even before intelligent consciousness, and before there can be any personal responsibility. Thus there may be dark foreshadowings of a man's future history, even in the silent womb. In the first germs of man's physical life lie hid those potentialities which time and circumstance will afterwards develop. Though the individual himself commences a new life, yet he is complicated with the past. "Esau seems to have inherited from his mother the rash, sanguine temperament, but without her nobility of soul: from Isaac he derives a certain fondness for good living—at least of game. Jacob inherited from Isaac the quiet, contemplative manner: from Rebekah, however, a disposition for rapid, prudent, cunning invention. Outwardly regarded, Jacob, on the whole, resembled more the father.—Esau the mother." — *Lange*.

29-34. (29) sod, boiled. pottage, cooked in a pot, of the consistence of gruel. (30) red, Heb. *min haadom*, *haadom*, of the red, the red. Edom, (*red*). (31) and . . said, Jacob here shows much of the shrewdness of the Jewish character; it can hardly be condoned; yet in view of subsequent developments and the character of the two men, we must acknowledge that it was the necessary thing to do. sell . . day, shamefully took advantage of that day of weakness. birthright, the right of primogeniture, which entailed all the blessings spoken to Abraham, as well as his possessions. (32) I . . die, prob. ref. to his kind of life wh. exposed him to death: or, to his present circumstances. (33) sold . . Jacob, whatever the faults of Jacob, it is clear that Esau had no very exalted views of this birthright. (34) lentiles, Heb. *Adashim*, still called *addas* in Syria. despised, *i. e.* set too light a price on it.

The birthright sold. — There are two characteristics portrayed in these verses: — I. The cunning man; Jacob. 1. He waited for the right opportunity. 2. He employed the likeliest means of gaining his object. 3. He took no account of natural ties. Fraternal feelings were stifled. II. The sensual man. Esau — 1. Lacked resolution; he would soon have been home. 2. Despised an honorable position. 3. Lost sight of the future. Conclusion — Both characters are unjustifiable. — *Jenkin Jones*.

Three bad bargains: — A Sunday-school teacher remarked that he who buys the truth makes a good bargain. I inquired if any scholar recollected an instance in Scripture of a bad bargain. "I do," replied a boy, "Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage." A second said, "Judas made a bad bargain when he sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver." A third boy observed, "Our Lord tells us that he makes a bad bargain who to gain the whole world loses his own soul." — *Old Test. Anec.*

B. C. *cir.* 1853.

slower than our wishes, frequently compensates that delay by greatly outdoing our requests." — *Hunter*.

birth of Jacob and Esau

a "A man of steady, domestic, moral habits" — *Speaker's Com.*

"We must be doing something to be happy. Action is no less necessary than thought to the instinctive tendencies of the human frame." — *Hazlitt*.

"There is nothing so terrible as activity without insight," says Goethe. "I would open every one of Argus's hundred eyes, before I used one of Briareus's hundred hands," says Lord Bacon. — *Whipple*.

Esau sells his birthright

b De xxi. 17; Is. xxii. 13; 1 Co. xv 32; He. xii. 16, 17.

Lentile not unlike the com. vetch. "There are several varieties recognized, and the red lentile is considered the best. It is generally used as a pottage, or cooked as the Spaniards cook haricot beans, stewed with oil, and flavored with red pepper. It is by no means an unsavory dish." — *Tristram. N. t. Hist. of Bible*.

We have liberty to sell our heavenly birthright. It is a glorious gift this of liberty, but still an awful one. — *Hom. Com.*

B. C. cir. 1804.

Isaac visits
Abimelecha Ge. xv. 18-21.
Ps. cv 8-12.

I will be with thee,
—the first draft
and outline of the
picture, afterwards
filled up, of Im-
manuel, "God
with us."

"Stars arose, but
such stars not
like the spangles
of the English
poet's concep-
tion, 'those
pallid of bright
gold,' though
that idea is
beautiful; but
one could see that
they were round
orbs that flashed
streams of dia-
mond light from
out their bright-
ness."—*J. Finn, M.
R. A. S.*

Isaac at
Gerarb Pr. xxix. 25; Ecc.
vii. 20.c 1 Ch. xvi. 21, 22;
Ps. cv. 14, 15.

"Deceit is the false
road to happiness;
and all the joys we
travel through to
vice, like fairy
banquets, vanish
when we touch
them."—*A. Hill.*

"No lie you can
speak or act, but it
will come, after
longer or shorter
circulation, like a
bill drawn on
nature's reaty,
and be presented
there for payment,
with the answer:
no effects."—*Car-
lyle.*

Isaac's
prosperityd Ge. xxvi. 3; 1 Ti.
iv. 8.

e Pr. x. 22.

f Ecc. iv. 4.

g Ge. xxi. 30.

h Ex. i. 9.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

1-5 (1) land, Canaan. first . . Abraham, see on Ge. xii. 10, about a hundred years before the present one. Abimelech, prob. not the A. of chap. xx. A. was an official title like Cæsar, or Pharaoh; besides 90 years had elapsed. (2) go . . Egypt, whither he intended to have gone, like Abraham before him and Jacob after. dwell . . of, i. e. in Philistia, God's purpose wiser than man's. (3) countries,^a lit. lands. perform, lit. will cause to stand up. (4) multiply, etc., see on Ge. xxii. 17, 18. (5) because, etc., the fulfilment of the promises secured by the obedience of faith.

Possession. — Charles Dickens, in his younger days, used sometimes, in his country walks, to pass a large house standing in its own grounds, called Gad's Hill Place. It was his boyish dream that some day he would be a rich man, and buy that house and make it his home. This actually came to pass. He dwelt in his latter years, and at length died, at Gad's Hill Place. I refer to this incident merely to illustrate the difference between the hope of possessing something and the actual possession of it. Now, in the Book of Genesis, we have before us the case of men whose eyes, day by day, beheld a domain which they hoped would one day be their home; who not merely beheld it, but actually dwelt in it. And yet they never came into possession! Of Abraham we are told in Heb. xi., that he "sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country;" and of all the patriarchs, that they "died in faith"—still trusting—yet "not having received the promises." In what way, then, were the promises fulfilled? As the progenitors of a people, the patriarchs were to obtain the fulfilment in their descendants, hundreds of years after. As individuals, they obtained it, not on earth, but in heaven. They "desired a better country, that is, an heavenly;" and they got it—something far beyond their most exalted anticipations. — *E. Stock.*

6-11. (6) Gerar, see on Ge. xx. 1. (7) sister, he prevaricates like his father and actuated by a similar motive; while sister denotes a general relationship according to Oriental usage, there is no question but that Isaac's intention was to deceive. kill, etc.,^b this, at any rate, illus. the general lawlessness of the age. (8) saw . . wife, i. e., taking freedoms, using familiarities which showed she was his wife and not a sister. (9) lest, etc., better have died, than lied. (10) what . . us? tempting to sin. guiltiness, shameful crime. (11) charged, etc.,^c Isaac suffers by comparison with the noble-minded Abimelech.

Isaac's deceit. — The similarity of this incident to that related in ch. xx. concerning Abraham in Gerar may be explained without resorting to the hypothesis of different authors. The stereotyped character of the manners of antiquity, especially in the East, is sufficient to account for the danger to which Sarah was exposed recurring in the case of Rebekah three quarters of a century later. That Isaac should have resorted to the miserable expedient of his father may have been due simply to a lack of originality on the part of Isaac; or perhaps the recollection of the success which had attended his father's adoption of this wretched subterfuge may have blinded him to its true character. But from whatever cause resulting, the resemblance between the two narratives cannot be held as destroying the credibility of either, and all the more that a careful scrutiny will detect sufficient dissimilarity between them to establish the authenticity of the incidents which they relate. — *Pul. Com.*

12-16. (12) received,^d lit. found, i. e. more than he looked for. (13) went forward,^e advanced to greater prosperity. (14) great store,^f Heb. *avuddah rabbah*, i. e. much service. (15) wells, a most effective way of showing their enmity since wells were absolutely essential to pastoral vocation. which . . father,^g and wh. were therefore parts of I.'s property. the . . them, the envious injure others without benefit to themselves. (16) Abimelech, the same apprehension of their growing numbers which led Pharaoh to enslave Israel in Egypt. This was not given as advice; it was a royal mandate. for . . we,^h especially since he possessed Divine protection, of which his prosperity was a plain sign.

Stopping wells. — To stop the wells is justly reckoned an act of hostility. The Canaanites, envying the prosperity of Abraham and Isaac, and fearing their power, endeavored to drive them out of the country by stopping "up"

the wells which their servants had digged, and filling them with earth.' The same mode of taking vengeance on enemies, mentioned in this passage, has been practiced in more recent times. The Turkish emperors give annually to every Arab tribe near the road by which the Mohammedan pilgrims travel to Mecca a certain sum of money, and a certain number of vestments, to keep them from destroying the wells which lie on that route, and to escort the pilgrims across their country. — *Paxton*.

17-22. (17) departed,^a for the sake of peace. He might have stayed and defended his rights. **valley**, a low, flat region, watered by a mountain stream. (18) **which . . . father**, A. not only sojourned in the country, but improved it. **for . . . Abraham**, to prevent other tribes fr. settling there. **names . . . them**, and thus reasserted his claim. (19) **digged, etc.**, I. had so increased that what served his father was not enough for him. **springing water**, *lit.* "living water;" waters that run or spring forth from fountains are called *living* in opposition to *stagnant*, contained in pools and cisterns. (20) **ours**, prob. on the ground that the valley was theirs. **Esek**, (*contention*). (21) **Sitnah**, (*spitefulness*). (22) **for . . . not**, prob. out of their territory. **Rehoboth** (*enlargement*), prob. the *Wady-er-Ruhaiseh*,^b eight hrs. S. of Beer-sheba.

Old wells dug out. — Let us try to dig open some of the old wells which we possess. Bring shovel and pickaxe, and dig out the well of : I. The atonement. It is nearly filled up with the *debris* of old philosophies, which now are unwrapped and called original; but we will dig it out. II. Christian comfort. Take away all stoicism and fatality, and dig out this cooling fountain. III. Gospel invitation. Come ye around this old gospel well; dig it out, and drink of the water of life. — *Talmage*.

Strife for water. — One morning, when we had been driven by the stress of weather into a small bay, called Birk bay, the country around it being inhabited by the Budoos (Bedoweens), the hoquedah sent his people on shore to get water, for which it is always customary to pay. The Budoos were, as the people thought, rather too exorbitant in their demands, and not choosing to comply with them, returned to make their report to their master. On hearing it, rage immediately seized him, and, determined to have the water on his own terms, or perish in the attempt, he buckled on his armor, and, attended by his myrmidons, carrying their matchlocks, guns, and lances, being twenty in number, they rowed to the land. My Arabian servant, who went on shore with the first party, and saw that the Budoos were disposed for fighting, told me that I should certainly see a battle. After a parley for about a quarter of an hour, with which the Budoos amused them, till nearly a hundred were assembled, they proceeded to the attack, and routed the sailors who made a precipitate retreat; the hoquedah and two others having been in the action, and several having been wounded. — *Major Rooke*.

23-25. (23) **went, etc.**, a place filled with memories of his father. (24) **and . . . him**, by the usual symbol of the Shekinah. **fear not, etc.**,^c a timely encouragement to one who encountered so much opposition. (25) **altar . . . tent . . . well**, religion, home, occupation: their mutual relations.

The rich contents of the term, God of Abraham. — It declares — I. That the Eternal God has made a covenant with us imperishable beings (Lu. xx. 37, 38). II. The continuity, the unity, the unchangeableness, of the revelation of Jehovah through all times and developments. III. The transmission of the hereditary blessing from the believing father to the believing children. — *Lange*.

The favor of God. — There is shed abroad in his heart that deep peace which is most profound in the midst of storm. God was with him. The waves which lash the surface of the sea are only on the surface; below, the depths are calm. And Isaac, quietly leaving place after place, felt the deeps of his soul untouched. What was the loss of a well, or ten wells, to him with whom God was, for his portion, his exceeding and all-sufficient great reward. — *Robertson*.

26-30. (26) **Ahuzzath** (*possession*). **Phichol** (*the mouth of all*) see on Ge. xxi. 22. (27) **wherefore, etc.**, I. might well be perplexed by this visit aft. the recent contention. (28) **we saw, etc.**, the prosperity of I. filled them with superstitious fear. **oath**, *Heb.* an oath of execration; i. e., an oath

B. c. cir. 1804.

"To bring the best human qualities to anything like perfection, to fill them with the sweet juices of courtesy and charity, prosperity, or, at all events, a moderate amount of it is required, — just as sunshine is needed for the ripening of peaches and apricots." — *A. Smith*.

a Ma. v. 39.

b "Here is an anc. well now filled up, 12 ft. in diam., built with hewn stone." — *Robinson, Phys. Geog.*, 243; and *B. R.* 289.

"If men wound you with injuries, treat them with patience; hasty words rattle the wound, soft language dresses it, forgiveness cures it, and oblivion takes away the scar. It is more noble by silence to avoid an injury than by argument to overcome it." — *J. Beaumont*.

Beer-sheba

c Is. xii. 10; He. xiii. 5, 6; Ps. xxvii. 1.

d Ge. xii. 7; Ps. cxvii. 17.

"There is no man who has not some interesting associations with particular scenes, or airs or books, and who does not feel their beauty or sublimity, enhanced to him by such connections." — *Sir A. Alison*.

covenant between Abimelech and Isaac

B. C. cir. 1804.

a Zec. viii. 23; Ps. cxv. 13.

"If you desire to be magnanimous, undertake nothing rashly, and fear nothing that you undertake; fear nothing but infamy; dare anything but injury to the measure of magnanimity is neither to be rash nor timorous." — *Quarles*.

"Upon the northern side of the Wady-es-Seba are the two deep and ancient wells which gave occasion to this name." — *Robinson's Phys. Geog.* p. 242; *B. R.* i. 300.

"Kindness nobler even than revenge." — *Shakespeare*.

Esau's wives

b *Ge.* xxv. 20.c *Ge.* xxxvi. 2, 5, 14, 18, 25.d *Ge.* xxxvi. 24, etc., q. v.e *Jos.* i. 4; 1 *K.* x. 2; 2 *K.* vii. 6; cf. also *Ge.* xxvii. 46, with xxviii. 1.f *De.* vii. 1-4; *Ge.* xxvii. 46; xxviii. 1.g *He.* xii. 16.

"God has set the type of marriage everywhere throughout the creation. Each creature seeks its perfection in another." — *Luther*.

carrying a curse with it wh. should be visited upon the breaker. (29) that . . hurt, I. must have been a great man for a king to crave this. as we, etc., this was not true. They pretend to be oblivious of what I. had suffered from their people. thou . . Lord,^a and, therefore, can well afford to be magnanimous. (30) and, etc., a usual custom following the ratifying of a covenant; this may well remind us of the great feast of good things spread for kings and peoples, and even enemies, by Him whom I. typified.

Treatment of insults. — Sir Walter Raleigh, a man of known courage and honor, being very injuriously treated by a hot-headed, rash youth, who proceeded to challenge him, and, on his refusal, spat in his face, and that, too, in public, the knight, taking out his handkerchief with great calmness, made him only this reply: "Young man, if I could as easily wipe your blood from my conscience as I can this injury from my face, I would this moment take away your life." The youth, with a strong sense of his improper behavior, fell on his knees, and begged forgiveness.

31-33. (31) rose . . swear, the feast being an amicable intro. to a covenant of peace and friendship. (32) came . . day, the blessing of God crowned the compact. (33) Shebah, i. e. he repeated and confirmed the name.

Isaac's peace-loving nature — Few things are more pleasing than the picture of this gentle patriarch, yielding everything and finding everything; as if his history was an antique pictorial illustration of the very words, "Give, and it shall be given unto you." He yields his life on the altar on Moriah, and he finds it. In the strife he always gives up. A lamb among wolves, he conquers the wolves. By patience he is successful. And so "the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great," illustrating, so far back, the Hebrew saying, that to the good man "the very stones of the field shall be at peace." — *A. G. Mercier*.

34, 35. (34) Esau . . wife, the age of his father at his marriage.^b Judith (*Jeveess*) also called Aholibamah^c (*tent of the height*): prob. J. was the original name. Beeri (*the wellman*), also called Anah.^d Hittite, a name = generally, an inhabitant of Canaan.^e Bashemath (*fragrant*). Elon (*an oak*). (35) which, etc.,^f 1. His polygamy. 2. His mar. with an idolatrous people: whence E. is called "a fornicator."^g

Esau's marriage. — Esau's ill-assorted marriage a continuance of the proclivity in the disposal of his birthright. The threefold offense — I. Polygamy without any necessary inducement. II. Women of Canaanitish origin. III. Without the advice, and to the displeasure of his parents. The heart sorrow of the parents over the misalliance of their son. Esau's marriage a self-attestation of his lawful expulsion from the chosen generation, and, at the same time, an actual warning to Jacob. — *Schroder*.

Ingratitude to parents. — There was once a man who had an only son, to whom he bequeathed everything. When his son grew up, he was unkind to his father, refused to support him, and turned him out of his house. The old man said to his grandson, "Go and fetch the covering from my bed, that I may go and sit by the wayside and beg." The child burst into tears, ran for the covering, took it to his father, and said to him, "Pray, father, cut it in two; the half of it will be large enough for grandfather; and perhaps you will want the other half when I grow a man and turn you out of doors." The words of the child struck him so forcibly, that he ran to his father, asked his forgiveness, and took care of him until his death.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

B. C. cir. 1760.

Isaac would bless Esau

h *Pr.* xxvii. 1; *Ja.* iv. 14; *Ec.* ix. 10; *Lu.* xii. 40.

1-5. (1) old, some say 137 yrs. old, wh. for var reasons seems improb. my son, expression of endearment; still his favored son, notwithstanding his waywardness. (2) behold, etc.,^h but the day seemed very near to the old man. (3) weapons, *lit.* implements. quiver, the Heb. sig. that wh. is hung on. venison, *lit.* hunt me a hunting, i. e. game. (4) savoury, tasteful. that . . die, "as eating and drinking were used among the Asiatics on almost all religious occasions, it is reasonable to suppose that something of this kind was essentially necessary on this occasion; and that Isaac could not convey the right, till he had eaten of the meat provided for the purpose by him who was to receive the blessing." — *Adam Clark*. (5) heard, and at once took measures

on behalf of Jacob. (In judging of her conduct it is right to remember her view of Esau's conduct on his marriage. She doubtless felt that such a man was not a suitable representative of the fam. of Abraham. Nor had she forgotten the prediction at his birth.^a Yet was she not justified in doing evil that good might come.^b)

Isaac in the near prospect of death. — I. He has warnings of his approaching end. 1. His advanced age. 2. Signs of weakness and decay. II. He sets in order his worldly affairs. 1. Duties prompted by the social affections. 2. Duties regarding the settlement of inheritance and property. — *T. H. Leale.*

The uncertainty of life. — I have read a parable of a man shut up in a fortress under sentence of a perpetual imprisonment, and obliged to draw water from a reservoir which he may not see, but into which no fresh stream is ever to be poured. How much it contains he cannot tell. He knows that the quantity is not great; it may be extremely small. He has already drawn out a considerable supply during his long imprisonment. The diminution increases daily, and how, it is asked, would he feel each time of drawing water and each time of drinking it? Not as if he had a perennial stream to go to — "I have a reservoir; I may be at ease." No; "I had water yesterday. I have it to-day; but my having it yesterday and my having it to-day is the very cause that I shall not have it on some day that is approaching." Life is a fortress; man is the prisoner within the gates. He draws his supply from a fountain fed by invisible pipes, but the reservoir is being exhausted. We had life yesterday, we have it to-day, the probability — the certainty — is that we shall not have it on some day that is to come. — *R. A. Wilmott.*

6-10. (6) spake . . son,^c whom she loved. (7) bless, a blessing that she felt might be inspired and confirmed by God; and estab. Esau in his birth-right. (8) obey, etc., heed my advice, act acc. to my instructions. As Jacob was perh. 77 years old he must be considered an accomplice, not a tool. (9) I . . make, etc., she would know how to disguise the food. (10) and thou, etc., at the best this mother's advice was but a crooked policy. He who had predicted Jacob's supremacy would have secured it in his own, and therefore a better way.

The blessing fraudulently obtained (on the whole chapter). — Concerning the spirit of doubt and mistrust here manifested by Rebekah, consider that such a spirit — I. Leads men to practice deceit. There are three things which characterize this deception as of the basest kind: it was deceiving — 1. A relative; 2. An infirm relative; 3. An infirm relative in spiritual matters. II. Deadens man's moral sensibilities. 1. It creates indifference to his moral culture; 2. It renders him insensible to the greatest danger. III. Involves pain. 1. Loss of peace; 2. Instability; 3. Humiliation. — *J. Jones.*

Isaac's scheme. — Isaac's carefully calculated project is thwarted by a woman's shrewdness. A carnal policy can always be met by its own weapons. Rebekah overhearing this charge of Isaac to his son Esau, takes measures to direct the blessing into another channel. It was just that Esau should lose the blessing, for by selling his birth-right he had despised it. It was God's design, too that Jacob should have it. Rebekah also knowing of this design, from its having been revealed to her that "the elder should serve the younger," appears to have acted from a good motive. But the scheme which she formed to correct the error of her husband was far from being justifiable. It was one of those crooked measures which have too often been adopted to accomplish the Divine promises; as if the end would justify, or at least excuse the means. — *Hom. Com.*

11-13. (11) Jacob said, etc., Jacob rather remonstrates and shrinks back at the trickery of his mother. (12) seem, he seems to have feared detection more than the sin. curse^d . . blessing,^e the presence of the curse would be a greater evil than the absence of the blessing. (13) upon . . curse, fr. so promptly assuming the responsibility, it is clear she felt justified in the course she pursued.

Rebekah. — There is a touch of womanhood observable in her recklessness of personal consequences. So that only he might gain, she did not care "upon me be thy curse, my son." And it is this which forces us, even while we most condemn, to compassionate. Throughout the whole of this revolting scene of deceit and fraud we never can forget that Rebekah was a mother: hence a certain interest in and sympathy with her are sustained. And we

B. C. cir. 1760.

a Ge. xxv. 23.

b Ro. iii. 8.

"O sir you are old; nature in you stands on the very verge of her confine; you should be ruled and led by some discretion, that discerns your state better than you yourself!" — *Shakespeare.*

"Age imprints more wrinkles in the mind, than it does in the face. Man moves all together, both towards his perfection or hide deep vice." — *Montaigne.*

Rebekah tells Jacob and advises him

c "Notice Esau his son, Jacob her son." — *Alford.*

"Ah that deceit should steal such gentle shapes, and with a virtuous visor hide deep vice." — *Shakespeare.*

"Wiles and deceit are female qualities." — *Æschylus.* We must walk in simplicity, *sine plicis*, for though the serpent can shrink up into his folds, and appear what he is not, yet it doth not become the saint to shuffle either with God or men. Jacob got the blessing by a wile, but he might have got it cheaper by plain dealing. — *W. Gurnall.*

she takes the effect of the deception on herself

d De xxvii. 18.

e Ps. xlv. 4, 5; y. 6; Je. xlviii. 10; 1 Th. v. 22.

Samuel Morley's mother was a woman of rare piety. He was wont to say concerning her, I am

B. c. cir. 1780.

much what my mother has made me."—*Bib. Il.*
"Craftiness is a quality in the mind, and a vice in the character."
—*Sanial-Dubay.*

she prepares him for the interview with Isaac

"Martial (*Lib. xii. Epig. 46*) alludes to kid-skins as used by the Romans for false hair to conceal baldness. The wool of the Oriental goat is much longer and finer than of those of this country"—*Speaker's Com.*

"For all those with whom we live are like actors on a stage; they assume whatever dress and appearance may suit their present purpose, and they speak and act in strict keeping with this character. In this way we find it difficult to get at their real sentiments."—*Polybius.*

Jacob invites his father to eat

a Ep. iv. 25; Col. iii. 9; Pr. vi. 16, 17; xii. 22; xiii. 5; Ps. ci. 7; cxix. 29; Pr. xxx 8; Is. lxiii. 8, 11.

b Job xiii. 7; Ex. xx. 7

"On the whole, we think, we must be content to leave this humiliating conduct as a blot on the character of Jacob, without apology and without excuse, only observing that, disgraceful as it was, God could forgive it."—*Bush.*

Jacob declares himself to be Esau

mark another feminine trait; her act sprang from devotion to a person rather than to a principle. A man's idolatry is for an idea, a woman's for a person. A man suffers for a monarchy, a woman for a king. Nay, even in their religion personality marks the one, attachment to an idea or principle the other. Woman adores God in His personality; man, in His attributes; at least, that is on the whole the characteristic difference.—*Robertson.*

14—17. (14) and, etc., it is strange that he should agree to his mother's incurring so grave a responsibility. (15) goodly, desirable, *i. e.* suitable. "They were probably best, or state garments of 'my lord' Esau, in which he sought the companies of his brother hunters, and redolent (verse 29) of the aromatic shrubs of the wilderness which they had hasted through."—*Alford.* put . . son, disguising the man as well as the food. (16) put . . neck, in imitation of E., the hairy man. (17) and, etc., the time all these preparations required suggestive of the usual distance afield gone by E. upon his hunting expeditions; or they may have commenced bef. he departed.

Influence of truth.—Abd-el-Kader obtained permission from his mother to go to Bagdad and devote himself to the service of God. "At parting she wept; then taking out eighty dinars, she told me that, as I had a brother, half of that was all my inheritance. She made me promise, when she gave it to me, that I would never tell a lie, and afterwards bade me farewell, exclaiming, 'Go, my son: I consign thee to God. We shall not meet again till the day of judgment.' I went on well till I came near to Hamadöm, when our kâfilah was plundered by sixty horsemen. One fellow asked me what I had got. 'Forty dinars,' said I, 'are sewed under my garments.' He laughed, thinking, no doubt, I was joking with him. 'What have you got?' said another. I gave him the same answer. When they were dividing the spoil, I was called by the chief: 'What property have you got, my little fellow?' said he. 'I have told two of your people already,' I replied. 'I have forty dinars sewed up carefully in my clothes.' He ordered them to be ripped open, and found my money. 'And how came you,' said he with surprise, 'to declare so openly what has been so carefully hidden?' 'Because,' I replied, 'I will not be false to my mother, to whom I have promised that I will not tell a lie.' 'Child,' said the robber, 'hast thou such a sense of thy duty to thy mother at thy years, and I am insensible, at my age, of the duty I owe to my God? Give me thy hand, innocent boy, that I may swear repentance upon it.' He did so. His followers were all alike struck with the scene. 'You have been our leader in our guilt,' said they to their chief: 'Be the same in the path of virtue!' And they instantly, at his order, made restitution of the spoil, and vowed repentance on my hand."

18—20. (18) who . . son? "he thought he recognized the voice of Jacob: his suspicions were aroused; he knew the crafty disposition of his younger son too well; and he felt the duty of extreme carefulness."—*Kalisch.* (19) I . . first born, etc., it is pitiable to note the efforts of critics to explain and excuse here. Who can make less than a lie of this? (20) how . . quickly? still suspicious. because, etc.,^b blasphemy added to falsehood: this, the worst feature in the whole infamous transaction.

Honest Frank.—A young man—we will call him honest Frank—who loved truth, was a clerk in the office of a rich merchant. One day a letter came recalling an order for goods which had been received the day before. The merchant handed it to honest Frank, and, with a persuasive smile, said: "Frank, reply to this note. Say that the goods were shipped before the receipt of the letter countermanding the order." Frank looked into his employer's face with a sad but firm glance, and replied, "I cannot, sir." "Why not, sir?" asked the merchant angrily. "Because the goods are now in the yard, and it would be a lie, sir." "I hope you will always be so particular," replied the merchant, turning upon his heel and going away. Honest Frank did a bold as well as a right thing. What do you suppose happened to him? Did he lose his place? No; quite different. The merchant was too shrewd to turn away one who would not write a lying letter. He knew the untold value of such a youth, and at once made him his confidential clerk.

21—23. (21) and Isaac, etc., the voice and the time made the old man suspicious. Perh. he had a habit, founded in reason and observation, of suspecting Jacob—the supplanter. (22) felt, was there no pity for the blind old man when he passed his trembling fingers over his son's person? voice . .

hands, aroused by one sense, his suspicions are lulled by another. (22) **SO** . . him, mentally prob., anticipative of words aft. spoken.

Deception. — 1. Those who attempt to deceive others are not unfrequently themselves deceived. 2. Those who enter on a sinful course may speedily sink deeper into the sin than they intended. 3. Deception practiced by a son against a father, at a mother's instigation, is a monstrous and unnatural display of wickedness. 4. God can accomplish His own designs by means of man's crimes, without either relieving them of guilt or Himself being the author of sin. — *Pul. Com.*

Isaac, the organ of Divine blessing. — It is a strange and, in some respects, perplexing spectacle that is here presented to us — the organ of the Divine blessing represented by a blind old man, laid on a "couch of skins," stimulated by meat and wine, and trying to cheat God by bestowing the family blessing on the son of his own choice to the exclusion of the Divinely-appointed heir. Out of such beginnings had God to educate a people worthy of Himself, and through such hazards had He to guide the spiritual blessing He designed to convey to us all. Isaac laid a net for his own feet. By his unrighteous and timorous haste he secured the defeat of his own long-cherished scheme. — *M. Dods.*

24-26. (24) **art** . . **Esau** ? he cannot shake off the suspicion that he is being deceived. Luther wonders how he could brazen it out, adding: "I should probably have run away in terror, and let the dish fall." and . . **am**, one lie begets many. (25) **brought** . . **drank**, his suspicions must have spoiled his relish for the feast. (26) **near** . . **kiss**, this was intended as a mark of paternal affection; although some commentators think it was with the intention of trying the test of smell. (Isaac's antitype was *betrayed*, but not *deceived*, by a kiss.)

The blind poet's lament :

Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and from the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse — *Milton.*

27-29. (27) **blessed**, the blessing (*vss.* 27-29) in the Heb. is in the form of poetic parallelism. "The elements of the blessing, we perceive, were threefold, consisting of the promise (1) of worldly wealth and prosperity; (2) of dominion or empire; (3) of family pre-eminence." — *Bush.* **smell** . . **field**, the fresh odor of the hills and plains. (28) **give thee, etc.** "The blessing craved was substantially that of a fertile soil, in Oriental countries the copious dew deposited by the atmosphere supplying the place of rain. Hence dew is employed in Scripture as a symbol of material prosperity (Deut. xxxiii. 13, 28; Zech. viii. 12), and the absence of dew and rain represented as a signal of Divine displeasure (2 Sam. i. 21; 1 Kings xvii. 1; Haggai i. 10, 11)" — *Pulp. Com.* (29) **let people, etc.**,^b foreign and hostile nations were to be subject to him — *power.*

Jacob's blessing. — The three different parts of the blessing contain the three prerogatives of the firstborn — I. The double inheritance. Canaan was twice as large and as fruitful as the country of the Edomites. II. The dominion over his brethren. III. The priesthood which walks with blessings, and finally passes over to Christ, the source of all blessing." — *Rambach.*

Eastern perfumery. — The natives of the East are universally fond of having their garments strongly perfumed; so much so as that Europeans can scarcely bear the smell. They use camphor, civet, sandal wood, or sandal oil, and a great variety of strongly-scented waters. It is not common to *salute*.

B. C. cir. 1760.

At Isaac's advanced age, his sense of touch might be nearly as much impaired as that of vision.

"To a nice ear the quality of a voice is singularly affecting. Its depth seems to be allied to feeling; at least, the contralto notes alone give an adequate sense of pathos. They are born near the heart." — *Tuckerman.*

"Some frauds succeed from the apparent candor, the open confidence, and the full blaze of ingenuousness that is thrown around them. The slightest mystery would excite suspicion, and ruin all. Such stratagems may be compared to the stars; they are discoverable by darkness, and hidden only by light." — *Colton.*

Isaac blesses Jacob

^a He. vi. 7; De. xxxiii. 13, 28; Ps. lxx. 9-11.

^b 1. K. iv. 21; 1s ix. 7; Ge. xxv. 23; xii. 3; 2 S. viii. 14.

Isaac believes, and blesses the younger son in the garments of the elder. If our Heavenly Father smell upon our backs the savor of our elder brother's robes, we cannot depart from him unblessed. — *Bp. Hall.* Though the words and actions of the parties in this

B C cir. 1760.

transaction were built upon a falsehood, yet a true blessing was obtained. Through all the evil purposes and schemes of men God works out his great designs.—*Hom. Com.*

Esau's return and Isaac's discovery

a Ro. xi. 29.

b "The words of the Patriarch, spoken in the fulness of Divine inspiration, are irrevocable, however obtained."—*Alford.*

"Grief or misfortune seems to be indispensable to the development of intelligence, energy and virtue."—*Fearon.*

Esau craves a blessing

c He. xii. 17; q. v.

"See on ch. xxv. 26. The words seem to mean, is there not a connection between the meaning of his name Jacob, and the fact that he thus supplants or outwits me?"—*Speaker's Com.*

"That grief is the most durable which flows inward, and buries its streams with its fountain, in the depths of the heart."—*Jane Porter.*

Isaac blesses Esau

d Jos. Wars, iv. 4.1.

e 1 S. xiv. 47; 2 S. viii. 14; 1 K. xi. 14; 2 K. xiv. 7, 22; 2 Ch. xxv. 11; xxvi. 2.

f 2 K. viii. 20, 22; xvi. 6; 2 Ch. xxviii. 17.

as in England: they simply *smell* each other; and it is said that some people know their own children by the smell. Of an amiable man it is said, "How sweet is the smell of that man! the smell of his goodness is universal." That delightful traveler, Captain Mangles, R. N., informed me that while on a short visit at the house of Mr. Barker, our consul at Aleppo, he heard Mrs. Barker, who was a Greek lady, say something to her child, accompanied by signs of great endearment. Mr. Barker said to Captain Mangles, "You do not understand her; she says 'Come hither, my darling, and let me smell thee.'"—*Roberts.*

30-33. (30) Esau . . hunting, he *was* quick with his hunting aft. all. (31) bless, if he had sold his birthright he would at least secure the blessing. (32) and . . said, prob. in wonder and perplexity. I . . Esau, this time there is E.'s voice. (33) and . . exceedingly, "his emotions were actually overwhelming." who? he now mistrusts his sense of hearing. *yea . . blessed,* however deceived, he could not revoke the blessing.^b

Blindness a great affliction.—It would be a dreadful thing to me to lose my sight; to see no more the faces of those I love, nor the sweet blue of heaven, nor the myriad stars that gem the sky, nor the dissolving clouds that pass over it, nor the battling ships upon the sea, nor the mountains with their changing lines of light and shade, nor the loveliness of flowers, nor the burnished mail of insects. But I should do as other blind men have done before me; I should take God's rod and staff for my guide and comfort, and wait patiently for death to bring better light to nobler eyes. Oh, ye who are living in the darkness of sin! turn before it is too late to the light of holiness, else death will bring to you, not recreation but retribution. Earthly blindness can be borne, for it is but for a day; but who could bear to be blind through eternity?—*Beecher.*

34-36. (34) cried . . cry, with deep and poignant grief and possibly of rage at his brother. *bless . . father*, I have lost my birthright, still let me have the blessing (35) *hath . . blessing*, the blessing that I specially designed for thee. (36) *is . . Jacob, etc., lit.* Is it that he is called Jacob, and he supplanteth or outwitted me these two times! Esau was wrong when he said that Jacob had taken away his birthright, as though he had robbed him of it. *hast . . me?* or was the blessing designed for me, and stolen by another, so great that there is nothing left?

Esau a type of the world (on vs. 36).—1. Esau awakes to the consciousness of his foolishness; 2. He finds the past irrevocable.—*A. Boyd.*

The vale of tears.—The vale of tears is very low, and descends far beneath the ordinary level; some parts of it, indeed, are tunnelled through rocks of anguish. A frequent cause of its darkness is that, on either side of the valley, there are high mountains called the mountains of sin. These rise so high that they obscure the light of the sun. Behind these Andes of guilt, God hides His face, and we are troubled. Then how densely dark the pathway becomes! Indeed, this is the very worst thing that can be mentioned of this valley; for, if it were not so dark, pilgrims would not so much dread passing through it.—*Spurgeon.* *Esau's cry.*—Esau's great and bitter cry, which at first sight we are disposed to pity, is the cry of one who has rejected God, and God in turn has rejected him. It is the cry of one who has trifled with God's mercies, and then sought to regain them when it was all too late. It is the cry of one who has not heeded the warning, "see that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."—*Newman.*

37-40. (37) and . . son? what can I give to compensate thy loss? (38) and Esau, *etc.*, he found no place (in his father's heart) of repentance (turning towards himself), though he sought it carefully with tears. *Esau . . wept*, "Those tears expressed, indeed, sorrow for his forfeiture, but not for the sinful levity by which it had been incurred. They were ineffectual (*i. e.* they did not lead to genuine repentance) because Esau was incapable of true repentance" (*vide* Delitzsch on Heb. xii. 17). (40) *sword . . live*,^d the Edomites long maintained their independence, living by the sword. The descendants of Esau were to be a turbulent people of predatory habits (see Josephus, B. I. iv. 4). and . . brother, this the relation of the posterity of the two brothers. and . . pass, *etc.*, this was literally fulfilled.^f

The cry of one man representing the wail of many.—I. There is here the sense of an immense loss. A holy character is the highest birthright. we have all

to lament the loss of this. II. The sense of a great injury. Victimized by his own brother. III. The sense of remorse. IV. The sense of approaching hopelessness. Conclusion: 1. What we have all lost. Our birthright — the image of God. 2. What we should all chiefly struggle for. The restoration of the Divine image. Our loss is not, like Esau's irremediable. We can, by faith in Christ, regain it. — *Homilist*.

Esau's blessing. — "Taken according to the letter, this blessing, as far as it goes, is precisely identical with that of Jacob, *vs.* 28; and if that, as we suggested, includes the promise of the land of Canaan, it is perfectly inconceivable how the same earthly inheritance could be prophetically secured to both. For this reason we are strongly inclined to adopt the rendering of some of the Jewish critics, 'Thy dwelling shall be from (*i. e.* at a distance from) the fatness of the earth,' &c. This is the literal sense of the original, although we know not that the present rendering can be considered as doing any positive violence to the Hebrew idiom. But we think, on the whole, that there is a designed equivocation in the words of the oracle. They were so framed as to be *susceptible* of the most favorable sense which Esau could draw from them, and yet at the same time, in *Isaac's intention*, or rather in the mind of the Spirit, legitimately conveyed the meaning attributed to them above." — *Bush*. The *R. V.* gives in the margin the reading, "away from the fatness," etc.

41-46. From this time there dates a change in the character of the two bros. The noble Esau bec. revengeful, etc.; while the supplanter bec. prayerful, etc. (41) *hated*,^a E. was not penitent, but hateful and remorseful. *the . . hand*, he will spare his father the grief that his purposed crime will occasion. *then . . him*,^b in purpose even now a murderer. (42) *words . . Rebekah*, some one had heard him speaking to himself. *she . . son*, a mother's love is the son's shield. *comfort*, "what a source from whence to draw comfort!" (43) *flee . . Haran*, her fraud deprived her of her son, whom she prob. never saw again. (44) *tarry . . days*, it proved to be twenty years. (45) *then, etc.*,^c she would watch for the softening of E.'s heart. *why . . day?* If E. killed Jacob she must lose them both, as the avenger of blood would punish E. with death. (46) *and . . Isaac*, once more hiding the truth from him. *I . . Heth*,^d she professes to fear that J. may mar. one of them, as Esau had done. *If, etc.*, she does not propose Jacob's departure; knowing the bare suggestion will suffice.

Esau's enmity against his brother had the effect of promoting the further separation between the church and the world. Jacob is preserved from alliance by marriage with the ungodly. He is put in the way of contracting a better marriage than Esau, such as would ensure the purity and nobility of the chosen race. Rebekah contrives not only to save Jacob from his brother's anger, but also to save him from falling into the same sin of an ungodly marriage. Thus human passions, and the conflict of private and selfish interests are made to work out the designs of God. — *Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

1-5. (1) *Isaac*, alarmed by R's suggestion,^e *thou . . Canaan*, in this, imitating Abraham.^f (2) *Padan-aram*, see on Ge. xxv. 20. (3) *thou . . people*, *lit.*^g a congregation of peoples, prob. ref. to the twelve tribes. The *Heb.* word *multitude* is from a root wh. means *to call together*, corresponding to the Gr. word for church. (4) *give . . Abraham*,^h *i. e.* confirm to thee the bless. he prom. to A. *land . . stranger*, *lit.* land of thy sojournings. (5) *Laban, etc.*, see on Ge. xxiv. 29. *Bethuel . . Syrian*, called the Syrian or Aramean, not bec. he was of the race of *Aram* or Shem, but because he was a dweller in their land.

Jacob's departure from Canaan. — The necessity for separation among the household of Isaac becomes the source of new blessings. I. The feeble Isaac becomes a hero. II. The plain and quiet Jacob becomes a courageous pilgrim and soldier. III. The strong-minded Rebekah becomes a person that sacrifices her most dearly loved. — *Lange*.

Jacob's banishment. — Jacob was no sooner blest than he was banished. So our Saviour was no sooner out of the water of baptism, and had heard, "This is my beloved Son," etc., but He was presently in the fire of temptation, and heard, "If thou be the Son of God," etc. (Matt. iii. iv.) When Hezekiah

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"Giving comfort under affliction, requires that penetration into the human mind, joined to that experience which knows how to soothe, how to reason, and how to ridicule; taking the utmost care never to apply those arts improperly." — *Fielding*.

Esau purposes to slay Jacob, who is told of it by Rebekah

^a 1 Jo. iii. 15; Ob. 10.

^b Ps. lxiv. 5.

^c Pr. xix. 21.

^d Ge. xxviii. 8; xxiv. 3.

"All the ends of human felicity are secured without revenge, for without it we are permitted to restore ourselves; and therefore it is against natural reason to do an evil that no way co-operates the proper and perfective end of human nature." — *J. Taylor*.

Isaac sends Jacob to Laban

^e Ge. xxvii. 46.

^f Ge. cxxiv. 3.

^g Ps. xxvii. 3.

^h Ge. xli. 2; xvii. 8; He. xi. 13.

Abraham is the man of active faith, Isaac is the man of passive submission, and Jacob is the man of struggling trial. — *Jacobus*.

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set all in good order (2 Chron. xxxi.), then up came Sennacherib with an army (Chap. xxxii. 1.) God puts His people to it; and often, after sweetest feelings. — *Trapp*.

Esau
marries
dau. of
Ishmael

a Ep. vi. 1, 2.

b Ge. xxvii. 1.

c "He knows that his wives were displeasing to his father, and he endeavors in his clumsy way to repair the mischief." — *Alford*

d Ge. xxxvi. 3.

"Let grace and goodness be the principal loadstone of thy affections. For love which hath ends will have an end." — *Dryden*.

6-9. (6) **saw**, understood, considered. (7) **obeyed**,^a yet he may have been now 75 years old.^b (8) **pleased not**, *lit.* were evil in the eyes of. (9) **went** . . **Ishmael**, *i. e.*, to his people; Ishmael had been dead some years. He desired to regain his father's good-will.^c **took** . . **had**, *see on Ge. xxvi. 34, 35. Ma-halath* (*a stringed instrument, a lyre*), also called *Bashemath*,^d perh. M. was a description, and B. the name, *i. e.* a dau. of music named Bashemath. **Nebajoth**, *see xxv. 13.*

Counsels for marriage. — Many a marriage has commenced, like the morning, red, and perished like a mushroom. Wherefore? Because the married pair neglected to be as agreeable to each other after their union as they were before it. Seek always to please each other, my children, but in doing so, keep heaven in mind. Bethink ye, my daughters, what the word *housewife* expresses. The married woman is her husband's *domestic trust*. On her he ought to be able to place his reliance in house and family; to her he should confide the key of his heart and the lock of his storeroom. His honor and his home are under her protection, his welfare in her hands. Ponder this! And you, my sons, be true men of honor, and good fathers of your families. Act in such wise that your wives respect and love you. And what more shall I say to you, my children? Peruse diligently the Word of God; that will guide you out of storm and dead calm, and bring you safe into port. And as for the rest — do your best. — *Frederika Bremer*.

Jacob's
dream

e Ho. xii. 12.

"Dreams in their development have breath, and tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy; they leave a weight upon our waking thoughts, they take a weight from off our waking toils, they do divide our being." — *Byron*.

"Dreams are the bright creatures of poem and legend, who sport on the earth in the night season, and melt away with the first beam of the sun, which lights grim care and stern reality on their daily pilgrimage through the world." — *Dickens*.

10-12. (10) **went** . . **Haran**,^a to obey his father's command to seek a wife, and his mother's to escape the wrath of Esau. (11) **and** . . **place**, in the course of his journey; the *dist.* proves it was not the close of the *first* day's march. **pillows**, head-rest. **and** . . **sleep**, meaning simply to lie down and does not imply sleep. (12) **ladder**,^b "Whether it was the vision of a common ladder or flight of steps, or whether, as some suppose, it was a pile of mountain terraces, matters little. The flight of steps hewn in the rocky sides of the mountain near Tyre, on the edge of the Mediterranean, is called '*the ladder of Tyre*.'" — *Jacobus*. **behold** . . **it**, the way, a communication, a living way. (Through Christ divine blessings descend to us, and our prayers ascend to God.)

Consecrated night life. — (vss. 10-15). — Consider this vision, as to — I. The occasion. In the most helpless situation, the most solemn and glorious dream. II. The form. A divine revelation in the dream-vision — 1. Miracles of sight, symbols of salvation; 2. Miracles of the ear, promise of salvation. III. Its contents. The images of the vision. — 1. The ladder; 2. Angels ascending and descending; 3. Jehovah standing above the ladder and speaking. — *Lange*.

What Jacob saw in sleep. — Sleeping to see. One may be too wide awake to see. There are things which are hidden from us until we lie down to sleep. Only then do the heavens open and the angels of God disclose themselves. It does not follow that God is not, because we cannot discern Him. Little do we dream of the veiled wonders and splendors amid which we move. — *S. A. Tipple*. *Christ our ladder.* — Our Saviour applies these words to Himself, the true ladder of life, through whom alone we are able to ascend to heaven (John i. 51). He that will go up any other way must, as he emperor once said, erect a ladder and go up alone. He touched heaven, in respect to His Deity; earth in respect of His humanity; and joined earth to heaven, by reconciling man to God. Gregory speaks elegantly of Christ, that He joined heaven and earth together, as with a bridge; being the only true Pontifex, or *bridge-maker*. Heaven is now open and obvious to them that acknowledge Him their sole Mediator, and lay hold, by the hand of faith, on His merits, as the rounds of this heavenly ladder. These only ascend; that is, their consciences are drawn out of the depths of despair, and put into heaven, as it were, by pardon and peace with God, rest sweetly in His bosom, calling Him Abba, Father, and have the holy angels ascending to report their necessities, and descending as messengers of mercies. — *Trapp*.

God's
promise to
Jacob

f Ge. xlviii. 3; xxxv. 12

g Nu. xlii. 10.

Ma. viii. 11; Ac.

iii. 25; Ga. iii. 8.

13-15. (13) **behold** . . **it**, as accepting this way of access to Him. **I** . . **Isaac**,^f the same God who is revealed to us by Christ, "the new and living way." (14) **seed** . . **dust**, *etc.*,^g as Isaac desired, the blessing prom. to A. is confirmed to Jacob. **and** . . **blessed**, "in its ultimate significance this points

to the world-wide universality of the kingdom of Christ.”—*Murphy*. (15) I . . goest,* the Divine presence fulfills the Divine word.

A fourfold comfort.—Against his fourfold cross, here is a fourfold comfort. 1. Against the loss of his friends, “I will be with thee.” 2. Of his country, “I will give thee this land.” 3. Against his poverty, “Thou shalt spread abroad to the east, west,” etc. 4. His solitariness; angels shall attend thee, and “thy seed shall be as the dust.”—*J. Trapp*.

Scripture views of dreams.—The view of dreams set forth in Scripture, and which pervades the sacred books, is, that God does sometimes make known His will to man, and disclose His purposes in dreams: “God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man” (Job. xxxiii. 14–17). See also Joel ii. 28, compared with Acts ii. 16, 17. The question is, whether these things have ceased? It may be so. Miracles have ceased; prophecy has closed; why may not significant dreams also have ceased? They may; but have they?—*Kitto*.

16—19. (16) place, wh. when he lay down seemed so dark, cheerless, lonesome. I . . not, that he was so near. If in such a place, God would be in every place. (17) dreadful, “awe-inspiring,” but . . God, every place may be for us a holy place. this . . heaven, the earthly traveler is always nr. that gate. (18) stone,^b collective singular for stones, as from vs. 11 it appears that there was more than one stone; that wh. had been for his comfort should bec. the lasting memorial of God’s goodness. oil . . it, to sanctify, and set apart the place and stone as holy. (19) Beth-el (*house of God*) not for the first time so called, since Abraham found the place named thus (Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 3; xxv. 30); now (*Beitin*) a mass of ruins ab. 12 ms. N. of Jerus. Luz (*almond-tree or hazel*). “The city in the immediate neighborhood was, at that time, called Luz. The descendants of the patriarchs transferred the name of Bethel to that city. The Canaanites, not caring for this, continued to call it Luz, which was retained till Joshua occupied the Land. Bethel, the holy place, is distinguished from Luz, the city.”—*Kurtz*.

The memorial impulse in religion.—I. The time, place, and circumstances of a man’s discovery of God in his life are the most memorable in personal experience. II. With such a discovery, there always rides an impulse to set up some landmark for memory. III. The best memorials are those which rise up in a man’s habits and character.—*The Preacher’s Monthly*.

Jacob’s pillar.—The monument, whatever it was, that was still in after ages ascribed to the erection of Jacob, must have been, like so many described or seen in other times and countries, a rude copy of the natural features of the place, as at Carnac in Brittany, the cromlechs of Wales and Cornwall, or the walls of Tiryns. In Greece there were rude stones at Delphi, still visible in the second century, anterior to any temple, and, like the rock of Bethel, anointed with oil by the pilgrims who came thither. In Northern Africa, Arnobius, after his conversion, describes the kind of fascination which had drawn him towards one of these aged stones, streaming and shining with the sacred oil which had been poured upon it. The black stone of the Arabian Caaba reaches back to the remotest antiquity of which history or tradition can speak.—*Stanley*.

20—22. (20) vow,* this the first of which we have formal record. if, better, *since, forasmuch*; not the language of uncertainty. give . . on,* mere necessities are enough, and all we should desire. (21) so . . peace, he to his earthly, we to our heavenly Father’s house. then . . God,* “to have bargained and bartered with God in the way which this suggests before assenting to accept him as an object of trust and worship would have been little less than criminal. Accordingly, the clause is best placed in the protasis of the sentence, which then practically reads, ‘If Elohim will be Jehovah to me, and if Jehovah will be to me Elohim’ (*vide* Hengstenberg, ‘Introduction,’ vol. i. p. 358).”—*Pulp. Com.* (22) shall . . house, this shall always be to me a sacred place. tenth, for support of religion. This tenth was purely voluntary, and was paid and set apart before the giving of the law of Moses.

The tenth is God’s.—The late Bishop Selwyn used often to quote that

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a Ju. vi. 16; Is. xliii. 2, 3; Je. i. 19; Ps. cxxi. 5–8; Jos. i. 5; 1 K. viii. 57; He. xiii. 5.

“We must daily wait at the gate of heaven if we would enter there.”—*Hom. Com.*

b Ge. xxxi. 12.

“It has been thought by many that this act of Jacob, in setting up a stone to mark a sacred spot, was the origin of cromlechs and all sacred stones. Certainly we find in later ages the custom of having stones, and those too anointed with oil, as objects of idolatrous worship.”—*Spk. Com.*

Jacob’s vow

c Ec v. 2, 5.

d 1 Ti. vi. 8.

e De. xxvi. 17.

“The order of what he desired is deserving of notice. It corresponds with our Saviour’s rule, to seek things of the greatest importance first. By how much God’s

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favor is better than life, by so much His being with us, and keeping us, is better than food and raiment."—Fuller.

motto of John Wesley's, "Save all you can and give all you save," and he did not think that charity began until after a tithe had been paid to God. "Whatever your income," he wrote once to his son, "remember that only nine-tenths of it are at your disposal."—*Old Test. Anec. Giving a tenth.*—Oberlin, a poor French minister, gave his tenth of income, and then God so blessed him in his circumstances, that he used to say he "abounded in wealth." One day Oberlin was reading in the Old Testament where God told the Jews that He expected them to give a tithe of all their property to Him, said he to himself, "Well, I am sure that I, as a Christian, have three times as many blessings as the Jews had. If it was right for a Jew to give one tenth of his property to God, surely I ought to give at least *three times as much as that.*" So he made up his mind to do this. — *Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

Jacob by the well

a Ho xii. 12.

"As the proverb says, 'He who would bring home the wealth of the Indies must carry wealth with him,' so it is in traveling; a man must carry knowledge with him if he would bring home knowledge."—Johnson.

his discourse with the shepherds

b Ge. xxiv 24, 29.

"What a solemn and striking admonition to youth is that inscribed on the dial, at All Souls, Oxford—*perit et impunitur*—the hours perish and are laid to our charge; for time, like life, can never be recalled."—S. Smiles.

Jacob's interview with Rachel

c Ex. ii. 16.

d Ge. xiv. 16; xxiv. 48.

e Ge. ii. 23

"Among the Sinai Arabs, a boy would feel him self insulted were any one to say, 'Go and drive your father's sheep to pasture.' These words, in his

1—3. (1) *went* . . journey,^a *lit.* "lifted up his feet," *i. e.* went briskly, cheerfully. *into* . . east, term app. to Arabs, in Mesopotamia. (2) *stone* . . mouth, to keep out sand, etc. (3) *and*, etc. perh. this *vs.* describes what was customary; and, further on, what was done in this case.

The stone on the well.—In Arabia, and in other places, they are wont to close and cover up their wells of water, lest the sand, which is put into motion by the winds there, like the water of a pond, should fill them, and quite stop them up. This will serve to explain, I think, extremely well, the view of keeping that well covered with a stone from which Laban's sheep were wont to be watered; and their care not to leave it open any time, but to stay till the flocks were all gathered together, before they opened it, and then, having drawn as much water as was requisite, to cover it up again immediately, Gen. xxix. 2-8. — *Harmer.*

4—8. (4) *brethren*, their occupation was one with wh. he had a brotherly sympathy. (5) *son*,^b *i. e.* descendant. (6) *well*? *lit.* "is there peace to him," yet a common mode of salutation in the E. *Rachel* (*an ewe*). (7) *it* . . day, *lit.* "yet the day is great," *i. e.* a great part of the day remains. *water* . . them, he evidently desired a private interview with R. or these words were intended as a gentle rebuke for the laziness and shiftlessness which marked the shepherds. — *Bush.* (8) *cannot*, in the sense of not having the right; or, it not being the custom.

Jacob at the well of Haran:—a romantic adventure. I. Jacob's meeting with the shepherds. 1. The providential discovery. 2. The friendly conversation. 3. The prudent counsel. II. Jacob's first sight of Rachel. 1. The gallant action. 2. The loving salutation. 3. The important communication. III. Jacob's introduction to Laban. 1. The uncle's reception of his nephew. 2. The nephew's return to his uncle. — *Pul. Com.*

Watering flocks.—I once saw such a scene in the burning plains of Northern Syria. Half-naked, fierce-looking men were drawing up water in leather buckets; flock after flock was brought up, watered, and sent away; and after all the men had ended their work, then several women and girls brought up their flocks, and drew water for them. Thus it was with Jethro's daughters; and thus, no doubt, it would have been with Rachel if Jacob had not rolled away the stone and watered her sheep."—*"Land and Book,"* p. 589.

9—14. (9) *came* . . sheep, not an unusual occupation for women in the E. kept, *lit.* she shepherdised them. (10) *rolled* . . mouth, "a light heart makes a strong hand." (11) *kissed*, respectful salutation of E. *wept*, for joy; perh. his thoughts turned to his mother, and her early life, etc. (12) *told* . . brother,^d this would explain his kind attention: brother, in the wider sense, relation, kinsman. *father*, to whom this stranger had referred. (13) *heard*, *lit.* heard the hearing. *and* . . things, who he was, whence he had come, and why. (14) *surely* . . flesh,^e *i. e.* a blood relation, yet L. did not treat his own flesh well. *month*, *lit.* a month of days, *i. e.* a full month. He remained with him this length of time bef. a definite contract was made.

Jacob and Rachel.—The sight of the daughter of his mother's brother affected him. The tears shed on this occasion must have arisen from a full heart. We cannot say that the love which he afterwards bore to Rachel did

not commence from his first seeing her. But, however that might be, the cause of his weeping was of another kind: it was her being "the daughter of his mother's brother," that now affected him. Everything that revived her memory, even the very flocks of sheep that belonged to her brother, went to his heart. Nor did he wish to be alone with Rachel, but that he might give vent without reserve to these sensations. — *Fuller*.

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opinion, would signify. 'Y o u are no better than a girl.' — *Burckhardt*.

15-20. (15) **serve**, Jacob was not an idle guest. (16) **Leah** (*wearied*). (17) **tender-eyed**, feeble, dull, weak; not fresh and brilliant. **beautiful, etc.**,^a in form and expression, in figure and face. (18) **serve**, since he had no property, and therefore could give no dowry, he was willing to serve. (19) **better** . . **man**, ref. to relationship. The whole matter of marriage in the E. is considered a business affair which is conducted by the father and mother without consulting the daughter. (20) **years** . . **days**,^b not that time seemed short, but the labor light.

Jacob wishes to marry Rachel

a Pr. xxxi. 30.

b Ep. v. 25.

Jacob and Rachel (vss. 18-20). — Notice the effect of love in making labor light and giving wings to time. In whatever form love shows itself this is its effect — I. When we love our work, how easy it is to us, how swiftly and pleasantly the time passes by! The schoolboy, the teacher and the preacher know the power of love in making their task easy. II. So with obedience. The child who does not love his parents finds obedience very hard. How different with the child who *does* love them! III. So when we enter upon life's hard work. Some of you must toil seven years for a Rachel. Love will make the time fly quickly by, and will sweeten your labor. IV. So with the service of God. His yoke is easy and His burden is light to those who love Him. Our heart must be in our religion, and our religion in our heart, if it is to be to us other than a toilsome drudgery. — *D. Longwill*

vs. 17. "In the E. the clear, expressive, lustrous eye is accounted the chief feature in female beauty. It was compared to the eyes of the gazelle; see 1 S xvi. 12. On the contrary, Rachel's beauty was complete; she was beautiful in form and beautiful in look, both in figure and face." — *Alford*.

Serving for a bride. — It is related that a rich saddler, whose daughter was afterwards married to Dunk, the celebrated Earl of Halifax, ordered in his will that she should lose the whole of her fortune if she did not marry a saddler. The young Earl of Halifax, in order to win the bride, served an apprenticeship of seven years to a saddler, and afterwards bound himself to the rich saddler's daughter for life. — *Bib. Ill.* Jacob, as a younger brother, had an unquestionable claim to Rachel, the youngest daughter of Laban. Among all the Bedouin Arabs at the present day a man has the exclusive right to the hand of his first cousin; he is not obliged to marry her, but she cannot be married to another without his consent. — *Bush*.

"It is wonderful to our minds to remember that these seven years were from the 78th to the 85th year of Jacob's age. — *Alford*.

21-24. (21) **wife**, *i. e.* his betrothed. **fulfilled**, he did his part; it was now for Laban to fulfil his word. (22) **feast, lit.** a drinking. (23) **and, etc.** the supplanter is outwitted.^c (24) **Zilpah** (*a dropping*), still the cust. in E. for father to give a slave to his dau. on her mar.

Laban gives Leah to Jacob

Comparisons between the deception practiced by Laban upon Jacob, and that which Jacob practiced upon Esau. — I. One brother upon another. II. There the younger upon the older; here the older upon the younger. III. Jacob did not know Leah when he was married to her, just as his father knew him not when he blessed him. IV. Leah at the instigation of her father, Jacob at the instigation of his mother. V. But he received, notwithstanding his ignorance as to Leah, the wife designed for him by God, just as Isaac blessed him unwittingly as the rightful heir of the promise. — *Roos*.

c Ge. xxvii. 35, 36; Ma. vii. 2; Re. iii. 19.

"Cheaters must get some credit before they can cozen, and all falsehood, if not founded in some truth, would not be fixed in any belief." — *Fuller*.

Laban's fraud. — According to the custom of those eastern nations, the bride was conducted to the bed of her husband, with silence, in darkness, and covered from head to foot with a veil; circumstances all of them favorable to the wicked, selfish plan which Laban had formed to detain his son-in-law longer in his service. He who employed undue advantage to arrive at the right of the first-born has undue advantage taken of him in having the first-born put in place of the younger. He who could practise on a father's blindness, though to obtain a laudable end, is, in his turn, practised upon by a father, employing the cover of the night to accomplish a very unwarrantable purpose. — *Hunter*.

"We degrade life by our follies and vices, and then complain that the unhappiness which is only their accompaniment is inherent in the constitution of things." — *Bovee*.

25-30. (25) **morning**, light once more, effects of the feast had passed away. **wherefore** . . **me**, deceivers like not to be deceived. (26) **it** . . **country**, it was undoubtedly true that the oldest daughter must be disposed of before the younger can be given away, but Laban should have said it before. (27) **week**, the mar. week: week of feasting.^d (28) **gave** . . **also**, one sin begets

Jacob marries Rachel

d Ju. xiv. 12

B. C. cir. 1760.

a De. xxi. 15.

"All my own experience of life teaches me the contempt of cunning, not the fear. The phrase, 'profound cunning' has always seemed to me a contradiction in terms. I never knew a cunning mind which was not either shallow or on some point diseased."—*Jame-son*.

Reuben,
Simeon,
Levi, and
Judah are
born

b Ps. cxxvii. 3.

c Ma. i. 2

"You are my true and honorable wife; as dear to me as are the ruddy drops that visit this sad heart."—*Shakespeare*.

"Woman is like the reed which bends to every breeze, but breaks not in the tempest."—*Whately*.

B. C. cir. 1749.

Rachel
envies Leah

d Ge. xxv. 16-19; Job v. 2.

e Ep. iv. 28; 1 S. 1. 5.

f "That she may bear, and I will be the nurse."—*Onkelos*. "I will take her child on my lap as my own"—*Alford*.

"She certainly is no true woman for whom every man may not find it in his heart to have a certain gracious, and holy, and honorable love; she is not a woman who returns no love, and asks no protection."—*Bartol.*

another. Laban's treachery, to Jacob's bigamy. (29) **Bilhah**, (*bashfulness*). (30) **loved . . Leah**,^a deceived by R.'s beauty; as by L.'s fraud.

Laban's deceit.—This discloses a baseness in Laban's character, arousing contempt and aversion; but it ought not to blind us against the redeeming qualities of his heart. In the human mind, fragrant flowers often blossom surprisingly by the side of noxious weeds. But the fraud of Laban was not only a moral offence in itself; it was the more deplorable, as it destroyed the principle of monogamy to which the patriarchs on the whole adhered. Jacob had intended to marry Rachel alone; and when he found himself, against his will, allied with Leah, his heart could not renounce her from whom he expected the best part of his happiness; he took her to wife besides Leah; nor was he permitted to dismiss the latter after the solemnization of the marriage.—*Kalisch*.

31-35. (31) **hated**, less loved. The expression is *relative*, not absolute. **he, etc.**,^b by which her husband's love might be increased: or she comforted with love of children. (32) **Reuben** (*behold a son*). **now . . me**, L. seems to have been tender-hearted, as well as tender-eyed. (33) **Simeon** (*hearing*). (34) **now . . me**, she is intensely anxious to win her husband's love. Prob. his little love was occasioned by her participating in her father's fraud. **Levi** (*joined*). (35) **now . . Lord**, prob. thinking she would secure J.'s love. **Judah**,^c (*praise*). **and . . bearing**, *i. e.*, for a time; she had three more children after this (Gen. xxx. 17-21).

Leah and Rachel.—Consider—I. Leah's quiet behavior under her trial, and the reward she received for her patience. Leah loved Jacob with a constant and persevering affection. This is very evident from the expressions she makes use of on the successive occasions of the birth of her four children. Though not loved well by Jacob, still she has the better portion. II. Rachel's self-will and impatience, and God's displeasure with her. Her history and experience are a great contrast to Leah's.—*D. Longwill*.

Their compensations.—Leah was blessed with children, which compensated her for the loss of her husband's love. The names of the four sons successively born to her were all significant, and betoken that pious habit of mind which recognized the hand of God in all that befel her. Rachel, on the other hand, continued barren. But she was compensated by her beauty, and by the thought that she was first in her husband's affections. Thus with the evils which fall to the lot of individuals, there are compensations.—*Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTIETH.

1-4. **envied**, was jealous. (1) **or . . die**,^d I am as one dead,—for shame of her sterility. (2) **anger**,^e angry that one so tenderly loved should charge him with being the cause of her childlessness. (3) **bear . . knees**, I will nurse her children as if they were my own.^f **may . . her, lit.**, be built up by her. (4) **gave . . wife**, as Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham.

Rachel's impatience.—I. It was ungodly. 1. She was the victim of unholy passions. Envy and jealousy. 2. She took a despairing view of life. 3. She failed rightly to recognize the true Author of all good things. II. It led to the adoption of wrong expedients. Showing impatient haste of unbelief, and a want of confidence in God. III. It had an influence for evil. 1. Upon her own character. 2. Upon her sister (*vs.* 9).—*T. H. Leale*.

A true wife:—

I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better, yet, for you,
I would be trebled twenty times myself:
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich:

"That only to stand high on your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account; but the full sum of me
Is sum of something; which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschooled, unpractised;
Happy in this she is not yet so old
But she may learn; and happier than this,

She is not bred so dull but she can learn ;
 Happiest of all, is, that her gentle spirit
 Commits itself to yours to be directed,
 As from her lord, her governor, her king.
 Myself, and what is mine, to you and yours
 Is now converted : but now I was the lord
 Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
 Queen o'er myself ; and even now, but now,
 This house, these servants, and this same myself,
 Are yours, my lord." — *Shakespeare*.

5-8. (6) judged, hath procured justice for me Dan (*judge*), so called, prob. bec. she regarded God as having *decided* in her behalf. (8) with . . wrestlings, *lit.*, wrestlings of God : here ref. to earnest prayer. Naphtali (*my wrestling*), or Nephtalim."

Great wrestlings.—Thus speaks Rachel ; and this woman's experience, multiplied as it is a thousand-fold in hearts that never told their struggles, shows us that life is not so calm as it seems. Beneath many a placid stream there are deep and dangerous under-currents. Often a quiet face hides the deep things, which even the dearest intimacies cannot draw out, and which constitute the tragedies of the heart's history. It is well that we learn the need of wrestling ; for life, especially Christian life, has flesh and blood to battle with. Paul says, "we wrestle ;" and goodness, even at its best, is dearly bought and hardly won. — *W. M. Statham*.

9-13. (9) gave . . wife, prob. in hope of retaining such marks of love as she had won. (11) a . . cometh, "rather good fortune cometh." Gad (*a troop*). (13) for . . blessed, "all coming generations will felicitate me on my happy lot." Asher (*happy*).

The happiness of woman (vs. 13). — The happiness of woman illustrated by that of Leah the elements of whose happiness consisted of—I. The joys of maternity. II. The increase of conjugal affection. III. An obliviousness of personal defects. IV. The anticipation of future congratulations.

Houses without children.—Tell me not of the trim, precisely-arranged homes where there are no children ; "where," as the good Germans have it, "the fly-traps always hang straight on the wall ;" tell me not of the never-disturbed nights and days, of the tranquil, unanxious hearts where children are not ! I care not for these things. God sends children for another purpose than merely to keep up the race—to enlarge our hearts, to make us unselfish, and full of kindly sympathies and affections ; to give our souls higher aims, and to call out all our faculties to extended enterprise and exertion ; to bring round our fireside bright faces and happy smiles, and loving, tender hearts. My soul blesses the Great Father every day, that he has gladdened the earth with little children. — *Mary Howitt*.

14-16. (14) Reuben, now four or five yrs. old, prob. accompanying the reapers. days . . harvest, ab. mo. of May. mandrakes, ^b Heb. *dudaim* = love apples : the *Atropa mandragora*, allied to the deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*), narcotic and stimulating. give, *etc.*, she evidently shared in the superstition. (15) and, *etc.*, in order to obtain Leah's compliance with her request.

The mandrake.—"This plant is a species of melon, of which there are two sorts, the male and the female. The male mandrake is called Morion, or folly, because it suspends the senses. It produces berries of a good scent, and of a color approaching towards saffron. Its leaves are large, white, broad, and smooth, like the leaves of the beech-tree. Both the smell and the taste are pleasant ; but it stupefies those that use it. The Orientals cultivate this plant in their gardens, for the sake of its smell ; but those which Reuben found were in the field, in some small copse of wood perhaps, or shade, where they had come to maturity before they were found. If they resemble those of Persia rather than those of Egypt which are of a very inferior quality, then we see their value, their superiority, and perhaps their rarity, which induced Rachel to purchase them from the son of Leah." — *Paxton*.

17-21. (17) hearkened, this implies prayerfulness on her part. (18) hire . . husband, prob. ref. to her self-denial in giving up Zilpah. Issachar (*he bringeth a reward*). (20) God . . dowry, except her maiden she went por-

B. C. cir. 1749.

Discontent takes away the glory of life, and prevents us from enjoying the blessings we have.

Dan and Naphtali are born

a Ma. iv. 13.

"Rachel had manifested impatience, seeking from Jacob what only could be given of God. Jacob's remonstrance with her, vs. 2, may have directed her to wiser and better thoughts." — *Spk. Com.*

Gad and Asher are born

"If a boy is not trained to endure and to bear trouble, he will grow up a girl ; and a boy that is a girl has all a girl's weakness without any of her regal qualities. A woman made out of a woman is God's noblest work ; a woman made out of a man is His meanest." — *Beecher*.

the mandrakes

^b "Now the voluptuous mandrakes, widely exhaling their somniferous odor, breathe and excite to love." — See *Michaelis* on Song, vii. 13. See also *Tristram*, 103, ff.

"There are not unfrequently substantial reasons underneath for customs that appear to us absurd." — *Charlotte Brontë*.

Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah are born

B. C. cir. 1749.

a Ge. xlv. 7.

"Joy is the mainspring in the whole round of everlasting nature, joy moves the wheels of the great timepiece of the world; she it is that loosens flowers from their buds, suns from their firmaments, rolling spheres in distant space, seen not by the glass of the astronomer." — Schiller.

The man whose yea is yea and his nay nay, is, we all confess, the most courageous, whether or no he may be the most successful in daily life; and he who gave the precept has left us the most perfect example of how to live up to it. — T. Hughes. Good characters are built up of little acts of kindness, industry, generosity, obedience, and integrity. One mean or dishonest act may destroy a reputation which it has taken years to acquire. — W. H. Booth.

Joseph is born

b 1 S. i. 19, 20.

"Men are almost always cruel in their neighbors' faults; and make others' overthrow the badge of their own ill-masked virtue. — Sir P. Sidney.

The Rev. Moses Browne had twelve children. On one remarking to him. "Sir, you have just as many children as Jacob," he replied "Yes; and I have Jacob's God to provide for them."

Jacob wishes to return

tionless fr. her earthly father. now . . me, in pref. to R. : or, regard me as his wife in reality as well as name. Zebulun (*dwelling*). (21) Dinah (*judgment*), prob. J. had other daus.,^a but such were not usually named unless of historical importance.

Leah's dowry (vs. 20) — I. What it was not. Not — 1. Worldly wealth; 2. Personal charms. II. What it was. 1. Intense affection for her husband; 2. The increase, through her, of his family; 3. The increase of domestic joy. III. Who gave it? 1. Laban gave her nothing, save her handmaiden; 2. It was God who gave her children and her husband's love.

The promised seed. — Bishop Patrick well suggests here, that the true reason of this contest between Jacob's wives and their giving their maids to be his wives was the earnest desire they had to fulfil the promise made to Abraham (and now lately renewed to Jacob), that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude. and that in one seed of his the Messiah, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. And he thinks it had been below the dignity of this sacred history, to take such particular notice of these things, if there had not been some such great consideration in them. — M. Henry. This view is strongly confirmed by the almost uniform reference of the sisters to *God's dealing with them* in connection with the successive births. — J. G. Butler.

Attributes of woman : —

The woman's cause is man's. They rise or sink Together. Dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free; If she be small, slight-natured, miserable, How shall men grow? . . . Let her be All that not harms distinctive womanhood; For woman is not undevelop'd man, But diverse. Could we make her as the man, Sweet love were slain, whose dearest bond is this, Not like to like, but like in difference; Yet in the long years liker must they grow; The man be more of woman, she of man; He gain in sweetness, and in moral height, Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world; She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care, More as the double-natured poet, each; Till at the last she set herself to man, Like perfect music unto noble words. — Tennyson.

22—24. (22) and, etc., who all this time was childless, save in the very secondary sense of having the children of her maid reckoned to her. (23) God . . reproach, the ungenerous reproach of man. (24) Joseph,^b (*he will add*). said, etc., the birth of J. inspired her with faith and hope.

God's favor towards Rachel. — I. It was long delayed. Discipline. II. It was granted to her after some solemn lessons had been learned. 1. Dependence; 2. Patience; 3. Faith and hope. III. It awakened gratitude. 1. Grateful recognition of God's dealings (*ver. 23*); 2. Heartfelt acknowledgment of God (*ver. 24*). — T. H. Leale.

Delightfulness of children —

Thou, little child,
Thy mother's joy, thy father's hope — thou bright
Pure dwelling, where two fond hearts keep their gladness —
Thou little potentate of love, who comest
With solemn sweet dominion to the old,
Who see thee in thy merry fancies charged
With the grave embassy of that dear past,
When they were young like thee — thou vindication
Of God — thou living witness against all men —
Who have been babes — thou everlasting promise
Which no man keeps — thou portrait of our nature,
Which in despair and pride we scorn and worship —
Thou household god, whom no iconoclast
Hath broken! — Dobell.

25—27. (25) when, etc., gen. sup. to have been at end of second 7 years' service; but this not necessary, it may have been longer. send . . country, i. e., "permit me to go;" aft. so long an absence he was nat. anxious to

return, to look aft. his birthright, *etc.* (26) **knowest, etc.**, he asks only what was his due. (27) **if . . eyes**, a very questionable thing. **I . . sake**,^a he cared more for himself than for Jacob, whose value he had learned by experience, *i. e.* by investigation (*lit.* by divination), by insidious inspection. Neither did he care much for his daughter's withdrawal. He looked upon Jacob and his family simply as instruments of gain.

Home. — Let us, by God's grace, live and work for Him daily, and when death comes we can say, without fear, "Send me away, that I may go to mine own place, and to my country." The dying Baxter, who wrote "The Saint's Rest," said, "I am almost well, and nearly at home!" and another dying man exclaimed, "I am going home as fast as I can, and I bless God that I have a good home to go to." During the American civil war the two rival armies were encamped opposite each other on the banks of the Potomac river. When the federal bands played some national air of the union, the confederate musicians struck up a rival tune. Suddenly one of the bands played "Home, Sweet Home," and the contest ceased. The musicians of both armies played the same tune, voices from opposite sides of the river joined the chorus, "There's no place like home!" So we, the pilgrim band, are bound together by that one strong link — we are going to our own place and our own country, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." — *H. J. Wilmont Buxton.*

28-33. (28) **appoint, lit.** prick down: *i. e.* state precisely. **and . . it, if** any more than this long service is due. (29) **knowest . . served**,^b with what conscientious diligence. **how . . me**,^c *i. e.* to what great number they have grown. (30) **when . . house**,^d this explains J's conduct. He must care for his own family. (31) **thou . . thing**, *i. e.* no specified fixed amount. Jacob had in mind another plan. **if . . me**, accede to this stipulation. (32) **and . . hire**, these were likely to be *very few*.^e (33) **so . . face**, "it is as if he had said, so shall my honest and upright conduct bear witness for me." The thing will show for itself that I am guilty of no fraud whatever, but simply take what you agree to give me." — *Bush.*

Since my coming: Heb. "At my foot" (vs. 30). — By the labor of Jacob's foot, the cattle of Laban had increased to a multitude. Of a man who has become rich by his own industry, it is said, "Ah! by the labor of his feet these treasures have been acquired." "How have you gained this prosperity?" — "By the favor of the gods, and the labor of my feet." "How is it the king is so prosperous?" — By the labor of the feet of his ministers." — *Roberts.*

34-36. (34) **and, etc.**, this seemed for him, a most safe arrangement. Laban had been dishonest; and now Jacob was to overcome it by shrewdness. (35) **he . . day**, *L.* proceeds at once to take care for himself. **goats . . sheep**, leaving those whose progeny were least likely to be part-colored. (36) **set . . Jacob**, he places the spotted, *etc.*, at a safe distance from the rest so that there would be no danger of inter-breeding. **Jacob . . flocks**, and proceeded to win his hire.

Jacob's expedient. — Some acquaintance with the influence of circumstances on the lower animals at breeding-time, sheds much light on this transaction. For example, I have known among sheep a black wether, when pastured at the breeding season with a white flock, show its influence over the females to such a degree as to add to the flock several lambs marked with black and even one or two wholly black. In pheasant preserves the influence of a white domestic fowl, when shut up with them, is acknowledged in making the plumage of one or more of the young pheasants much lighter than it would otherwise have been. It would be out of place to dwell here on this. These cases are mentioned to indicate the nature of the expedient to which Jacob had recourse in order to enrich himself from the flocks of Laban. The term "ring-straked" is applied to white bands on the limbs or necks of the goats, and to black or brown bands on those of the sheep. The zebra is neither spotted nor speckled, but ring-straked. — *Dr. Duns.*

37-43. (37) **poplar**, perh. the *styrax* or *storax*: a shrub, ab. 12 ft. high. **hazel**, Heb. *luz*,^a almond. **chestnut**, the plane-tree. **made . . rods**, by stripping off the thin rind or bark. (38, 39) **and, etc.**, "That Jacob believed in the efficacy of the artifice he adopted is apparent; but the multiplication of parti-colored animals it will be safer to ascribe to Divine blessing than to

B. c. 1749.

g. Ec. xxxix. 3-5.

"My idea is that there are duties toward our native land, common to every citizen and even public institutions and education must have such a direction as to enable every citizen to fulfil his duty toward his fatherland." — *Kossuth.*

"The love of country produces good manners, and good manners also love of country." — *Montesquieu.*

Jacob's expedient for his vindication

^b Ge. xxxi. 38-40; Tit. ii. 10.

^c Ep. vi. 5-8; 1 Pe. ii. 18; Col. iii. 22-24.

^d 1 Ti. v. 8

^e "The color of the sheep in the E. is gen. white; that of the goats is black." — *Tristram Nat. Hist. of Bible, 144.*
^f Ps. xxxvii. 6.

Laban approves Jacob's plan

Jacob was willing to trust to Providence with an artful use of the means which his experience furnished him. — *Jacobus.*

If Laban had been honest, he would have represented to Jacob that he would be a great loser by this bargain. — *Lange.*

Increase of Jacob's flocks

"The Arabs still call the almond *luz*."

B. C. 1749.

Pill, to peel, "The skillful shepherd pulled me certain wands." — *Shakespeare, M. of Ven.*, i. 3.

a "It has been observed that in the whole of this narrative of J.'s stratagems the sacred names do not once occur." — *Alford*.

B. C. cir. 1739.

God commands Jacob to return

b De. xxviii. 54.

c Ge. xxviii. 15; xxxii. 9.

"A certain amount of distrust is wholesome, but not so much of others as of ourselves; neither vanity nor conceit can exist in the same atmosphere with it." — *Mde. Necker*.

"Of all the passions, jealousy is that which exacts the hardest service, and pays the bitterest wages." — *Colton*.

Jacob's proposal to his wives

d Nu. xiv. 22; Job xix. 3; Le. xxvi. 26; Ec. vii. 19, Zec. viii. 23; Re. ii. 10.

"Never put much confidence in such as put no confidence in others. A man prone to suspect evil is mostly looking in his neighbor for what he sees in himself. As to the pure, all things are pure, even so to the impure all things are impure." — *Hare*.

human craft." — *Pulp. Com.* (40) lambs, these speckled ones produced by the foregoing artifice in a flock by themselves. **set . . . Laban**, the meaning prob. is that they were so located as to make the speckled lambs serve the same purpose as the peeled rods. **and . . . cattle**, so that they should not produce offspring of a uniform color. (41, 42) **and, etc.**, hence J.'s flock bec. the most healthy and vigorous, as well as most numerous. (43) **increased**, *lit.* broke forth, expanded. Thus far the historian simply narrates the fact of the patriarch's prosperity, and the steps which led to it, "without expressing approbation of his conduct or describing his increasing wealth as a blessing from God. The verdict is contained in what follows." — *Keil*.

Advised diligence. — What though you have found no treasure, nor has any friend left you a rich legacy! Diligence is the mother of good luck, and God gives all things to industry. Then plough deep while sluggards sleep, and you shall have corn to sell or to keep. Work while it is called to-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered to-morrow. One to-day is worth two to-morrows, as poor Richard says; and further, never leave that till to-morrow which you can do to-day — *Franklin*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

1-3. (1) **heard**, not directly, but thro' report of others. **sons**, who seem as unjust as their sire. **Jacob . . . father's**, "a calumnious assertion," by fraud, they meant, **glory, lit.** weight *i. e.* of wealth. The word glory is used since it gen. is the concomitant of wealth. (2) **toward . . . before**, *lit.* as yesterday and the day before. This change in Laban's disposition was God's signal for Jacob to return to the land of his inheritance. (3) **return, etc.**, such is God's command. **I . . . thee**,^c hence all opposition will be in vain.

Jacob's resolution to return (vss. 3-16). — Jacob here makes a resolution to return to Canaan. This he makes—1. Upon a just provocation: Laban's sons speak ill of him; Laban looks ill towards him; 2. By Divine direction and under the convoy of a Divine promise; 3. With the knowledge and consent of his wives. — *M. Henry*.

The stirring-up of the nest. — Jacob was becoming too contented in that strange land. Like Ulysses and his crews, he was in danger of forgetting the land of his birth; the tents of his father; and the promises of which he was the heir. He was fast losing the pilgrim-spirit, and settled into a citizen of that far country. His mean and crafty arts to increase his wealth were honeycombing his spirit, and eating out his nobler nature, prostituting it to the meanest ends. His wives, infected with the idolatry of their father's house, were in danger of corrupting the minds of his children; and how then would fare the holy seed, destined to give the world the messages of God? It was evident that his nest must be broken up in Haran; that he must be driven back into the pilgrim-life—to become a stranger and a sojourner, as his fathers were. And this was another step nearer the moment when he became an Israel, a prince with God. — *F. B. Meyer*.

4-9. (4) **sent . . . flock**, for a more private interview. (5) **but . . . me**, of which the great flock around them was the proof. (6) **power**, ability, skill, time. (7) **deceived**, false promises, fair words, falsehoods. **ten times, i. e.** many times: a common idiom.^d (8) **if . . . thus**, in each case thinking only of his own advantage. **then, etc.**, what he intended for *his*, turned out for *my* gain. (9) **God . . . me**, God has cared for me, and also reproved him.

Jacob and Laban. — During the fourteen years that Jacob kept the flocks for Rachel and Leah, Laban regarded him with evident satisfaction; not perhaps for his own sake, but for the unprecedented increase in his (Laban's) pastoral wealth which had taken place under Jacob's fostering care. He was even disposed to be somewhat pious so long as the flocks and herds continued multiplying (ch. xxx. 27). But now, when at the end of six years the relative positions of himself and Jacob, are reversed, — when Jacob is the rich man and he comparatively speaking at least, the poor one, — not only does his piety towards God disappear, but his civility towards man does not remain. There are many Labans in the Church, whose religion is but the shadow that waits upon the sun of their prosperity, and many Labans in the world, whose

amiability towards others is only the reflection of their complacent feelings towards themselves.—*Pul. Com.*

B. C. 1739.

10-13. (10) dream, perhaps it was in a dream that the expedient was suggested to him; now by a dream he is warned to return. (11) and . . dream, most probably the same dream referred to in vs. 10 here . . I, ready for all God's will. (12) for . . thee, hence to compensate J., and punish L., was the change in the property. (13) I . . Beth-el,^a who comforted thee on that dark night. where . . me, J. is reminded of his promise of obedience. return . . kindred, *i. e.* Caanan wh. was J.'s inheritance.

he tells them of the command

^a Grised, now spelled grizzled, of a greyish color.

A strange vow. — A minister now (1873) living relates the following: — In early life his father felt called to the ministry, but asked God to excuse him, and made a vow to give his eldest son to the work of the ministry. The vow was apparently accepted of God, as the father felt no longer the pressure of this special duty, and prospered in his religious life. Twenty years later the son was converted, and felt that, if he would be religious at all, he must be a minister. He accepted the duty gladly, prepared for it; and, after his ordination, his father said to him, for the first time informing him of the vow, "My son, you have a double duty to do. You have your own work and mine also."

The *Spl. Com.* says, "sprinkled as with hail; the *lit.* meaning of the word grised."

^a Ge. xxviii. 18-22. Remembrance wakes with all her busy train." — *Goldsmith.*

14-16. (14) is there, *etc.*, even his daus. had no great love or respect for L.; and nothing to hope for from him. "By 'portion,' is to be understood such voluntary gifts and presents as he might be induced to make to them, and by 'inheritance,' that to which they might expect to succeed by law or common usage." — *Bush.* (15) strangers, rather than kindred. sold, instead of giving them wedding dowries he had sold them for the hire of Jacob as tho' they had been slaves. hath . . money, referring to the portion which, as daus., they may have expected: or the price for which they were sold. (16) riches . . father, God did not permit L. to thrive by his unrighteous exactions. God . . do, they were willing to fully cast in their lot with one whom God so signally defended, and who had so proved his love for them.

they agree to his proposal

"It may, indeed, be said that sympathy exists in all minds, as Faraday has discovered that magnetism exists in all metals; but a certain temperature is required to develop the hidden property, whether in the metal or the mind." — *Lytton.*

Our Inheritance. — There is welcome for us, room for us, reward for us. Have you ever stood outside a flower-show in the summer-time, and seen carriage after carriage drive up, with rustling silks and dazzling liveries and crested panels, pride and pomp entering in; and then caught the wistful face of a poor child at the gate, with another child in her arms, shut out from seeing God's beautiful flowers? The poor, the blind, the maim, the halt, the prodigals of every type are welcome. What, does he want me? does He wait for me? has he asked for me? — *W. M. Statham.*

17-21. (17) then . . up, since they were united, he would act while they were in the mind. sons, his oldest son was not more than 13, and the youngest about 6. wives, careful for their comfort. (18) carried, *lit.* drove, led, conducted. getting, possessing. (19) Laban . . sheep, the time seized for this removal was when L. and his servants were absorbed by this important occupation. images,^b Heb. *teraphim*, prob. gods, like the *Penates* of classical nations; objects of adoration, or instruments of divination. (20) stole . . Laban,^c *lit.* stole away the heart, *i. e.* departed without his knowledge. (21) river, Euphrates, wh. was called by pre-eminence "the river." Gilead, as it was afterwards called (*vss.* 46, 47).

Jacob's departure from Laban

^b Ge. xxxv. 2. Gilead, a mt. range extending from S. to N. along E. border of Caanan, known by dif. names in dif. parts; it reaches from Hermon to Arabia Petrea.

Rachel's theft of her father's *teraphim*. — Among the many solutions which have been attempted of her conduct, the following may be specified: — 1. That the images were of precious metal, and Rachel stole them to compensate for the loss of dowry sustained through Laban's bargain with Jacob; 2. That she thought that by taking the oracles she should deprive Laban of the means of discovering the flight of her husband; 3. That she expected by this act to bring prosperity from the household of her father to her husband; 4. Some conclude that she hoped to cure her father of his idolatrous propensities by depriving him of the instruments; while many, on the other hand, imagine that Rachel and her sister were infected by the same superstitions as their father, and wished to continue the practice of them in the land of Canaan. — *Bush.*

^c This flight of J. occurred in the 158th yr. of Isaac's age, and 98th of Jacob's. — *Bush.*

22-24. (22) on . . day, all so busy with the shearing, and the distance betw. the flocks so great that he could not well hear of it bef. (23) pursued, Jacob

Laban pursues Jacob

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a Ge. xx. 3; Job xxxii. 15.

"Dreams are the children of an idle brain, begot of nothing but vain fantasy, which is as thin of substance as the air, and more inconstant than the wind."—*Shakespeare*.

"Can any of the metaphysicians inform us why all the operations of the mind are carried on with undiminished strength and activity in dreams, except the judgment, which alone is suspended and dormant?"—*Colton*.

and overtakes him in Gilead

b Pr. xxvi. 24, 25.

c Ju. xviii. 24.

"Parting and forgetting? What faithful heart can do these? Our great thoughts, our great affections, the truths of our life, never leave us. Surely they cannot separate from our consciousness; shall follow it whithersoever that shall go; and are of their nature divine and immortal."—*Thackeray*.

the search for the gods

d Ex. xx 12; Le. xix. 32.

"Cunning has only private selfish aims, and sticks at nothing which may make them succeed. Discretion has large and extended views, and, like a well-formed eye, commands a whole horizon; cunning is a kind of short-sightedness, that discerns the minutest objects which are

this shows how a formal request for another kind of leaving would have been received. **seven**, Jacob having marched ten days. **overtook**, they were prob. mounted on the swift dromedaries of the E. Moreover, they were unencumbered; while Jacob had all his flocks with him. (24) **God . . dream**,^a His way of warning the wicked, as well as comforting and instructing the good. **either . . bad**, *lit.* from good to bad. Characteristics of L. to beg with fair speech and advance to rough measures.

Providence in dreams.—Captain Yount, of California, in a mid-winter's night had a dream, in which he saw what appeared to be a company of emigrants arrested by the snows of the mountains, and perishing rapidly by cold and hunger. He noted the very cast of the scenery, marked by a huge perpendicular front of white rock cliff; he distinguished the very features of the persons and the look of their particular distress. He woke profoundly impressed with the distinctness and apparent reality of his dream. At length he fell asleep, and dreamed exactly the same dream again. In the morning he could not expel it from his mind. Falling in shortly with an old hunter comrade, he told him the story; and was only the more deeply impressed by his recognizing, without hesitation, the scenery of the dream. This comrade came over the Sierra by the Carson Valley Pass (in California), and declared that a spot in the pass answered exactly to his description. By this the unsophisticated patriarch was decided. He immediately collected a company of men with mules and blankets and all necessary provisions. The men were sent into the mountains one hundred and fifty miles distant, directly to the Carson Valley Pass. And there they found the company in exactly the condition of the dream, and brought in the remnant alive. — *Dr. Bushnell*.

25—30. (25) **Jacob . . mount**, for him a mt. of safety. (26) **what . . done**, the guilty are prone to accuse others. It was bec. of what he had done that Jacob fled. **and . . daughters**, what did he care for his daughters, he who had sold them as tho. they had been slaves. **as . . sword**, not true: they went of their own free will. (27) **that . . away**, if so willing to send them away, why the pursuit? **mirth**, feasting and song: old custom. **tabret**, Heb. *toph*, a kind of tambourine. (28) **kiss**,^b sheer hypocrisy. **sons, i. e., grandsons. thou . . doing**, in the O. T. foolishness carries in it the idea of wrongdoing. Delitzsch thinks there was a mixture of crafty dissimulation and paternal affection in all this. (29) **it . . hurt**, an empty boast to a man who had God for his helper: L. must have felt this after the dream to which he referred. (30) **because . . house**, but chiefly to be free from oppression. **yet . . gods**,^c how, in the hurry of pursuit, had he missed them? Perh. he had gone to consult them in ref. to this journey.

Laban. — Laban's affection for his daughters was only a pretence. Consider his conduct towards them while they dwelt with him. He had kept them penniless, and now he wants to dismiss them with a generous feast. He is also passionate and revengeful while he appears to be pious. He asserts that his superior power puts Jacob at his mercy, but that he is restrained from hurting him by God's injunction. But all this time he feels the passion of revenge burning within him, as if he would say to Jacob, "I could crush you if I pleased, only that God has forbidden me." — *Hom. Com.*

31—35. (31) **Jacob**, answering the first part of his question as to the reason for his leaving. **for . . me**, a hint to L. that he knew him for a violent and unjust man. (32) **with . . live**, answering the second part of the question with reference to the idols. This is rather a rash and hasty statement. **brethren, i. e., the kinsmen of Laban. for . . them**, otherwise he might have been ready in his defence. (33) **and . . tent**, where he would have been glad to have found them. **Rachel's**, guilty, yet least suspected, she was the favorite. (34) **furniture**, prob. the litter wh. the camel carried for her convenience, and wh. she made use of as a couch in the tent. **searched**, indicates how much faith L. had in J.'s veracity. (35) **let . . lord**,^d a respectful address, but sugg. of the sternness of his character. **custom . . me**, which rendered her ceremonially unclean, a statute in force among the ancient Arameans. **and . . images**, suffering the vexation of losing his gods, being deceived, and exposing himself to censure for making what appeared a false charge.

Furniture. — Kitto thinks that it was under the common pack-saddle of the camel, which is high, and shaped so as to suit the ridge of the camel's back;

and that under this, or among the shawls, cloaks and rugs which are used to make the saddle easy for women, the teraphim were concealed. There was room enough under this for the small teraphim, or *busts* of human form, and Rachel, cunning as ever, did not lack a device and pretence to give her success. Laban could not think that in such circumstances she would sit upon his gods. — *Jacobus*.

36-39. (36) *wroth*, with this charge of theft, aft. all that had preceded. *chode*, disputed, pleaded. *what, etc.*,^a he who had deceived others, is now himself deceived. (37) *what . . stuff?* gods or aught else. *judge, decide, arbitrate.* (38) *thy . . young*, through neglect of mine in the lambing season. *and . . eaten,*^b I have not taken the usual rations or perquisites. (39) *I . . loss, etc.*, like a com. hireling shepherd rather than as one of the fam.

Jacob's wrath. — There is a deal of nature in this free and indignant outbreak of Jacob's — restrained by the fear of a detention that might have involved some of his family, but when that fear has passed away and its operation as a check was removed — then the sense of injury, kept under till now, comes forth in loud and open remonstrances against him who had inflicted it. It is this truthfulness to humanity which stamps an authentic character on the whole narrative. — *T. Chalmers*.

40-42. (40) *day . . night*, exposed to all extremes of heat and cold in the discharge of his duties. *my . . eyes*, through exhaustion and anxiety. (41) *six . . cattle*, time occupied by his expedient; see on xxx. 32-43. *thou . . times*, see vs. 7. (42) *except . . Abraham,*^c to whom alone I am indebted for what I have. *and . . Isaac, i. e. God*, who is the object of Isaac's fear. *thou . . empty*, notwithstanding thy pretence. *God . . yesternight*, Jacob appeals to L.'s confessed vision in which he had been warned against using violent language.

The climate of Palestine. — "A fine day at this time of year shows the country in its best cloak. A little later in the season every blade of grass will be withered up; the shrubs on the hills will be blackened and parched; the plain will be covered with an impenetrable veil of white mist, known to the African traveler by the appropriate name of 'smokes.' Above head the sky will be that pitiless glare of changeless blue, never to be relieved by a single speck of cloud till the welcome rains of autumn begin to cool the scorched soil and burning rocks. These fine days of early spring are rare, however, and we must often look for cold pelting rains, mists, hail, and even snow — though the latter very rarely, and only on the central range. While I am writing these lines hail is falling, and dense fogs, accompanied by sharp showers at intervals, are hurried up by the violent equinoctial gale from the south-west, which threatens every moment to tear the frail cotton shelter from over my head and hurl it into the neighboring valley. Stout guy ropes and piles of stones on the tent-pegs have as yet succeeded in baffling Æolus, though for three nights and days we have been obliged to be on the alert every instant to save our tents from wrack and ruin. Only a few days ago the weather was like a fine June day in England. Such are the changes of temperature to be found in this country from Petra to Damascus." — *Drake*.

43-47. (43) *answered*, he still has the effrontery to reply, yet wishes to adjust matters as best he can. *are . . is*, these words in *italics* may be read in the past tense — *were, was*. *what can, etc.*, it was prob. only his conscious inability that prevented him making some attempt. (44) *make, etc. lit. cut.* see on xv. 18. (45) *stone*, to mark the site. (46) *stones . . heap, on wh.* aft. they had eaten, the pillar was prob. erected. (47) *Jegar-sahadutha*, Aramaic (Chaldee or Syriac), and *Galeed*, Hebrew; both terms mean the same; *i. e.* heap of witness. "These words are the oldest testimony that in Mesopotamia, the mother country of the Patriarchs, Aramaic or Chaldee was spoken; while in Canaan, the country of Jacob's birth, Hebrew was the vernacular. And hence we may conclude that Abraham's family had adopted the Hebrew from the Canaanites (*i. e.* the Phenicians)." — *Keil*.

These daughters are my daughters (vs. 43). — Laban now turns again, and gives way to the natural affections of a father. Consider the circumstances which tended thus to calm his mind. I. The seven days' journey. II. The Divine warning. III. The mortification resulting from his fruitless search.

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near at hand, but is not able to discern things at a distance." — *Addison*.

Jacob vindicates his conduct

a "All this virtuous indignation is founded on Rachel's lie." — *Alford*.

b Ez. xxxiv. 1-5. See the confidence of a clear conscience! Happy is he that can be acquitted by himself in private; in public by others. in both by God. — *Trapp*.

and ascribes his prosperity to God

c Ps cxxiv. 1-3; Ex. iii 7; Is. viii. 13; Jude ix.

"We must not love virtue for the bare sake of reputation and human esteem. To do good, purely to be gazed and talked of and applauded, this was the character of the Pharisees, whose vices were real, and whose virtues were imaginary; but had their virtues been as real as their vices, this poor view and narrow purpose would have spoilt them all; and they could only expect their reward where they sought it, that is from men." — *Jortin*.

the heap and the pillar

"Who, in the midst of just provocation to anger, instantly finds the fit word which settles all around him in silence is more than wise or just; he is, were he a beggar, of more than royal blood, he is of celestial descent." — *Lavater*.

"Prudence is a duty which we owe ourselves, and if

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we will be so much our own enemies as to neglect it, we are not to wonder if the world is deficient in discharging their duties to us for when a man lays the foundation of his own ruin, others too often are apt to build upon it" — *Fielding*.

Galeed and Mizpah

a Ju. xi 29; 1 S. vii. 6.

b Jos. xiii. 26.

"Duties are ours: events are God's. This removes an infinite burden from the shoulders of a miserable, tempted, dying creature. On this consideration only can he securely lay down his head and close his eyes." — *Cecil*.

The Lord takes cognizance of the conduct of men when they are absent one from another.

Jacob and Laban separate

c Jos. xxiv. 2.

d Pr. xvi. 7.

"Let our parting be fully as charitable as our meeting was; that the pale, envious world, glad of the food of other's miseries, civil dissensions and nuptial strifes, may not feed fat with ours." — *Middleton*.

"Abruptness is an eloquence in parting, when spinning out the time is but weaving of new sorrow." — *Suckling*.

IV. Jacob's self-defense and the truth of his reproaches. His courage and anger gradually give way to fear and anxiety. — *Calver*.

Heaps of stones. — The traveler in Palestine frequently remarks in the open country pyramidal piles of small stones of different heights. These have significations differing with their shapes. When they are from five to six feet high, and arranged in a line with a certain regularity, they are meant to mark the spot where a battle has taken place between two hostile tribes. When, however, they are formed of five or more stones, and are placed on the boundary of some property, they signify that there two litigants have come to terms, and erected them in token of their agreement, and no one dares to remove these land-marks. Sometimes small heaps surround fields, where the crops are growing or have just been reaped, or are placed upon piles of logs or hewn timbers, signifying that they are private property, so that no one ventures to take them. I have no doubt that this custom was mainly derived from the ancient owners of the soil, for we find many instances of it in the Bible. — *Pierotti*.

48—50. (48) *witness*, those who made it and saw it made will testify to its purpose. (49) *Mizpah*,^a (*watch-tower*) perh. same with *Ramath mizpeh*,^b and *Ramoth-gilead*. There were sev. Mizpehs. *watch* . . *another*, certainly L. had need to be "watched." Considering the distrust of each other which these parting words imply, it is somewhat curious that they have been taken for the Christian Endeavor society benediction. The sentiment is beautiful if understood in the commonly accepted sense. (50) *afflict*, hypocritical profession of a tender regard for the *daus*. he had "sold." *man* . . *us*, i. e. no human being will see us, but God will.

Mizpah. —

When we are absent the one from the other,
Harder as every fresh parting must be,
Love that surpasseth the love of a brother
Tenderly watcheth between me and thee.

Slumbering not, sleeping not, through the long hours,
Israel's Watchman looks down from above;
Heareth this low-murmured "Mizpah" of ours,
Smiles on our trusting and blesseth our love.

Absent or present, in joy or in weeping,
This thought be ours to soothe our distress;
One Eye — the same Eye — on both watch is keeping,
One Hand — the same Hand — is stretched out to bless.

51—55. (51) *heap*, wh. J. cast equally with L. (52) *harm*, he draws the limit here. (53) *the* . . *father*, but their father Terah was an idolator.^c *sware* . . *Isaac*, i. e. by the only true God, who was the object of Isaac's reverential homage. "Laban calls to witness the gods (the verb is in the plural in the original) of Abraham and Nahor and their father Terah; but Jacob swears only by the true God, Him whom Isaac, his father, feared." — *Alford*. (54) *sacrifice* . . *bread*, a religious festival: happy termination of what threatened to be a feud. (55) *blessed*, another instance of that interesting Eastern custom. *Laban* . . *place*,^d Padan-Aram, wh. he had been more wise not to have left. Jacob's place no more.

The pillar a witness. — The following story is told of a rich old citizen of Bermago: He had lent to one of his countrymen at Florence four hundred crowns without any witness, and without requiring a written acknowledgment. When the stipulated time had elapsed, the creditor required his money; but the borrower positively denied that he had ever received it. After many fruitless attempts to recover it, the lender was advised to resort to the duke. Alessandro accordingly ordered both of the parties before him; and after hearing the assertions of the one, and the positive denial of the other, he turned to the creditor, saying, "Is it possible, then, friend, that you can have lent your money when no one was present?" "There was no one, indeed," replied the creditor. "I counted out the money to him on a post." "Go bring the post, then, this instant," said the duke, "and I will make it confess the truth." The creditor, though astonished at receiving such an order, hastened to obey, having first received a secret caution from the

duke not to be very speedy in his return. Meantime the duke employed himself in transacting the affairs of his other suitors, till at length, turning to the borrower, he said, "This man stays a long time with this post." "It is so heavy, sir," replied the other, "that he could not yet have brought it." Again Alessandro left him, and, returning some time afterward, carelessly exclaimed, "What kind of men are they that lend their money without evidence? Was there no one present but the post?" "No, indeed, sir!" replied the knave. "The post is a good witness then," said the duke, "and shall make thee pay the man his money." — *Bib. Ill.*

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"Let us not un-man each other,—part at once; all farewells should be sudden, when for ever." — *Byron.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

1-2. (1) **Jacob** . . way, still homeward bound, after an absence of twenty yrs. **angels** . . him,^a prob in a vision, yet may have been otherwise. (2) **Mahanaim**^b (*two camps*), prob. the idea of his own encampment meeting with that of God.

Mahanaim

The ministry of angels. — I. The angels themselves. 1. Their number is very great. 2. They are swift as the flames of fire. 3. They are strong. 4. They seem to be all young. 5. They are evidently endowed with corresponding moral excellences. II. The ministry of angels has these characteristics. It is a ministry of — 1. Guardianship. 2. Cheerfulness. 3. Animation. 4. Consolation. 5. Fellowship and convoy through death to life, and from earth to heaven. III. The whole subject shows in a very striking manner — 1. The exceeding greatness of the glory of Christ. 2. The value and greatness of salvation. — *A. Raleigh.*

^a Ps. xci. 11; He. i. 14.

^b Lu. ii. 13; Ps. ciii. 20, 21; Jos. v. 14.

"The angels of God met him." —

"And is there care in heaven? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is; else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts. But, O! th' exceeding grace
Of highest God that loves His creatures so,
All, all His works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels He sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe,
How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succor us that succor want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The fitting skyes, like flying Pursuivant,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward.
O! why should heavenly God to men have such regard?"

— *Spenser, The Faery Queen.*

"All God's children may call death, as Jacob did this place, Mahanaim; because there the angels meet them." — *Trapp.*

"God holds them chain'd in fetters of His power; that without leave, one minute of an hour, they cannot range." — *Du Bartas.*

3-5. (3) **and** . . **Esau**, Laban gone, an angry brother now to be dealt with. In the journey of life one diff. succeeds another. **Seir** (*hairy, bristly*), mt. range anc. inhab. by Horites.^c The N. of Seir now *Jebal*; the S., *esh-Sherah*. We have no account of Esau's going to that land, and the separation from his father. the . . **Edom** (*red*), so called fr. Esau, who aft. possessed it, having sold his birthright for the *red* pottage.^d (4) **commanded**, he *had* sent some bef. : Jacob had not yet crossed the Jabbok. **lord**, language of conciliation. Jacob was strictly E.'s lord.^e **and . . now**, without coming to claim my inheritance. (5) **I . . women-servants**,^f now a rich man disinterestedly seeking reconciliation, not a desperate man under stress of poverty.

Jacob's message to Esau

^c Ge. xiv. 6; De. ii. 12.

^d Ge. xxv. 30.

^e Ge. xxvii. 29.

^f Pr. xv. 1.

Jacob's preparation for meeting his angry brother. — I. He took those measures dictated by human prudence. 1. He sends messengers of peace. 2. He divides his company into two bands. 3. He sends a present. II. He took those measures dictated by religion. **Prayer.** 1. He appeals to God as the Covenant God and Father (ver. 9). 2. He pleads God's gracious promise to himself. 3. He confesses his own unworthiness, and God's goodness and faithfulness (ver. 10). 4. He presents his special petition expressing his present want (ver. 11). This prayer shows the kind husband, the tender father, the man of faith and piety. — *T. H. Leale.*

Confidence in men mostly stands or falls with their fortunes.

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"Be circumspect in your dealings, and let the seed you plant be the offspring of prudence and care; thus fruit follows the fair blossom, as honor follows a good life." — *H. Ballou.*

the messenger's return

"It may be conjectured that large caravans used at that time to take this precaution against hostile attacks. Sir H. Blount relates in his *Travels*, that he traveled with a caravan which had divided itself in like manner into two troops, one of which that went before, being attacked by robbers, had an action with them, and were plundered, whereas the other escaped uninjured." — *Rosenmüller.*

Jacob's prayer

a Ge. xxxi. 3; xxviii. 13.

b Ps. l. 15; xci. 15; Ph. iv. 6; 1 S. xxx. 6; 2 Ch. xx. 12.

c 2 S. vii. 18; Ge. xxiv. 27; Is. lxi. 7; Job viii. 7.

d Is. xliii. 26; He. x. 23.

"Nothing is more humbling than the grace of God." — *Starke.*

"To remind God of His promises is one of the privileges of prayer." — *Hom. Com.*

Jacob sends a present to Esau

e Pr. xviii. 16. "It passes in the world for greatness of mind, to be perpetually giving and loading people with

Bear, forbear, forgive. — The attachment of the Rev. John Eliot, usually called "the apostle to the Indians," to peace and union among Christians was exceedingly great. When he heard ministers complain that some in their congregations were too difficult for them, the substance of his advice would be, "Brother, compass them! Brother, learn the meaning of those three little words — bear, forbear, forgive." His love of peace, indeed, almost led him to sacrifice right itself. When a bundle of papers was laid before an assembly of ministers, which contained the particulars of a contention between parties who he thought ought at once to be agreed, he hastily threw them into the fire, and said, "Brethren, wonder not at what I have done; I did it on my knees this morning before I came among you."

6-8. (6) and . . Jacob, *i. e.* to his camp on the N. of the Jabbok. he . . thee, they seem to have brought no reply, save that he would come. It was 20 yrs. since they separated, and perh. E.'s rage had passed away, but still there was the uncertainty. and . . him, the band by the aid of wh. he was prob. subjugating Seir. (7) afraid, not knowing the purpose of his bro. distressed, perplexed, straitened; notwithstanding Mahanaim. and . . bands. he prudently prepares for the worst. (8) said . . escape, this, an Arab expedition; and an ill. of the old cunning of the man.

Esau's company. — This was a formidable force. Esau had begun to live by the sword (Gen. xxvii. 40), and had surrounded himself with a numerous body of followers. Associated by marriage with the Hittites and the Ishmaelites, he had rapidly risen to the rank of a powerful chieftain. It is vain to conjecture with what intent he advanced at the head of so large a retinue. It is probable that he was accustomed to a strong escort, that he wished to make an imposing appearance before his brother, and that his mind was in that wavering state when the slightest incident might soothe him into goodwill or arouse him to vengeance. — *Murphy.* When Jacob was well rid of his father-in-law, he thought all safe; and his joy was completed by the sight of that army of angels. But he is damped and terrified with this sad message of Esau's approach and hostile intentions. This is the godly man's case while here. One trouble follows in the neck of another. Ripen we apace, and so get to heaven, if we would be out of the gunshot. The ark was transportative till settled in Solomon's temple; so, till we come to heaven, we shall be tossed up and down and turmoiled, whilst we are, as Bernard hath it, "in this exile, in this purgatory, in this pilgrimage, in this vale of tears." — *Trapp.*

9-12. (9) said, aft. making provision for safety, he betakes himself to prayer. the . . saidst, *etc.*,^a he pleads his obedience to the command; and the promise too. (10) worthy . . servant,^b nor are better men than Jacob worthy of God's mercies. *lit.* "I am less than all the mercies." staff . . Jordan, the staff was all his substance once. become, by the blessing of God. two bands, *vs.* 7. (11) Deliver, *etc.*, from thanksgiving he passes to petition. smite . . children, *lit.* smite me, *even* the mo. with the children; implying that if they were killed he would have nothing. He identifies himself with his company. (12) saidst,^d admitting his own unworthiness, he casts himself on the Divine word. We do not find these precise words, but they indicate what J. understood by the words of xxviii. 15.

Jacob's prayer. — Observe the spirit pervading this prayer. It is a spirit of — I. Reverence. II. Humility. The sense of God's greatness, and of his own weakness humbled him. III. Thankfulness. When comparing the present with the past, his heart is filled with thankfulness to God for the great wealth given him. IV. Dependency upon God. To save himself from Esau he hopes not, unless the Lord comes to his help. V. Great confidence in God. He rests himself on the promises given him, and feels assured that deliverance in some way or other will be given him. — *J. Jones.*

The promise to Jacob. — But such a promise does not exclude great trials, sore temptations, fiery persecutions, poverty, disappointment and perplexity. All these may happen to us and yet the Lord deal well with us.

13-19. (13) there, N. of Jabbok at its union with the Jordan. took . . hand,^c not that which was nearest at hand: but, prob. that wh. he had in his hand: that which he had come into possession of. (14) two, *etc.*, 550 head of cattle; a princely gift: sugg. of Jacob's wealth, of his fear of his bro., and of his desire for reconciliation. (15) thirty . . camels, these, on acc. of milk, esp. valuable. (16) every . . themselves, *i. e.* of each kind.

put . . drove, that any good impression on Esau's mind might be deepened by successive arrivals. (17) *and, etc.*, sent select messages as well as gifts. (18) *servant . . lord*, by respectful terms seeking to disarm resentment. (19) *second, etc.*, giving definite instructions in each case.

Eastern flocks and herds.—From the present which Jacob made to his brother Esau, consisting of five hundred and eighty head of different sorts, we may form some idea of the countless numbers of great and small cattle which he had acquired in the service of Laban. In modern times, the numbers of cattle in the Turcoman flocks which feed on the fertile plains of Syria are almost incredible. They sometimes occupy three or four days in passing from one part of the country to another. Chardin had an opportunity of seeing a clan of Turcoman shepherds on their march, about two days' distance from Aleppo. The whole country was covered with them. Many of their principal people, with whom he conversed on the road, assured him that there were four hundred thousand beasts of carriage, camels, horses, oxen, cows, and asses, and three millions of sheep and goats. — *Paxton*.

20—23. (20) *appease*,^a *lit.* I will cover (*i. e.* pacify) his face, *accept*, *lit.* will lift up my face, *see* note on xix. 21. (21) *night*, one of the most memorable nights on record. (22) *Jabbok*,^b wh. flows into the Jordan on the E. side, about half-way betw. Dead S. and S. of Galilee. (23) *brook*, or *wady*.

The river Jabbok.—The Jabbok lies on the East of the Jordan, and takes its rise among the mountains in the south-east of Gilead. The natives call it *Nahr-el-Zerkah*, or Zerkah, from a village of that name in the neighborhood. It flows with a rapid course for about fifty miles, over a rocky bed, towards the Jordan, which it enters about forty miles to the south of the Sea of Tiberias. The waters of the stream are clear, are agreeable to the taste, while the banks are well wooded with wild olive and almond trees, tall reeds and shrubs. Buckingham says that when he crossed the river it was ten yards wide, and that the stream, being deeper than the Jordan, and quite as rapid, was forded with difficulty. It separated the kingdom of Sihon from that of Og, king of Bashan (Deut. ii. 36, 37). When Jacob was returning from Haran, with his family and flocks, he crossed over the ford Jabbok, and there, hard by the rippling stream, in the silence of the night, he wrestled with an angel, and received in his change of name a token of God's favor. — *Bib. Treas.*

24—26. (24) *alone*, not crossing himself till all was safely over. *wrestled*, the Heb. word means to excite a dust, as was usual in the old Grecian games by antagonists to blind each other. This wrestling therefore was by no means actually or symbolically prayer. Jacob was not aggressive, nor did he stay behind his company to spend the night in praying for them. It was God who came and laid hold on Jacob to prevent him from entering the land in the temper he was in, and as Jacob. He was to be taught that it was not only Esau's appeased wrath, or his own skilful smoothing down of his brother's ruffled temper, that gave him entrance; but that a nameless Being, Who came out upon him from the darkness, guarded the land, and that by His passport only could he find entrance. And henceforth, as to every reader of this history so much more to Jacob's self, the meeting with Esau and the overcoming of his opposition were quite secondary to and eclipsed by his meeting and prevailing with this unknown combatant. — *Dods, Eep. Bib. man*, but a supernatural being, an angel.^c (25) *he . . thigh*,^d socket of the hip-joint, this, that Jacob, though a conqueror, might be humbled. This explained more fully in verse 34. The sinews of his thigh (*nervus ischiadicus*) were paralyzed through the extreme tension and distortion. But this bodily paralysis does not paralyze the persevering Jacob. — *Lange*. (26) *let . . breaketh*, meaning that he yielded Jacob the victory, since daybreak required him to pursue other duties. *said . . me*,^e "The highest heroism of faith shines forth in these words. He declares himself determined to retain his pertinacious hold upon the author of blessing." — *Bush*. "The words show that Jacob now clearly recognized his mysterious Antagonist to be Divine and sought to obtain from him the blessing which he had previously stolen from his aged father by craft." — *Pulp. Com.*

Jacob and the angel. — (vss. 24—29). — 1. The text shows us that Jacob was alone when God appeared to him; 2. We are also informed

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bounties; but it is one thing to know how to give, and another thing not to know how to keep. Give me a heart that is easy and open; but I will have no holes in it; let it be bountiful with judgment, but I will have nothing run out of it I know not how." — *Seneca*. "To reveal its complacency by gifts is one of the native dialects of love." — *Sigourney*.

Jacob sends his company over the

Jabbok

a Heb. *akapperah panav*; fr. *kaphar*, to cover, the term usually employed under the law to sig. "making atonement." The LXX. reads "I will propitiate his countenance." *6 Jos. xii. 2.*

"A gift — its kind value, and appearance; the style in which it reaches you — may decide the dignity or vulgarity of the giver." — *Lavater*.

Jacob wrestles with the angel

c Ho. xli. 3, 4; Ep. vi. 12. The Jews held this was Esau's guardian A., or the A. that protected his country. Many think the "man" was a created A. The fathers held that the A. was one of the manifestations of the Eternal Son; an anticipation of this incarnation. Perh. this is the right view: see vss. 29, 30.

d 2 Co. xii. 7.

e Is. lxiiv. 7; Ma. xv. 23; Lu. xxiv. 28, 29.

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"Faith builds in the dungeon and the lazaret-house its sublimest shrines; and up, through rods of stone, that shut out the eye of heaven, ascends the ladder where the angels glide to and fro,—prayer." — *Lytton*.

"Prayer is not eloquence, but earnestness; not the definition of helplessness, but the feelings of it, not figures of speech, but compunction of soul." — *H. More*.

Jacob's name is changed to Israel

a Ho. xli. 3-5.

b Ge. xxxiii. 4.

c Ju. xlii. 18.

"Prayer among men is supposed a means to change the person to whom we pray; but prayer to God doth not change Him, but fits us to receive the things prayed for." — *Stillington*.

"We pray for trifles without so much as a thought of the greatest blessings; and we are not ashamed, many times, to ask God for that which we should blush to own to our neighbor." — *Seneca*

that it was night; 3. Further, the narrative teaches us that he was sunk in a deep fear. II. Jacob wrestling. 1. There was bodily wrestling; 2. There was mental wrestling; 3. The struggle was a long one. III. Jacob prevailing. 1. He earnestly desires a blessing; 2. His prayer is answered. — *J. C. Jones*

The supplanter become a prince (vss. 24-29). — We see here — I. Jacob helplessly hanging upon God. Jacob's thigh being paralyzed, he clings helplessly to the man of God. This is expressive of the inward change; he relies no longer on his mean cunning, he is no longer Jacob. II. Jacob prevailing mightily as a prince with God. He prevailed through his helpless clinging to God. "When I am weak, then I am strong." III. Jacob invested with the true glory and blessedness of a prince. — *D. Longwill*.

"Now." — Canon Wilberforce tells a pathetic story illustrating the force of this little word "now." It was of a miner who, hearing the gospel preached, determined that, if the promised blessing of immediate salvation were indeed true, he would not leave the presence of the minister who was declaring it until assured of its possession by himself. He waited, consequently, after the meeting to speak with the minister, and, in his untutored way, said, "Didn't ye say I could have the blessin' now?" "Yes, my friend." "Then pray with me, for I'm not goin' awa' wi'out it." And they did pray, these two men, wrestling in prayer until midnight, like Jacob at Peniel, until the wrestling miner heard silent words of comfort and cheer, even as Jacob heard the angel's announcement, "As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." "I've got it now!" cried the miner, his face reflecting the joy within; "I've got it now!" The next day a terrible accident occurred at the mines. The same minister was called to the scene, and among the men, dead and dying, was the almost breathless body of this man, who only the night before, big and brawny, came to him to know if salvation could really be had now for the asking. There was but a fleeting moment of recognition between the two, ere the miner's soul took flight, but in that moment he had time to say, in response to the minister's sympathy, "Oh, I don't mind, for I've got it—I've got it—it's mine!" — *Bib. ill.*

27—29. (27) name? not on acct. of ignorance, but calling attention to it in view of the change. (28) name . . Israel, *i. e.* princely prevailer with God. men, he prevailed with men as the result of prevailing with God. (29) Tell . . name, perh. desiring to become acquainted with the mysterious character of the Divine antagonist. wherefore, *etc.* I had a reason for asking thy name; what is thy reason? or, is not my name clear to thee? blessing, the blessing more fully revealed then. there, the place of prayer was the place of blessing.

Jacob at Peniel. — From this hour Jacob was another man. In the strength of this vision, and in the blessing which he received in this mysterious struggle, he advanced to meet his brother. The hand of the Lord was also on him. Strangely, I probably might say unexpectedly, to Jacob, he met him; and the old boyhood affection returned. They made friends; and they parted, one going one way after the interview, and the other going the other way. But that to which attention is more especially directed is, that from this hour Jacob is nowhere recorded as falling back upon his selfish, his politic, his managing career. From this hour out there is no trace of anything in him but largeness of mind, nobleness of purpose, and beauty of character. All the dross seems to have been purged away. He had met the crisis, and had risen, and gone through it; and he had come out a changed man. And now he was indeed a prince of God, and he was the principal founder of the nation of the Israelites. — *H. W. Beecher*. "Jacob halted." — The celebrated John Elias, the prince of Welsh orators, addressed on one occasion a meeting presided over by the late Marquis of Anglesey. The marquis was lame, having lost a limb in the battle of Waterloo. Referring, therefore, to that circumstance, the speaker thrilled his audience by this striking remark, "We have a president here this evening, whose very step as he walks reminds you of his bravery!" So Jacob "halted on his thigh." His limping gait kept in remembrance his wonderful victory with God. A man of prayer is well known as such; there are certain marks which reveal his character; his public performances bear the impress of his private wrestlings. In this transforming, elevating, and invigorating influence of prayer lies the secret of a godly man's strength. — *D. Rowlands*.

30-32. (30) **Peniel** (*the face of God*). and . . preserved,^a these words contain, perhaps, an allusion to the prevalent opinion that no man could see God and live; prob. ref. also to safety in prospect of meeting Esau. (31) **Penuel**, perh. old form of the same word. Others think this original name of the place, which Jacob changed by the alteration of a vowel. **sun . . him**, bright herald of joyous day, aft. night of anxiety and prayer. **he . . thigh**, his physical defect a reminder of that memorable night. (32) **the . . shrank**, Heb. *nasheh*, the sciatic nerve (*nervus ischiadicus*) called *nasheh* by the Arabs to this day. "This exemption exists still, but since the ancients did not distinguish clearly between muscle, vein, and nerve, the sinew is now generally understood, *i. e.*, the interior cord and nerve of the so-called hind-quarter, including the exterior also, and the ramifications of both." — *Delitzsch*.

God seen and yet unseen (vs. 30 : comp. Ex. xxxiii. 20). — I. Consider the Scriptures that testify of God's invisibility. 1. His invisibility is affirmed (Col. i. 15; He. xi. 27); 2. The utter impossibility of seeing Him is affirmed (1 Tim. vi. 16; Jo. i. 18, v. 37). II. Observe how God did reveal Himself. 1. By an audible voice to Abraham and others; 2. By magnificent symbols; 3. In human or angelic form. III. Note that God has revealed Himself more truly and favorably in His Son Jesus Christ. — *Burns*.

Deeds of Prayer. — Prayer has divided seas, rolled up flowing rivers, made flinty rocks gush into fountains, quenched flames of fire, muzzled lions, disarmed vipers and poisons, marshalled the stars against the wicked, stopped the course of the moon, arrested the sun in its rapid race, burst open iron gates, recalled souls from eternity, conquered the strongest devils, commanded legions of angels down from heaven. Prayer has bridled and chained the raging passions of man, and routed and destroyed vast armies of proud, daring, blustering atheists. Prayer has brought one man from the bottom of the sea, and carried another in a chariot of fire to heaven. What has not prayer done. — *Ryland*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

1-3. (1) **looked**, now without fear because he had the assurance that he should prevail with man. **Esau . . men**, an Arab chief at the head of a great band of warriors. **handmaids**, Zilpah and Bilnah. (2) **Rachel . . hindmost**, the dearest in the safest place; or perh., as *Bush* thinks, to reserve his most beautiful wife and son to deepen the impression. (3) **bowed . . brother**, these salutations of respect and humility followed ea. other at intervals. **seven**, an indefinite number of times.

The brothers reconciled. — This chapter relates the reconciliation of Jacob and Esau. Concerning this we notice that it was — I. A reconciliation after a long separation. II. A most desirable reconciliation. Desirable on account of — 1. The happiness of their aged parents; 2. Their own families; 3. Their own spiritual well-being. III. A reconciliation which brought to sight the best traits of their character; 1. Prayerfulness; 2. Humility; 3. Disinterestedness. — *J. Jones*.

Reconciliation. — On one occasion, when Mr. Nott, a missionary, and his companions, arrived at the island of Tubuai, the whole of its population, being engaged in a war, were preparing for battle. The missionary and his friends stepped forward as mediators, saw the leaders of the contending parties, expostulated with them, procured an interview between them, and reconciled their differences. The contending armies threw down their weapons of war, cordially embraced each other, went in company to a new building which was devoted to the service of God, and sat side by side to hear the Gospel of peace, which was now published to many of them for the first time. — *Anec. on Old Test*.

4-7. (4) **ran**, comp. this with J.'s slow and ceremonious approach. **fell . . him**,^b perfect reconciliation. **wept**, in fulness of joy; but fr. dif. causes. (5) **who . . thee?** *lit.* who are these to thee? *i. e.*, in what relation do they stand to thee? **graciously**,^c all he was and had was of grace. (6, 7) **Then, etc.**, it has been noted that E. made no reply, kind or otherwise, to these salutations; perh. he was overwhelmed with surprise.

Reconciliation of Esau and Jacob. — I. The resentments of brethren are usually exceedingly deep. II. However deep the resentment of any one may

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Peniel

^a Ex. xxiv. 10, 11; De. v. 24; xxxiv. 10; Ju. vi. 22; xlii. 22; Is. vi. 5; Ex. xxxiii. 20; Jo. i. 18; Col. i. 15.

"The custom prevailing among the Jews to this day of abstaining religiously from eating this sinew seems a lasting monument of the historical truth of this wonderful event in the life of Jacob." — *E. H. Browne*.

the meeting of Jacob and Esau

"All ceremonies are in themselves very silly things, but yet a man of the world should know them. They are the outworks of manners and decency, which would be too often broken in upon if it were not for that defense which keeps the enemy at proper distance." — *Chesterfield*.

Jacob introduces his wives and children to Esau

^b Ge. xxxii. 28; Ps. xxxiv. 4; Pr. xvi. 7; xxi. 1. ^c Ps. cxxvii. 3; 1 Ch. xxviii. 5; Ge. xli. 52.

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"Sir, you are very welcome to our house, it must appear in other ways than words, therefore, I scant this breathing courtesy."—*Shakespeare*.

"Absence, with all its pains, is by this charming moment wiped away."—*Thomson*.

Esau declines the present

a 2 K. v. 15.

b "Jacob had all, because he had the God of all."—*Trapp*.

"The Christian's inheritance will leave him riches enough, and his prerogative honor enough, after all the batements that his generosity prompts him to make."—*Bush*.

Jacob and Esau

"Gentle feelings produce profoundly beneficial effects upon stern natures. It is the spring rain which melts the ice-covering of the earth and causes it to open to the beams of heaven"—*F. Bremer*. Nothing is so strong as gentleness; nothing so

be, we may hope by proper means to overcome it. The means we should use are—1. Prayer to God; 2. A conciliatory conduct to man. III. When once a reconciliation is effected, extreme caution is necessary to preserve and maintain it.—*Simeon*.

Eastern salutations.—Here comes another caravan of twenty camels, at least. Such a shaking of hands! Foremost is our sheikh, who advances to the old gray-bearded (I cannot say gray-headed, for who can see an Arab's bare head?) Sheikh Beshārah, from Sinai, probably the same who was Dr. Robinson's guide. The sheikhs take each other by the right hand; then, throwing the left round each other's necks, they kiss five times on either cheek. They then inquire after the health of themselves and their friends. How like does this seem to the sons of Isaac—"And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him." Here are the same four things:—they run to meet, they embrace, they fall on the neck, they kiss. So in the case of Laban, "when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him" (Gen. xxix. 13). Still more does the meeting of Sheikhs Sulimān and Beshārah remind us of Aaron and Moses—"He went and met him in the mount of God and kissed him"—for this is the region in which the two brothers met, and their mode of salutation was the same.—*Bonar*.

8—12. (8) what . . met? ref. to the presents; wh. fr. magnitude he had perh. thought was all his bro. had. lord, J. still adopts this form of address. (9) brother, in exchange for lord. keep . . thyself, generosity; he would not have J. think he was influenced by these presents. (10) present, thus convince me we are at one again. for . . face, that sight is well worth all I offer. as . . God, i. e. "he had received from Esau the same friendly welcome that one coming into God's presence would receive from him, or that he had come into Esau's presence with the same feelings of penitence as if he had been coming before God, or that, as he had already seen the face of God and his life was preserved, so now he had seen the face of Esau, and the anticipated destruction had not been inflicted on him, either of which accords with the words that follow."—*Pulp. Com.* (11) blessing, a i. e. gift, a sugg. that his gift might bring a blessing. enough, see Heb., E. says, *yesh li rab*, "I have much," and J. *yesh li kol*, "I have all."^b (12) let, etc., E. proposes to make J.'s way his. I . . thee, prob. intending to be his bro.'s escort.

Christian contentment.—A poor Christian woman, who was breaking her fast upon a crust and a cup of water, exclaimed, "What! all this and Christ too!" A Puritan preacher asking a blessing on a herring and potatoes, said, "Lord, we thank Thee that Thou hast ransacked sea and land to find food for Thy children."—*Spurgeon*.

Presents in the East.—It is the custom of the East, when one invites a superior, to make him a present after the repast, as an acknowledgment of his trouble. Frequently it is done before it, as it is no augmentation of honor to go to the house of an inferior. They make no presents to equals, or those who are below themselves.—*Burder*. Not to accept a present, is at once to show that the thing desired will not be granted. Hence, nothing can be more repulsive, nothing more distressing, than to return the gifts to the giver. Jacob evidently labored under this impression, and therefore pressed his brother to receive the gifts, if he had found favor in his sight.—*Roberts*.

13—16. (13) my . . tender, while this was a true reason, there is no doubt that other considerations were prevalent in his mind which made it wise to decline the invitation. men . . die, Esau's men would move too fast for Jacob's cattle. (14) softly, gently. according, etc., "Heb. 'According to the foot of the possessions—and according to the foot of the children.' The meaning is, at the pace of the cattle, as fast as the business of traveling with cattle will permit."^b—*Hom. Com.* until . . Seir, it was obviously J.'s intention to visit his brother, but whether or not he ever went we have no account. (15) let . . folk, i. e. for escort. let . . lord, he and his bro. were at peace: that was all he needed. (16) so, etc., a bright day in the hist. of the two bros.

Tenderness of manner.—Even in our manner there should be tenderness. A truly kind act may be so performed as to cause as much grief as joy. We have heard of one who would throw a penny at a beggar and thus hurt him while relieving him. A heart full of love has a mode of its own by which its

gifts are enhanced in value. There is enough misery in the world without our carelessly adding to it. Some persons are morbidly sensitive, and this is wrong on their part; but when we are aware of their failing we must be the more careful lest we cause them needless pain. A gouty man will cry out if we walk with heavy footstep across the room. Do we censure him for this? No, we pity him, and tread softly. Let us do the same for the sensitive. — *Spurgeon*.

17-20. (17) *Succoth*,^a (*booths*) "so called here by anticipation, and afterwards belonging to the tribe of Gad, was situated in the valley of the Jordan, on the east side of the river, and to the south of the Jabbok." — *Pulp. Com.* *booths*, "composed of upright stakes wattled together and sheltered with leafy branches." — *Murphy*. (18) *Shalem*,^b (*safe, peace*). "It seems very improbable that the word *Shalem* should be a proper name, as the A. V. after the LXX. and Vulgate has rendered it. No such place is known in the neighborhood of Sichem (Nablus), nor mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. The meaning is far more probably 'in peace.'" — *Alford*. *Shechem*, see on xii. 6. (19) *bought*,^c *etc.*, a proof of his faith that the whole land would one day be his. *money*, Heb. *kesitah*, *i. e.* lamb. Ancient coin were often stamped with the image of an animal which they represented. (20) *El-Elohe-Israel*,^d (*God, the God of Israel*). Jacob had to this time called God "the God of Abraham;" this title sugg. that J. felt he was accepted of God.

Jacob at Succoth. — The settlement at Succoth. — I. How promising; a happy return! Prosperous acquisition of the parcel of land; peaceful relations with the Shechemites; religious toleration. II. How seriously endangered: through Jacob's carelessness. He does not return early enough to Bethel to fulfil his vow. Probably he even considers the altar at Shechem a substitute. His love for Rachel makes him tolerant to her teraphim. III. How fearfully disturbed (ch. xxxiv.). Dinah, Simeon and Levi. IV. The happy conclusion caused by Jacob's repentance and God's protection. — *Lange*.

Early coins. — There is a very great reason to believe that the earliest coins struck were used both as weights and money, and indeed this circumstance is in part proved by the very names of certain of the Greek and Roman coins. Thus the Attic *mina* and the Roman *libra* equally signify a pound; and the *στατηρ* (*stater*) of the Greeks, so called from weighing, is decisive as to this point. The primitive race of men being shepherds, and their wealth consisting in their cattle, for greater convenience metals were substituted for the commodity itself. It was natural for the representative sign to bear impressed the object which it represented; and thus accordingly the earliest coins were stamped with the figure of an ox or a sheep: for proof that they actually did thus impress them, we can again appeal to the high authority of Scripture: for there we are informed that *Jacob bought a parcel of a field for a hundred pieces of money*. The original Hebrew translated pieces of money, is *kesitah*, which signifies lambs, with the figure of which the metal was doubtless stamped. — *Maurice*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

1-5. (1) *Dinah*,^a not less than fifteen yrs. old. see,^f know, bec. acquainted with to make them a friendly visit. (2) *prince*, his station flattering to her vanity. *defiled*, *lit.* humbled. (3) *and . . damsel*, *i. e.*, "tried to gain her affections," *lit.* "spake to the heart of the damsel." The idea seems to be that he tried to comfort her by promising marriage and fidelity. (4) *get . . wife*, this not simply for reparation, but fr. affection. It is evident that it was customary fr. heathen children to consult their parent about getting a wife. (5) *and . . peace*, *i. e.*, took no measures. *until . . come*, when he would consult with them.

Dinah's fall. — It is a startling announcement, but it contains nothing more than might have been expected. Poor girl! a moth fluttering about a flame! A foolish fish nibbling at the bait! Was she lonely, being the only girl? Did she want to show off some piece of jewelry or dress? Did she long for more admiration, or fascinating society, than she could find at home? Was there a secret drawing to the young men of the place? She went along a path that seemed to her girlish fancy ever so much more attractive than the dull routine of home. She took no heed of the warnings that may have been addressed to

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gentle as real strength. — *Francis de Sales*.

El-Elohe-Israel

^a Jos. xiii. 27; Ju. viii. 4, 5; Ps. ix. 6; cviii. 7.

^b Jo. iii. 23; Ac. vii. 15, 16; Ge. xxxiv. 2.

^c Jos. xxiv. 32; Jo. iv. 5.

^d Ge. xxxii. 28. "Religion is the final centre of repose — the goal to which all things tend; apart from which man is a shadow, his very existence a riddle, and the stupendous scenes of nature which surround him as unmeaning as the leaves which the wind scattereth in the wind." — *R. Hall*.

"Religion is a necessary, an indispensable element in any great human character. There is no living without it. Religion is the tie that connects man to his Creator, and holds him to his throne." — *D. Webster*.

Dinah is seduced by Shechem

^e Ge. xxx. 21.

^f Tit. ii. 4, 5.

"O, if the loving closed heart of a good woman should open before a man, how much controlled tenderness, how many veiled sacrifices and dumb virtues would he see reposing therein!" — *Richter*.

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conference of
Hamor and
Jacob

"Secrecy of design, when combined with rapidity of execution, like the column that guided Israel in the desert, becomes the guardian pillar of light and fire to our friends, a cloud of overwhelming and impenetrable darkness to our enemies."—*Colton*.

"I will govern my life and my thoughts as if all the world were to see the one and to read the other; for what does it signify to make a thing secret to my neighbor, when to God all is open?"—*Seneca*.

Shechem
proposes to
marry Dinah

a Ep. iv. 25.

b They pretended to have scruples of conscience, ab. the mar. of their sister with a heathen.—*Bush*.

and agrees
to the
conditions

"Lo, herein was their deceit. How often is religion pretended, made a state and stalking-horse to worldly and wicked aims and respects! A horrible profanation as when Naboth was put to death at a

her. And it all ended—as it has ended in thousands of cases since—in misery, ruin and unutterable disgrace.—*F. B. Meyer*.

6—10. (6) **Hamor . . him**, it is the custom in Oriental countries for parents to arrange the marriage of their children. (7) **and . . grieved**, "in Eastern countries it is thought that a brother is more dishonored by the seduction of his sister than a man by the infidelity of his wife; for, say the Arabs, a man may divorce his wife, and then she is no longer his; while a sister and daughter remain always sister and daughter."—*Michaëlis*. **because . . done**, "The expression manifestly belongs to a later time, and betrays the hand of a subsequent editor. It could hardly have been found in any document dating previously to the constitution of community known by the name of Israel."—*Alford*. (8) **longeth**, fr. intense affection. (9) **marriages, etc.**, to him there seemed no reason ag. this. (10) **dwell . . trade**, peaceful residence and profitable trade offered as inducements.

The power of love.—Gilbert Becket, who was afterwards a flourishing citizen, was, in his youth, a soldier in the crusades, and, being taken prisoner, became slave to an emir, or Saracen prince. He obtained the confidence of his master, and met and was loved by the emir's daughter. After some time, he effected his escape. The lady with her loving heart followed him. She knew but two words of the English language—*London* and *Gilbert*; and, by repeating the first, she obtained a passage in a vessel, arrived in England, and found her trusting way to the metropolis. She then took to her other talisman, and went from street to street, pronouncing "*Gilbert*." A crowd collected about her wherever she went, asking a thousand questions; and to all she had but one answer, "*Gilbert, Gilbert!*" She found her faith in it sufficient. Chance, or the determination to go through every street, brought her at last to the one in which he who had won her heart in slavery was living in a prosperous condition. The crowd drew the family to the window; his servant recognized her; and Gilbert Becket took to his arms and his bridal-bed his far-come princess, with her solitary fond word.—*Percy*.

11—14. (11) **let . . eyes**, I pray you grant my request. **what . . give**, to seal the compact. (12) **dowry . . gift**, dowry to the bride, gifts to her family. (13) **deceitfully**,^a smoothly, dissembling,^b **because . . sister**, justifying their deceit to themselves. (14) **uncircumcised**, they demanded submission to this rite to facilitate their revenge, the reason good, but the motive wrong.

Purchasing wives in the East.—In the remote ages of antiquity, women were literally purchased by their husbands; and the presents made to their parents or other relations were called their dowry. The practice still continues in the country of Shechem; for when a young Arab wishes to marry, he must purchase his wife; and for this reason, fathers, among the Arabs, are never more happy than when they have many daughters. They are reckoned the principal riches of a house. An Arabian suitor will offer fifty sheep, six camels, or a dozen of cows; if he be not rich enough to make such offers, he proposes to give a mare or a colt, considering in the offer the merit of the young woman, the rank of her family, and his own circumstances. The prophet Hosea purchased a wife for fifteen pieces of silver, and for a homer of barley, and a half-homer of barley.—*Paxton*.

15—19. (15) **this**, proposal of marriage. (16) **daughter**, they here speak as in person for Jacob. **we . . people**, "This proposal was sinful, since (1) they had no right to offer the sign of God's covenant to a heathen people; (2) they had less right to employ it in ratification of a merely human agreement; and (3) they had least right of all to employ it in duplicity as a mask for their treachery.—*Pulp. Com.* (17) **and . . gone**, we will have no further connection with you. (18) **pleased, lit.** were good in the eyes of. Not altogether agreeable perh. but on the whole satisfactory. (19) **and thing, i. e.** deferred not in *consenting*; "force of love, and hope of profit." **he . . father**, he stood high in rank; had therefore much influence.

Constancy of love.—A short time previous to the death of the Marchioness of Tavistock, and when she was preparing to go to Lisbon for the recovery of her health, a consultation of physicians was held at Bedford House; and one of the gentlemen present requested, while he felt her pulse, that she would open her hand. Her frequent refusals occasioned him to take the liberty of

gently forcing the fingers asunder; when he perceived that she had kept her hand closed to conceal the miniature picture of the marquis. "O madam!" observed the physician, "my prescriptions must be useless if your ladyship is determined to keep before your eyes an object which, although deservedly dear to you, serves only to confirm the violence of your illness." The marchioness replied, "I have kept the picture either in my bosom or my hand ever since the death of my lamented lord; and thus I am determined to preserve it till I fortunately drop after him into the grave." — *Percy*.

20-24. (20) **gate**, called a public meeting at the usual place of assembly. (21) **these, etc.**, they saw great advantage fr. so small a concession. (22) **to . . people**, as though the outward right made the only difference. (23) **shall . . ours?** *i. e.* not by dishonesty, but in the legitimate process of trade and intercourse; with Hamor the motive was love; with them gain: dif. men. dif. motives impel to similar acts. (24) **every . . city**, their assent was unanimous.

Shechem's arguments. — No little art is discoverable in the arguments employed. The principal prominence is given to those considerations which were merely secondary, while the main point, the circumcision, comes in as a little by-clause, a slight condition, to which they could not reasonably object. This was approaching worldly men through the most effectual avenue. Appeals to their interest usually succeed where their principles are addressed in vain. — *Bush*.

25-29. (25) **came . . sore**, they were incapable of resistance. **two . . brethren**, sons of the same mother: these were the leaders, but the rest prob. joined (*vs.* 13). **boldly, lit.** in confidence. (26) **edge . . sword**, *Heb.* "mouth of the sword." Hence the sword is said to devour. **took . . out**, maid, wife, widow — three short chapters in her young life. (27) **sons**, perh. it was at this point that the rest joined the two. (28, 29) **wealth**, including all their property. **spoiled . . house**,^a furniture, etc. All this was done perh. without Jacob's consent. (*See Gen. xlix. 6.*)

Slaughter of Shechemites. — Jacob's sons, making every allowance for their outraged feelings, acquitted themselves most detestably in this whole transaction. The allegation of a religious principle in the proposition which they made makes it all the more atrocious; and they stand forth in an aggravated likeness as the genuine descendants of the maternal family whence they sprung. There was something diabolical in the deceit wherewith the plot was constructed, and the appalling cruelty of its termination — when a hecatomb of innocent men and families was offered up to appease their vengeance. Altogether it was a most revolting tragedy. — *T. Chalmers*.

30-31. (30) **troubled**, not only grieved but endangered. **to . . stink**, *i. e.* to become hateful. **and . . number**,^b I, men of number, *i. e.* capable of being numbered. (31) **said, etc.**, note the pride and revenge in this reply.

Evil reputation. — The Spaniards, by their cruelty to the natives of the island of Cuba, rendered themselves odious, and excited in the minds of the inhabitants the strongest prejudices against their religion. A chief, who had been condemned to be burnt, when brought to the stake was exhorted to embrace Christianity, assured that thereby he would be admitted to heaven. The chief asked if there were any Spaniards in heaven. "Yes," said the priest who attended him, "but they are all good ones." The chief replied, "I cannot bring myself to go to a place where I should meet with but one; therefore do not speak to me any more of your religion, but let me die." — *Aneq. on Old Test.*

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fast; Henry VII., emperor, poisoned in the sacramental bread, by a monk." — *Trapp*.

the subjects of Hamor are circumcised

"Were the King at noon-day to say, 'This day is night,' it would behove us to reply, 'Lo, there are the moon and seven stars.'" — *Saadi*.

the revenge of Simeon and Levi

a Ge. xxxv. 5. "Dissipation leads to seduction; seduction produces wrath; wrath thirsts for revenge; the thirst of revenge has recourse to treachery; treachery issues in murder; and is followed by lawless depredation." — *Bush*.

"One murder made a villain; millions, a hero. Numbers sanctified the crime!" — *Bp. Porteus*.

Jacob reproves his sons

b Ge. xlii. 36. "Of a man who has lost his honor, whose fame has entirely gone, it is said, Ah! he has lost his smell — where is the sweet smell of former years?" — *Roberts*.

Jacob journeys to Bethel

c Ge. xxxi. 19; *Jos.* xxiv. 15, 23; *2 Co.* vi. 16. *d* Ex. xix. 10; *Ez.* xviii. 31; xxxvi. 25; *He. x.* 22. *e* Ge. xxxii. 7; xxviii. 20-22; *Ps.* l. 15.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH.

1-5. (1) **Bethel**, *see on xxviii.* 12-19. Recent events would make it unsafe for Jacob to remain longer in that place. **make . . God**, the same God who had saved him from the wrath of Esau would keep him now. (2) **put . . gods**,^c perh. the idols wh. had been taken from Laban and also the idols of the Shechemites. **clean**,^d ceremonial, typical of spiritual purity. (3) **distress**,^e when flying fr. a bro.'s anger. (4) **ear-rings**, perh. worn as charms, or symbols of an idolatrous nature. **oak . . Shechem**, "It was under this same

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a De. xi. 25; Ex. xv. 6; Jos. ii. 9; v. 1; 1 S. xi. 7.

"It has been said that men carry on a kind of coasting-trade with religion. In the voyage of life they profess to be in search of heaven, but take care not to venture so far in their approximations to it, as entirely to lose sight of the earth." - *Colton.*

Allon-bachuth

The Jews have a trad. that it was at this spot, Bethel, that Jacob heard of his mother's death; so that the name given to the oak ref. to her as well as to Deborah.

If Deborah was ab. 50 when she left Mesopotamia with Rebekah, she could not have been much less than 180 now.

"A grave matron she was; of great use while she lived, and much missed when she died. This is not every man's case." - *Trapp.*

the covenant renewed to Jacob

b Ge. xxviii. 12; xxxi. 11; xxxii. 1, 24.

c xxxii. 28.

d Ge. xlviii. 3. 4.

e Ge. xli. 7; xxvi. 3. 4.

oak that Joshua afterwards set up a stone of witness, upon the occasion of his having convened the people at Shechem, and, probably in memory of this very transaction of Jacob cleansed them of their idols, and brought them renewedly into a solemn covenant with God. Josh. xxiv. 25, 26." - *Bush.* (5) **terror,** God filled the minds of the people with terror.

Jacob's second journey to Bethel. - I. It was undertaken at the call of God. II. It was accomplished in the spirit of obedience and consecration. III. It was accompanied by the Divine protection. IV. It was followed by increased spiritual blessing. 1 The old promises were renewed. 2. He has increased knowledge of God. 3. His religious character is purified and raised. - *T. H. Leale.*

Ear-rings. -- Had these ear-rings been simply ornamental, they certainly would not need to have been given up with the "strange gods." It would therefore seem that they bore the figures of false gods, or some symbol of their power. Such ear-rings are still to be found in India and other countries of the East, and are regarded as charms or talismans to protect the wearer against enchantments and against enemies. It seems that the Israelites were not in aftertimes free from the objectionable practice, for Hosea (ii. 13) represents Jerusalem as having decked herself with the ear-rings of Baalim. - *Kitto.*

Jacob's return. - If years go by without any such incident occurring in our life as drives to a recognition of our moral laxity and deterioration, and to a frank and humble return to a closer walk with God, we had need to strive to awaken ourselves and ascertain whether we are living up to old vows and are really animated by thoroughly worthy motives. It was when Jacob came back to the very spot where he had lain on the open hill-side, and pointed out to his wives and children the stone he had set up to mark the spot, that he felt humbled as he cast his eye over the flocks and tents he now owned. - *M. Dods.*

6-8. (6) **Luz,** see on xxviii. 19. which . . Caanan, inserted to mark J.'s return to Caanan. **people . . him,** including captured Shechemites. (7) **El-beth-el** (*the God of Beth-el*) i. e. the God of the house of God. (8) **Deborah** (*bee*), here we learn the name of the nurse ref. to in xxiv. 59. **Allon-bachuth,** (*the oak of weeping*).

Jacob at Bethel. (*vss. 6-15*). - I Men are liable to suffer losses in this world, even when obeying God's commands. II. When obeying God's word, we may expect to meet God Himself (*vs. 9*). III. Meeting God is a memorable event (*vs. 14*). - *J. Jones.*

Bethel. - There are sacred places, not sacred for their own sake, but sacred to us. Where we have loved and lost, where we have gained new light and life, the church where our forefathers worshipped, the place where we first knew God - these are by instinct hallowed. Hence we are told that God met Jacob in Bethel, not that He came down from another place, for He is everywhere, but that Jacob experienced a feeling of awe, a feeling that God was then specially near to him. - *Robertson.* *Fast scenes.* - The early childhood of Dean Hook was spent at the rectory of Hertingfordbury, and to this, the house of his earliest recollections, he ever looked back with the fondest affection. A very few years before his death he made a journey with his youngest son specially to see it; to pace once more the pleasant lawn and garden, and to see if the names were still legible which in his boyhood he had carved upon some of the trees that shaded the path by the river-side, the names of himself and of his friend William Page Wood, together with the names of Shakespeare and Milton, both of whom they loved with passionate devotion. - *Bib. Ill.*

9-12. (9) **God . . him,** Jacob had now returned to the spot associated with the blessing and the vow of many yrs. bef. **blessed,** confirmed afresh the previous promises of blessing. (10) **name,** he is solemnly reminded of his change of name. (11) **nation . . nations,** *lit.* a nation, even a church of nations. (12) **land,** etc., the covenant to Abraham is renewed to Jacob.

Jacob at Bethel. - At Bethel he renews the change of name, to indicate that the meetings here were of equal moment in Jacob's spiritual life with that of Penuel. It implies also that this life had been declining in the interval between Penuel and Bethel, and had now been revived by the call of God to go to Bethel, and by the interview. The renewal of the naming aptly expresses this renewal of spiritual life. - *Murphy.*

God is the chief good. —

- "Without Thy presence earth gives no reflection;
Without Thy presence, sea affords no treasure;
Without Thy presence, air's a rank infection;
Without Thy presence, heaven itself no pleasure;
If not possessed, if not enjoyed in Thee,
What's earth, or sea, or air, or heaven to me?
- "The highest honors that the world can boast,
Are subjects far too low for my desire;
Its brightest beams of glory are at most
But dying sparkles of Thy living fire;
The proudest flames that earth can kindle, be
But nightly glow-worms if compared to Thee.
- "Without Thy presence, wealth is bags of cares;
Wisdom but folly; joy, disquiet, sadness;
Friendship is treason, and delights are snares;
Pleasures but pain, and mirth but pleasing madness,
Without Thee, Lord, things be not what they be,
Nor have their being when compared with Thee.
- "In having all things and not Thee, what have I?
Not having Thee, what have my labors got?
Let me enjoy but Thee, what further crave I?
And having Thee alone, what have I not?
I wish not sea nor land; nor would I be
Possessed of heaven, heaven unpossessed of Thee." — *Quarles*.

13-15. (13) *went, etc.*,^a prob. it was the depart. of some visible manifestation. (14) *pillar, etc.*, perh. the old one had fallen down, or been removed: or this may have been the reconsecration of the old. (15) *called . . Beth-el*, as he is reminded of his new name, so he revives the new name he had given to Luz.^b [According to the documentary hypothesis, the foregoing is another account of the same proceeding recorded in ch. xxviii].

Our Father. — Those who have ever traversed the plains of Mexico have seen the cactaceæ family. The cactus has an ungainly leaf, fat and thick, and full of thorns, so that when men see it growing, they say, "It is a clumsy and hateful thing that is ugly to look upon, and that pierces you whenever you touch it." Wait. When at last that plant has come to the point where it is developed, is there in the whole kingdom of beauty a blossom that is for exquisiteness of form and tint equal to the cactus blossom? It is the very perfection of beauty growing out of the very emblem of homeliness. And as it is with the vegetable kingdom, so it is with many developments of the Divine kingdom. God's providence looks like a cactus leaf — like an arid plant growing uselessly in the wilderness. But wait till it blossoms, and see how glorious is its beauty. The Lord Himself was declared to be a root out of a dry ground, in whom was no form or comeliness; and yet out of this has blossomed the infinite glory of the Saviour and Brother which makes us children of the common Father. The glory of the world, and the wealth and beauty of it, are not enough to illustrate the fulness of the meaning of that one word which the Lord's Prayer begins with, and which every man on earth may utter — "Our Father." — *Beecher*.

16-20. (16) *but . . way*,^c *lit.* a little space of ground, perhaps about a mile. Ephrath (*fruitful*). (17) *fear . . also*, timely comfort; a reminder of her former desire.^d It was now 16 or 17 years since Joseph was born. (18) *Ben-oni, (son of my sorrow), Benjamin, (son of my right hand)*. (19) *was . . way*, ab, a mile from Beth-lehem,^e (*house of bread*) about 6 m. S. fr. Jerus. (20) *and, etc.*,^f *i. e.* when this was written.^g

The tomb of Rachel. — Not far from Bethlehem a small solitary structure upon the open moor attracted our notice. It was the tomb of Rachel. The present building has been recently repaired, and is now the property of the Jews, having been purchased for his nation by Sir Moses Montefiore. It cannot well be doubted that the tomb which it encloses is really that of the venerable mother of the tribes of Israel. Scripture all but identifies the spot. It is "near to Ephrath," and is in the direct route from Bethel to that place. The pillar placed upon the tomb by Jacob still remained when Moses wrote

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"A sweet allayment of his late heaviness for Deborah, and a gracious preparative to the ensuing loss of Rachel." *Trapp*.

"In vain do they talk of happiness, who never subdued an impulse in obedience to a principle. He who never sacrificed a present to a future good, or a personal to a general one, can speak of happiness only as the blind do of colors." — *H. Mann*. "The common course of things is in favor of happiness; happiness is the rule, misery the exception." — *Paley*.

Beth-el

^a Ge. xvii. 22.

^b Ge. xxviii. 19.

"The glory of the Lord went up." — *Chal.* "The light or splendor of God went up." — *Arab.* and *Ethiop.* "A prince who loves and fears religion is a lion who stoops to the hand that strokes, or to the voice that appeases him. He who fears and hates religion is like the savage beast that growls and bites the chain, which prevents his flying on the passenger." — *Montesquieu*.

death of Rachel

^c In the LXX. *hippodrome, i. e.*, the length of a horse-race course, which, Michaelis says, among the people of the E. was ab. a mile.

^d Ge. xxx. 24.

^e Mi. v. 2; Ma. ii. 6.

^f There can be no doubt that the sq. building surmounted by a dome, of Mohammedan origin, marks the site of this pillar. — *Porter, Sy. and Pal. i. 70; Thomson, L. and B.*

^g 1 Sa. x. 2.

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"If the internal griefs of every man could be read, written on his forehead, how many who now excite envy would appear to be objects of pity."—*Metastasio*.

the book of Genesis, and when the people of whom Rachel was the mother were already about to enter into permanent possession of the land. Josephus, in speaking of it, instead of using the rather indefinite expression of the Scripture narrative, "near to Ephrath," employs the more precise expression, "over against Ephrath;" suggesting the idea that down to his time the place continued to be familiarly known. — *Buchanan*.

Rachel's Tomb —

What moldering pile near Ephrath stands alone,
With dome-shaped top, and base of mossy stone?
Rude is the chamber where her bones repose;
Yet here, 'tis said, fair Rachel's pillar rose.
Ah! sad her fate in Nature's pangs to die;
To sorrowing friends I hear her parting sigh;
I see her husband's woe, his streaming tear.
His last fond kiss before he laid her here,
His anguished brow, where smiles no more would be,
For ne'er was wife, poor Rachel! loved like thee.

— *Nicholas Michell*.

Reuben's deed of shame

a Mi. iv. 8. Jerome says this "tower of the flock" was ab a m. fr. Bethlehem, and was the place of the shepherds. It was prob. a watch-tower for the protection of flocks ag. robbers and wild beasts. See 2 K. xviii. 8; 2 Ch xxvi. 10; xxvii. 4.

b Ge. xlix. 3-4; 1 Ch. v. 1; 1 Co. v. 1.

21-26. (21) Edar,^a (*flock*) prob. a watch tower for the purpose of guarding the flocks. "He was on his way to Hebron, and his first stage aft. his sore bereavement was but a short one." (22) Reuben, *etc.*, for this crime he lost his birthright.^b Israel, *etc.*, sorrow upon sorrow for the old man. now . . twelve, as follow. (23) Leah, *etc.* see xxix. 32-35; xxx. 18-20. (24) Rachel, *etc.*, see xxx. 23; xxxv. 18. (25) Bilhah, *etc.*, see xxx. 6-8. (26) Zilpah, *etc.*, xxx. 11-13. these . . Padanaram, Benjamin excepted.

Bible Saints. — It is a mercy that the Scripture record of human life is painted to us in such dark colors as it is. The Bible saints were not the heroes of romance, for then they might have been painted spotless. They were the men of real life, and the details of that life sometimes guilty enough. But, then, life was an earnest thing with them. It was transgression, if you will; but then it was sore, buffeting struggle after that — much toiling and wandering in sharp suffering, that none knew but God; it was the penitence of men bent manfully on turning back to God. And so they fought their way back till they struggled out of the thick darkness into the clear light of day and peace. Let us lay this to heart. It is not the having been "far off" that makes peace impossible. It is not sin — no, not the darkest — that shuts out from restoration. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." It is languid indecision, desperate sullenness, anything which keeps a man away from Christ, that prevents peace; but in all this world there is nothing else. — *F. W. Robertson*.

death of Isaac

c Jos. xiv. 15; xv. 13.

For Hebron see Porter Hd. Bk. for Syria, i. 64.

d Ge. xxv. 7, 8; He. xi. 13.

Isaac was "an hundred and four-score years" when he died. He must, therefore, have lived in a state of blindness and inactivity for fifty-seven years.

27-29 (27) and . . father, it is prob. that Jacob visited his blind old father bef. this. Mamre,^c see xiii. 18. Arba, see xxiii. 2. (28) and, *etc.*, "At this time Jacob was 120; but at 130 he stood before Pharaoh in Egypt, at which date Joseph had been ten years governor. He was therefore 120 when Joseph was promoted at the age of 30, and 107 when Joseph was sold; consequently Isaac was 167 years of age when Joseph was sold, so that he must have survived that event and sympathized with Jacob, his son, for a period of thirteen years." — *Pulp. Com.* (29) was . . people,^d a hint of another world in wh. "his people" lived. sons . . him, they meet, reconciled, at their father's grave. (So Isaac and Ishmael had buried Abraham.)

Jacob and Esau. — The quarrel between Jacob and Esau had ended in a reconciliation. Again they meet in peace for the burial of their father. It was in similar circumstances that Isaac himself and Ishmael had met many years before to bury their father, Abraham. The grave ought to silence all enmities. These two brothers met after many years of separation, each pursuing a different course of life. The marks of time are upon each of them — the impressions of long labors, cares and sorrows. We have here types of the afflictions, struggles, and enmities of the world; but we have also types of reconciliation, forgiveness and peace, and the great consolations of God. — *Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH.

B. C. cir. 1796.

1-3. (1) Esau . . Edom, *see* on xxv. 30. (2) Esau . . wives, there is a seeming mixture of names here which it is difficult to explain. The supposition is that the wives of Esau had two names, and that sometime one is given, sometime the other. **Adah** (*ornament, beauty*), or **Bashemath**,^a **Aholibamah** (*tent of the height*) or **Judith**. **Anah** (*answer*) or **Beer. (3) **Bashemath** (*fragment*) or **Mahalath**.**

The generations of Esau.—This chapter is a kind of leave-taking of Esau and his posterity. They appear as surrounded with a momentary glare of earthly glory, but they immediately fall out of the course of that history which is not a world-history, but a history of the kingdom of God. We hear no more of Esau's descendants after this, except when they cross the path of Israel's history, or to appear on the page of prophecy as of bad eminence among the kingdoms of this world which are opposed to the kingdom of God. The way is cleared for the sacred annals of the chosen family by concluding and dismissing contemporaneous family histories. This is essentially the method and principle of this book of Genesis. — *Hom. Com.*

4-8. (4) **Eliphaz**^b (*God his strength*) afterwards the name of one of Job's friends. **Reuel** (*friend of God*) the name of Moses' father-in-law. (5) **Jeush**, (*to whom God hastens*). **Jaalam** (*whom God hides*). **Korah** (*baldness*). (6) **country**, into a land or country; *i. e.* another land. **from . . Jacob**, *lit. fr. before; i. e. bef. his arrival*. (7) **riches, etc.**, so the prosperity of Esau was an advantage to Jacob. **land . . strangers, i. e.** the land of their sojournings. (8) **thus . . Seir, etc.**, *see* on xiv. 6.

The cost of prosperity.—“What is the value of this estate?” said a gentleman to another with whom he was riding, as they passed a fine mansion and through rich fields. “I don't know what it is valued at; I know what it cost its late possessor.” “How much?” “His soul.” A solemn pause followed this brief answer. The late possessor referred to was the son of a pious man who supported his family by the labor of his hands. The son early obtained a subordinate position in a mercantile establishment in this city. He was then a professor of religion. He continued to maintain a reputable profession till he became a partner in the concern. He then gave increasing attention to business, and less to religion. Ere he was an old man, he had become exceedingly wealthy and miserly, and no one who knew him had any suspicion that he had ever been a professor of religion. He purchased a large landed estate, built the costly mansion referred to above, and died. Just before he died, he said, “My prosperity has been my ruin.”—*Haven*.

9-14. (9) **father, i. e.** founder. (10) **sons, etc.**, *see* on vs. 4. (11) **Teman** (*south, desert*) fr. whom the Temani, or Temanites.^c **Omar** (*eloquent*). **Zepho**^d (*watch-tower*). **Gatam** (*one puny and thin*). **Kenaz** (*a hunt*). (12) **Timna** (*restraint*). **Amalek**^e (*laboring*), fr. whom the Amalekites. (13) **Nahath** (*going down*). **Zerah** (*rising*). **Shammah** (*astonishment*). **Mizzah** (*fear*). (14) **Zibeon** (*died*). **Jeush** (*whom God hides*). **Jaalam** (*to whom God hastens*). **Korah**^f (*baldness*).

Providence among nations.—“A few drops of water, more or less,” says Victor Hugo, “prostrated Napoleon.” He meant that the battle of Waterloo was begun at eleven o'clock in the morning, because there was rain on the previous night, and Napoleon could not move his artillery over the heavy mud-plain until near noon, and that five hours' delay turned the fate of Europe; for Blucher did not arrive with his allies till the forces of the Iron Duke were all but defeated. In the same spirit, we believed, in the midst of our struggle, that nothing but Providence, immediately interfering in the crisis-hours of our destiny, could have saved us. You can never forget how, just at the nick of time, the little *Monitor* came down against that terrible monster which might have destroyed Washington, and raised the blockade. In Hampton Roads was fought, that day, a battle which revolutionized the navies of the world, while one great nation wept for joy, and all the nations wondered.”—*C. D. Foss*.

15-19. (15) **dukes**, Heb., *alluph*, chief, leader, guide, answering to present *emir* or *sheikh* (*see* previous *vs.* for meaning of names).

the generations of Esau

a Ge. xxvi. 34. Prob. one set of names were those borne bef. marriage; the others a ft.; by the Edomites.—Anah was prob. called Beer; or *well-finder* fr. the circumstance ref. to in vs. 24.—Hittite is supposed to include Hivite and Hovite.

b 1 Ch. i. 35.

“We are too careless of posterity; not considering that as they are, so the next generation will be.” Schiller, the German poet, had a patent of nobility conferred upon him by the emperor; but he was too noble to use it.

“The fear of God and sweet content yield riches that will ne'er be spent.”

c Noted for wisdom, and valor; they formed the stronghold of Idumean power. Je. xlix. 7; Ez. xxv. 13; Am. i. 12; Ob. 9. One of Job's friends was of this tribe.

d There is a Zaphia S. of the Dead S.

e Ex. xvii. 8-16; Nu. xxiv. 18-20; De. xxv. 17-19.

f There is a tribe of Arabs called *Kurayeh*.

“Titles of honor are like the impressions on coin, which add no value to gold and silver, but only renders brass current.”—*Sterne*.

B. C. cir. 1796.

"A great and fatal weight on him doth lie, the greatness of his own nobility." — *Seneca*.

a De. ii. 12, 22.

b A hill called *Shafeh* N. of Akaba. — *Robinson*, B. R. i. 256.

c Called also *Beri*, i. e., the wellfinder.

"Title and ancestry render a good man more illustrious, but an ill one more contemptible. Vice is infamous, though in a prince; and virtue honorable though in a peasant." — *Addison*.

"Titles are of no value to posterity; the name of a man who has achieved great deeds imposes more respect than any or all epithets." — *Voltaire*.

d Job, acc. to LXX. and some of the fathers.

e Porter *Five Years in Dam.* ii. 160, also his *Hd. Bk. for Syria*, 56.

f 1 Ch. i. 50. H. was prob. living when this was written, since his death is not ref. to.

"Some people are all quality; you would think they were made up of nothing but title

Pride of ancestry. —

I look down upon him
With such contempt and scorn, as on my slave;
Here's a name only, and all good in him
He must derive from his great grandsire's ashes:
For had not their victorious acts bequeath'd
His titles to him, and wrote on his forehead,
"This is a lord," he had lived unobserved
By any man of mark, and died as one
Amongst the common rout. — *Beaumont and Fletcher*.

20—25. (20) sons . . Horite, whom Esau conquered.^a Lotan (*covering*). Shobal (*flowing*). (21) Dishon (*antelope*). Ezer (*help*). (22) Hori (*a dweller in caverns*). Heman (*destruction*), (23) Alvan (*tall, thick*). Manahath (*rest*). Ebal (*stripped of leaves*). Shepho^b (*smoothness*). Onam (*strong, stout*). (24) Ajah (*screamer*). this . . Anah.^c R. V., "this is Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness." (25) Aholibamah, this Aholibamah was not Esau's wife, but the cousin of Esau's wife's father. — *Pulp. Com.*

Mules (vs. 24). — The Syriac renders the greatly disputed word as "waters," and is followed by St. Jerome, who translates *aguas calidas*, "warm springs or waters," and in his note makes a remark on the diversity of opinions which prevails on the subject; and says that the word has, in the Punic language, the signification which he assigns. — *Kitto*.

26—30. (26) Hemden (*pleasant*). Eshban (*reason*). Ithran (*excellence*). Gheran (*lyre*). (27) Bilhan (*bashful*). Zaaavan (*restless*). Akan (*twisting*). (28) Uz (*sandy*). Aran (*wild goat*). (29, 30) for names see previous vss.

How God works in the formation of peoples and nations. — The subjugation of the Horites by the Edomites, and the fusion of both under one kingdom, is an instance of the manner in which peoples and nations are formed and consolidated. This has often occurred in history. We have examples in the rise of the Samaritans, and in the formation of the Roman people. And in modern times, we have a similar instance in the subjugation of the Gauls by the Franks. We see that the footsteps of God are to be traced throughout all human history. Those nations which lay outside the covenant people were yet under the care and control of that Divine providence which appointed the bounds of their habitation, and watched over their growth and development. (Acts xvii. 26). — *Hom. Com.*

Individual responsibility in nations. — Men come to think that the guilt of sins committed in concert is distributed; and that, if there be a thousand men banded and handed together in wickedness, each shall have but the one-thousandth part of guilt. If a firm succeeds, the gain is distributed to each partner; but, if it fails, each one may be held for the whole loss. Whoever commits a sin will bear the sins, whether alone or with a thousand; whoever commits or connives at public sin will bear the blame. Public guilt always has private indorsement, and each man is liable for the whole note. — *Beecher*.

31—39. (31) these, etc., hence some have sup. that these words were written aft. kings reigned in Israel, thus proving post-Mosaic authorship. (32) Bela (*swallowing up*). Beor (*torch*). Dinhabah (*robber's den*). (33) Jobab^d (*a desert*). Zerah (*rising*). Bozrah^e (*fortress*), now *el-Busarieh*, a small vil. of 50 houses, in midst of ruins S. E. of Dead S. (34) Husham (*haste*). Temani (*south, desert*), desc. of Teman, vss. 11, 15. (35) Hadad (*clamor*). Bedad (*separation*), field, country. Avith (*ruins*). (36) Samlah (*garment*). Masrekah (*vineyard of noble vines*). (37) Saul (*asked for*). Rehoboth (*streets or wide places*). by . . river, prob. Euphrates; to dis. fr. R. of x. 11. (38) Baal-hanan (*lord of grace*). Achbor (*mouse*). (39) Hadar (*ornament*), also called Hadad.^f Pan (*bleating*). Mehetabel (*whom God benefits*). Matred (*pushing*). Mezahab (*water of gold*).

Supplementary note on vs. 31. — There is however, nothing inconsistent with the Mosaic origin of the whole passage. In the last chapter (xxxv. 11) there had been an emphatic promise from God Almighty to Jacob that "kings should come out of his loins." The Israelites, no doubt, cherished a constant hope of such a kingdom and such a kingly race. Moses himself (Deut. xxviii.

36) prophesied concerning the king that the Israelites should set over them; and hence it was not unnatural that, when recording the eight kings who had reigned in the family of Esau up to his own time, he should have noted that as yet no king had risen from the family of his brother Jacob, to whom a kingly progeny had been promised. — *Speaker's Com.*

40-43. (40) dukes, some of whom, as leaders of tribes, were prob. contemporaneous. *Alvah* (*wickedness*). *Jetheth* (*nail, tent-pin*). (41) *Elah* (*terebinth*). *Pinon* (*darkness*). (42) *Mibzar* (*fortress*). (43) *Magdiel* (*prince of God*). *Iram* (*belonging to a city*). in . . possession, i. e., their firm, fixed, abiding possession, in which they exercised independent sovereignty.

Safeguard of nations. — France tried to get on without a God in the time of her first Revolution; but Napoleon, for reasons of State, restored the Catholic religion. M. Thiers gives this singular passage in his history. Napoleon said, "For my part, I never hear the sound of the church-bell in the neighboring village without emotion." He knew that the hearts of the people were stirred by the same deep yearnings after God which filled his own; and so he proposed to restore the worship of God to infidel France. Negotiations were opened with the Pope; and the Romish worship was set up, amid the enthusiasm of the nation. Later, and with deep meaning, Perrier, successor to Lafayette as prime-minister to Louis Philippe, said on his death-bed, "France must have religion." So I say to-day, concerning that better faith, which breaks the shackles Romanism binds on, which is the only security of national permanence, — America must have religion. — *C. D. Foss.*

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and genealogy. The stamp of dignity defaces in them the very character of humanity, and transports them to such a degree of haughtiness that they reckon it below themselves to exercise either good-nature or good manners." — *L'Es-trange.*

"Kings do with men as with pieces of money; they give them what value they please, and we are obliged to receive them at their current and not at their real value" — *La Rochefoucauld.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

1-4. (1) *Jacob*, having bought the birthright. *dwelt* . . *stranger*,^a *lit.* in the land of his father's sojournings. This verse belongs with what goes before; it contrasts the dwelling of Esau in Seir with Jacob who dwelt in Canaan. (2) *generations*, family hist. *Joseph* . . *old*, at wh. time Isaac was living and Jacob was 108 yrs. old. *feeding* . . *brethren*, was shepherding with his brethren in or among the flock. *lad* . . *wives*, with *these* in particular. and . . *report*, the bad reputation which was current in the region concerning them. (3) *because* . . *age*,^b *lit.* son of old age to him; *lit.* true since Joseph was born in his 91st year. and . . *colours*,^c *R. V. marg.*, a long garment with sleeves, prob. to sig. distinction, office. (4) *hated*,^d instead of imitating his example.

the history of Joseph

his coat of many colors

^a Ge. xvii. 8; He. xi. 9.

^b Ge. xiv. 20.

^c The LXX. and Vulg. say, a garment of dif. pieces, patchwork; hence, of dif. colors. Other V. S. as *Aquila Syriac*, etc., say a tunic with fringes reaching to hands and feet. See *Jos. Ant.* vii. 8, 1, and *cf.* 2 Sa. xiii. 18.

^d Ep. vi. 4.

"Joseph's coat made him finer than his brethren, but it caused all his trouble."

Partiality in the family. — I. It was natural. 1. On account of a kindred spirit. 2. On account of pleasant associations. II. Unconcealed. 1. It was revealed for the comfort of Joseph. 2. It was manifested in such a manner that the other children could take offense. III. It produced hatred. 1. Their hatred took a wrong direction. 2. Their hatred overcame their humanity. — *Homilist.*

The father's favorite. — We are taught here the evil of favoritism in the family. The balance, as between the different children in the same household, must be held evenly by the parents. No one ought to be the "pet" of either father or mother, for the "pet" is apt to become petted, haughty, and arrogant towards the others; while the showing of constant favor to him alienates the affections of the rest, both from him and from the parents. "Is that you, Pet?" said a father from his bedroom to a little one who stood at the door in the early morning knocking for admission. "No, it isn't Pet, it's only me," replied a sorrowful little voice; and that was the last of "pet" in that family. See what mischief it occasioned here in Jacob's household? — *W. M. Taylor.*

his dreams

the sheaves

5-8. (5) *he* . . *brethren*, a more crafty person would have concealed it. "These day-dreams, though derided by those who cannot see the Caesar in the careless trifter, and though often awkward and even offensive in their expression, are not always the mere discontented cravings of youthful vanity, but are frequently instinctive propensities towards the position which the nature is fitted to fill." — *Dods, Exp. Bib.* *they* . . *more*, without perfectly understanding it, they saw it pointed to his advancement. *Perh.*, regarded it as the result of ambitious day-dreams. (6) *he* . . *them*, in guileless confidence.

"What the tender and poetic youth dreams to day, and conjures up with inarticulate speech, is to-morrow the vocifer-

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ated result of public opinion, and the day after is the character of nations." — Emerson.

a Ge. xlii. 6, 9; xliii. 26; xlv. 14.

"Nothing so much convinces me of the boundlessness of the human mind as its operations in dreaming." — W. B. Chulow.

When a person told his dream in relating religious experience, Rowland Hill said, "we do not despise a good man's dreams, but we will judge of the dream after we have seen how you act when you are awake."

B. C. cir. 1729.

Joseph's second dream

b Lu. ii. 19.

"Dreaming is an act of pure imagination, attesting in all men a creative power which, if it were available in walking, would make every man a Dante or a Shakespeare." — F. H. Hedge.

"As dreams are the fancies of those that sleep, so fancies are but the dreams of those awake." — T. B. Blount.

"Dreams are like portraits; and we find that they please because they are confessed resemblances." — Crabbe.

he is sent to seek his brethren

"As ships meet at sea a moment together, when words of greeting must be spoken, and then a way upon the deep; so men meet in this world; and I think we should cross no man's path with-

(7) behold, etc.,^a imagery related to most familiar objects. shalt . . us, the significance of the dream was obvious, and the brethren perceived it at once.

The dreams of Joseph (vs. 5-11). — Look at these dreams as illustrating I. The visions of youth. A tendency to brighten the future belongs to youth. II. The jealousies of society. Three remarks about this jealousy. It is—1. Very general; 2. An unhappy feeling; 3. Unchristian. III. The destiny of virtue. Glory is ever the destiny of virtue. 1. There is much in a virtuous life itself to ensure advancement; 2. Advancement is pledged by God Himself to a virtuous life. — Thomas.

Joseph's dreams. — Joseph relates two of his dreams. There was no difficulty in understanding their meaning. The first showed that his brethren were to be in subjection to him, and the second that he would even have a wider dominion—his father, his mother, and his brethren bowing down before him to the earth. These dreams must be regarded as Divine intimations of his future sovereign greatness, and they were remarkably fulfilled in Egypt twenty-three years afterwards. Though Jacob chided his son for the bold uttering of his dreams, yet we are told that he "observed the saying." (Verses 10, 11). He had a secret persuasion that those dreams were prophetic. And the hatred of his brethren shows a dreaded suspicion of the same prophetic import. It may not have been a shrewd policy in Joseph boldly to utter and declare these dreams before those with whom they were so intimately concerned. But he was a youth of genuine simplicity and transparency of character. He was openly honest. He had a natural fitness for future distinction and honor, and so the choice of God is justified to men. — Hom. Com.

9-11. (9) and . . dream, imagery dif. but meaning the same. "It is apparent that Joseph understood this second dream, even more plainly than the first, to foreshadow, in some way unexplained, his future supremacy over his brethren, who were unmistakably pointed out by the eleven stars of the vision; and this remarkable coincidence between the number of the stars and the number of his brethren would facilitate the inference that his parents were referred to under the other symbols of the sun and moon." — *Pulp. Com.* sun . . moon, ref. to father and mother: first dream ref. to brethren alone. (10) rebuked, to avoid irritating his brethren, or to repress the pride of Joseph, or to express his own surprise at the absurdity of the dream. (11) father . . saying,^b lit. kept the word: i. e. laid it to heart.

The brethren and father of Joseph (vs. 11). — We observe—I. That both brethren and father were worshippers, in the dream which they heard related. II. That if any might naturally be angry with Joseph for so dreaming, it was the father. III. That sundry matters of interest account for the difference in the feelings of the father and brethren; but chiefly the faith in God that Jacob possessed.

Joseph's dream. — Joseph's dream came true, though it was fulfilled in a way and by means too wonderful for him to anticipate. Instead of simply succeeding to his father's inheritance, and ruling his eleven brethren, he stood next to Pharaoh, and governed busy populous Egypt. His father and brothers did make obeisance unto him. Nay, the very sun and moon, which govern the tides and rains, and mete out years of famine and years of plenty, even these served him and helped him to the throne. Through the pit and the prison, by the path of sorrow and captivity, he rose to be the very center of the world; for "all the world went down into Egypt to buy corn of Joseph." — Cox.

12-14. (12) Shechem, ab. sixty ms. N. fr. Hebron where Jacob then was. (13) said . . I, sugg. of his habit of obedience. (14) see . . well, lit. see the peace, etc. Jacob might judge the neighborhood of Shechem an unsafe place.

The Vale of Shechem. — Having crossed the hill we entered the rich vale of Shechem, or Nablous, clad with olives, full of gardens and orange groves, with palm trees and watered by plenteous rills. It was the brightest and most civilized scene we had met with. Passengers on horse and foot, many of them unarmed, were traveling to and fro; camels, in long file, laden with cotton bales, were mingled with asses bearing firewood and baskets of cotton husks to the city; and wild horsemen were galloping in and out as they skillfully threaded their way among the laden beasts. Jays and woodpeckers

laughed among the olive trees, and a fox slunk past us to his hole; while the homelike caw of the jackdaw, whose acquaintance we had not before made in the country, was re-echoed from the poplar trees and the minarets. —*Tristram*.

15—18. (15) *wandering* etc., he would not return without information of his brethren. His father would be anxious. (*They* showed less thought presently.) (16) *tell* . . flocks, flocks of such size could hardly be unnoticed. (17) *let* . . *Dothan*, either bec. of danger: or of scant herbage. *Dothan*^a (*two cisterns or wells*), on S. edge of plain of Esdraelon; ab. twelve ms. N. of Samarita; site now called *Tell Dothaim*. (18) *when* . . *off*, and recog. him by his coat. *they* . . *him*,^b *lit.* they craftily conspired, etc.

Stages of crime. — Let us inquire into the various processes that at last resulted in this deliberate scheme of murder. I. Envy. This vice was the first symptom. II. Hatred. Envy, long indulged in, develops into open hatred. III. Treacherous conspiracy. IV. The plan of murder itself. This is the culminating point. Learn — 1. The danger of secret and small vices; 2. The tendency of all sin to increase in magnitude.

Allurements of sin. — We have heard of a singular tree, that forcibly illustrates the deceitfulness of sin. It is called the Judas tree. The blossoms appear before the leaves, and they are a brilliant crimson. The flaming beauty of the flowers attracts innumerable insects; and the wandering bee is drawn to it to gather honey. But every bee that alights upon the blossoms imbibes a fatal opiate, and drops dead from among the crimson flowers to the earth. Beneath this enticing tree, the earth is strewn with the victims of its fatal fascination. That fatal plant that attracts only to destroy is a vivid emblem of the deceitfulness and deadliness of sin. For the poison of sin's bewitching flowers, there is but one remedy; it is found in the "leaves of the tree of life" that groweth on Mount Calvary. — *Cuyler*.

19—22. (19) *dreamer*, *lit.* lord of dreams. Spoken in contempt. (20) *pit*, none deep enough to conceal their crime fr. God, *say*, etc., they would be murderers of their bro., and liars to their father. *we* . . *dreams*, this they did see, some twenty years hence. (21) *delivered*,^a *i. e.* it was his intention to do so. We should hardly have expected this from Reuben considering his former wickedness. (22) *to* . . *again*, at some convenient time.

The conspiracy to murder Joseph. — I. An example of the rapidly downward course of evil. II. An example of the bold daring of sinners. III. An example of guilt incurred even where purpose has not ripened into act. IV. An example of degrees of guiltiness even among those who have lent themselves to one design. — *T. H. Leale*.

Reuben's attempt to save Joseph. — He boarded the train which he could not arrest, but he boarded it with the purpose of ultimately controlling it and so preventing a catastrophe. The motive was good, but I am not quite so sure about the policy. It savors a little too much of worldly wisdom for me, and little good came out of it in the end. We have seen it tried here often enough in politics, and almost always with this result; that the well-meaning men who have gone into a questionable movement under the idea that they could thereby guide it into something that would be at least harmless, have been themselves outwitted and befooled. It would have been just about as easy for Reuben to have stood out against the persecution of Joseph altogether as it was for him to protest against the shedding of his blood, and it might have been equally efficacious. At any rate it would have exonerated him from the guilt which they all alike ultimately incurred. — *W. M. Taylor*.

23—28. (23) *stript*, etc., all the above had taken place while he was approaching, and now they fall upon him, and degrade him; and take away the proof of a father's love. If they could not deprive him of life, they could deprive him of its comforts. (24) *took*, etc., cisterns when empty and only covered with mud were sometimes used as prisons. (*See Jer. xxviii. 6.*) (25) *they* . . *bread*,^c their callous composure indicated their brutality. Reuben had left them meanwhile, *vs. 29*. *company*, caravan. *Ishmaelites*, or Midianites,^d *vs. 28* and 36. Arabs descended from Ishmael. *spicery*, perh. *storax*, gum of the styrax tree. *balm*, gum of *opobalsam*, or balsam tree: used for healing wounds. *myrrh*, or *ladanum*, a gum wh. exudes fr. a shrub, the *cistus ladaniferus*. *Egypt*, the land of the Pharaohs was the emporium of the

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out hailing him, and, if he needs, giving him supplies.^e — *Beecher*.

they conspire against him

a 2 K. vi 18.

b Ps. xxxvii. 32
"Combinations of wickedness would overwhelm the world by the advantage which licentious principles afford, did not those who have long practised perfidy grow faithless to each other."
— *Johnson*.

"The world is so corrupt that a reputation for honesty is acquired by not doing wrong."
— *De Levis*.

their plot and Reuben's purpose

c Pr. xxvii. 4.

d Ge. xlii. 22.

Reuben, though he had been very wicked, shows now a tender heart. — *Jacobus*.

That weakness of character for which Reuben was remarkable, had also its good side. It rendered him incapable of committing some sins.
— *Hom. Com.*

Joseph is sold to the Ishmaelites

e Ge. xlii. 21.

f Pr. xxx. 20; Am. vi. 6.

g Medan and Midian, sons of Abraham by Keturah; Ishmael his son by

B. C. cir. 17-9.

Hagar. The Ishmaelites and Midianites were neighbors and prob. united for commercial purposes.

a Ge. iv. 10.

"All the spite of his brethren cannot make Joseph cast off the livery of his father's love. What need we care for the censures of men, if our hearts can tell us we are in favor with God." — *Bp. Hall*.

"That execrable sum of all villainies commonly called a slave-trade." — *Wesley*.

his coat is shown to Jacob

"Cruelty is no more the cure of crimes than it is the cure of sufferings. Compassion, in the first instance, is good for both; I have known it to bring compunction when nothing else would." — *Lander*.

"Let me be cruel, not unnatural; I will speak daggers to her, but use none; my tongue and my soul in this be hypocrites." — *Shakespeare*.

Jacob mourns for Joseph who is sold to Potiphar

b Re. vi. 12.

Little knew Joseph what God was in doing. Have patience, till He have brought both ends together. — *Trapp*.

"Excess of grief for the deceased is madness; for it is an injury to the living, and the dead know it not." — *Xenophon*.

world's trade. (26) **profit**,^a the spirit of *Judah* in this *Judah*. (27) **come . . flesh**, a pretense of mercy for the sake of gain. **content**, *lit.* hearkened. (28) **drew . . Joseph**, who might think they relented. **sold**, the son becomes a slave. **they . . Egypt**, torn fr. his earthly father, his heavenly Father accom. him thither.

The execution of the plot against Joseph. — I. They stripped him. Thus, in imagination, they degraded him from the birthright. II. They went about to starve him, throwing him into a dry pit. III. They slighted him in distress, eating bread before his very face. IV. They sold him. This plan was — 1. Proposed by Judah through compassion; 2. Acquiesced in by the others from policy. They thought if he were sold for a slave, he would never be a lord. — *M. Henry*.

The company of Ishmaelites. — These were coming, says Kiel, along the road which leads from Beisan, past Jenin, and through the plain of Dothan to the great caravan road running from Damascus to Legum, Ramleh, and Gaza into Egypt. *Joseph sold to Arabs*. — The passage of an Arab caravan towards Egypt and its purchase of Joseph, if equally true to early times, and to the unchanging Eastern life of to-day. Sir Samuel Baker's boy, Saat, had, in the same way as Joseph, been carried off while he was tending goats, by an Arab caravan; hidden in a gum sack, and finally taken to Cairo and sold as a slave. "All the world may perish, so far as we care," said an Arab to Niebuhr, "if only Egypt remains." And it was left to them even more in Joseph's day than now, from the dislike of Egyptians to leave their country even for purposes of gain. — *C. Geikie*.

29—33. (29) and . . pit, prob. he had gone to devise means of Joseph's escape. **behold . . pit**, having been sold meanwhile. and . . clothes, cust. sign of grief. (30) and . . brethren, evidently he was not present at the sale. and . . said, *etc.*, as the eldest bro. he felt responsible. (32) and . . coat, *etc.*, to conceal their crime, and acc. for absence of Joseph. (31) they . . father, either they had not the fortitude to witness the father's grief, or they had not the audacity to tell such a brutal lie, so they sent a slave. this . . found, one crime begetting another, now falsehood. **know . . no**, who should know so well. (33) an . . him, the thing they wished to suggest. **Joseph . . pieces**, he could not suspect them of so foul a crime.

The character of Reuben. — In his farewell benediction in later days, Jacob declared this his eldest son was "unstable as water," or, as Craik points out, rather "impetuous as the water floods." He was a man moved by sudden impulse; hence, in this incident, he is seen almost beside himself with grief, and expresses himself in extravagant language; though at one time he had evidently taken part in the general dislike shown by Jacob's sons to the favored child. Judah also desired to save his life, from a dread of incurring the guilt of fratricide, yet he was willing to get Joseph out of the way. But Reuben, though thus affected at the moment, had not courage afterwards to disclose the crime committed by his brothers.

34—36. (34) sackcloth,^b made sometimes of camel's hair. and . . days, much longer than the customary period; perhaps through the twenty-two years of separation. (35) daughters, prob. daus.-in-law: only one daughter named — Dinah. **grave**, Heb. *sheolah*, Gk. *Hades*, *i. e.* the invisible world. thus . . him, inconsolable. (36) Potiphar (*consecrated to the sun*). **captain, etc. lit.** prince of the executioners, or, commander of the body guard. The nature of his duties is understood from the fact that he kept the state prison (ch. xxxix. 20).

Joseph in Egypt. — The whole passage implies the existence in Egypt at this time of a traffic in slaves, who were foreigners, and valued at no very high rate. The monuments prove slaves to have been exceedingly numerous under the ancient empire. The king had a vast number; the estates of the nobles were cultivated by them; and a large body of *hieroduli*, or "sacred slaves," was attached to most of the temples. Foreign slaves seem to have been preferred to native ones, and wars were sometimes undertaken less with the object of conquest or subjugation than with that of obtaining a profit by selling those who were taken prisoners, in the slave market. — *G. Rawlinson*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH.

1-5. (1) and . . time, while and before those events were proceeding in Egypt. Judah, going from sin to sin. down, *i. e.* southward. Adullamite, native of Adullam^a (*justice of the people*). Hirah (*noble birth*). (2) Shuah^b (*wealth*). and . . her, not content with dwelling among idolaters; he takes one to wife (3) Er (*watchful*). (4) Onan^c (*strong, stout*). (5) Shelah (*petition*). Chezib (*false*) or Achzib^d (*deceit*), a city in the plain of Judah.

Sin, a quicksand. — It sometimes happens on the coast of Britain or Scotland, that a person walking on the strand will suddenly find difficulty in walking. The shore is like pitch, to which the soles of his feet cling. The coast appears perfectly dry; but the footprint that he leaves is immediately filled with water. Nothing distinguishes the sand which is solid from that which is not. He passes on unaware of his danger. Suddenly he sinks: he looks at his feet; the sand covers them. He wishes to turn back; but with every effort sinks more deeply. With indescribable terror, he finds he is involved in a quicksand. He throws down his burden; but it is already too late. The slow burial of hours continues. The sand reaches to his waist, to his chest, to his neck: now only his face is visible. He cries. The sand fills his mouth, and all is silent; his eyes, then the night of death. What a striking emblem of the danger of sin!

6-11. (6) Tamar (*a palm tree*). (7) and . . him,^e perhaps as a natural result of his wickedness, rather than by direct visitation. (8) and . . brother,^f aft. incorporated into the Jewish code, and commonly called by writers the Levirate law. (10) wherefore . . also,^g God branding the sin with Divine indignation. (11) then . . said,^h etc., prob. Judah thought her the cause of his son's death. till . . grown, who was prob. too young to marry.

Only one sin. — If but one sin be unsold, the man continues still a bond-slave of hell. By one little hole a ship will sink into the bottom of the sea. The stab of a penknife to the heart will as well destroy a man as all the daggers that killed Cæsar in the senate house. The soul will be strangled with one cord of vanity, as well as with all the cart-ropes of iniquity; only the more sins, the more plagues and fiercer flames in hell; but he that lives and dies impenitent in one, it will be his destruction. One dram of poison will dispatch a man, and one reigning sin will bring him to endless misery. — R. Bolton.

12-15. (12) and . . time, *lit.* and the days were multiplied, *i. e.* several yrs. had passed. comforted, *i. e.* passed thro. the usual ceremonies of mourning. Timnath,ⁱ (*portion assigned*), now Tibneh, S. of Zorah, near Wady Surar. (13) behold . . sheep, wh. would occupy him sometime. (14) sat . . place,^j *lit.* in the gate of Enaim. for . . she, etc., she believing him old enough. (15) harlot, *lit.* consecrated *i. e.* to the impure worship of Astarte. because . . face, whence he prob. thought she was under a vow.

Judah and Tamar. — We see in this story how *one* interest — that for their families, and the preservation of them — overpowered every other feeling even the sense of shame in a woman. The sanctity of an ancient descent, as it had been brought out of Mesopotamia by Abraham's posterity, and the establishment of the duties of the brother-in-law (the Levirate, from a Latin word, *levir*, a husband's brother) are forcibly set forth by this narrative. The purport of the laws of the Israelites on the subject (no doubt derived from the patriarchs), was to preserve as much as possible the heirs in a direct line. The father lived in the son — the whole family descended from him was in a certain sense himself. — Gerlach.

16-19. (16) go to, etc., question — yet was not harlotry a sin? and she said, etc., sustaining her assumed character by demanding payment. Tamar's conduct, tho. reprehensible, was not prompted by lust, but by a desire to be avenged on Judah for withholding Shelah. (17) pledge, a man capable of this sin will break his word. (18) signet, signet-ring or seal, or seal sometimes worn round the neck, sometimes on the finger. bracelets, cord to which the seal was attached. staff, perh. a symbol of authority. (19) laid . . her, by wh. she had concealed herself fr. Judah. put . . widowhood, and returned to Judah's house as if nothing had happened.

B. C. cir. 1727.

birth of Er and Onan

a 1 S. xxii. 1; Jos. xii. 15; 2 S. xxiii. 13; 1 Ch. xi. 15; 2 Ch. xi. 7; Mi. i. 15;

b Ge. xxiv. 3.

c Ge. xlii. 12; Nu. xxvi. 19; 1 Ch. ii. 3.

d 1 Jos. xv. 44; Mi. i. 14.

"When love is well timed it is not a fault to love; the strong, the brave, the virtuous, and the wise, sink in the soft captivity together." — Addison.

their sin and death

e Nu. xxxii. 23; Ec. xii. 14; Job xxxiv. 22; Pr. xv. 3; Nu. xxvi. 19.

f De. xxv. 5; Ma. xxii. 24; Mk. xii. 19; Lu. xx. 28.

g Ge. xlii. 12.

h Ru. i. 13; Le. xxii. 13.

Tamar deceives Judah

i Ju. xiv. 1-5.

j Pr. vii. 12; ix. 5.

"Ah, how much suffering might be spared sometimes by a single abstinence, by a single no answered in a firm tone to the voice of seduction." — *Lavater*. "Labor to thy power to make thy body content to go of thy soul's errands." — *J. Taylor*.

she takes a pledge of him

"All animals are more happy than man. We, besides our necessary ills, draw upon ourselves a multitude of others." — *Menander*.

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"As surely as God is good, so surely there is no such thing as necessary evil. For by the religious mind, sickness and pain and death are not to be accounted evils. Moral evils are of your own making, and undoubtedly the greater part of them can be prevented."—*Southey*.

Judah tries in vain to redeem the pledge

"Judah now fears lest he shall be beaten with his own staff, lest his signet shall be used to seal his reproach. Nature is not more forward to commit sin, than willing to hide it." *Hall*.

Tamar's sentence and Judah's exposure

a Le. xxi. 9; 2 S. xii. 5; Ma. vii. 1, 2; De. xxii. 21.
b Nu. xxxii. 23; Ro. ii. 1, 3, 21, 22.
c Job xxxiv. 32; Jo. viii. 11.
"There is no den in the wide world to hide a rogue. Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. Commit a crime, and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and fox, and squirrel and mole."—*Emerson*.

birth of Pharez and Zarah

d Ge. xlv. 12; Nu. xxvi. 20, 21; Ru. iv. 12, 18; 1 Ch. ii. 4, 5; iv. 1; ix. 4.

e 1 Ch. xxvii. 3; Ne. xi. 4-6.

f Ge. xlv. 12.

g Nu. xxvi. 20; Jos. vii. 18, 24; xxii. 10.
1 Ch. ii. 4, 6; ix. 6; Ne. xi. 24.

The signet ring.—The signet used by kings and persons of rank in the East was a ring which served all the purposes of sealing. All the Orientals, instead of signature by sign manual, use the impression of a seal on which their name and title (if they have one) is engraved. Among intriguing and malicious people, it is so easy to turn the possession of a man's seal to his disgrace, by making out false documents, that the loss of it always produces great concern. This shows how much Judah put himself in the power of Tamar, when he gave her his signet. When an eastern prince delivers the seal of empire to a royal guest, he treats him as a superior; but when he delivers it to a subject, it is only a sign of investiture with office. Thus the king of Egypt took off his ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand, when he made him ruler over all his dominions; and the king of Persia took off the ring which he had taken from Haman and gave it unto Mordecai.—*Paxton*.

20—23. (20) but . . not, not seeking her in the house of Judah. (21) openly, *lit.* at Enaim. (22) harlot, *see vs.* 14. (23) let . . her, *i. e.*, the pledge, shamed, *lit.* lest we be for a contempt, not afraid to sin against God, but afraid to lose his reputation among men. behold, *etc.* I have done my best to redeem the pledge.

The Bible makes no apology, draws no curtain, makes no excuse; on it goes; taking life as it is, and describing it without flattery or fear. The Bible is true to the very root and reality of things. The book does not ignore facts, but faces them, names them, proposes remedies for them, and searches into the root and core of the whole of them. Evil be to him that evil thinks. These things belong to a greater whole; they must not be detached; the part that would be intolerable is essential to the whole that is beautiful.—*J. Parker*.

24—26. (24) burnt^a this punishment afterwards reserved for the daus. of priests. The father had power of life and death in his household. Stoning was the usual custom (Deut. xxii. 20-24). (25) sent . . saying,^b *etc.* leaving it to his conscience to vindicate her. (26) she . . I, *i. e.* less blamable, because . . son, had he done right she would not have done wrong, and . . more,^c abstinence from sin best proof of true repentance.

Which is the most guilty?—Society has usually little pity for the harlot. Her sisters scorn the fallen. Judah filled with pious (? self-righteous) indignation voted for the burning of Tamar. He acknowledged that she had been "sinned against," as well as "sinning." The scene reminds one of the N. T. story of the adulteress and her accusers; some of whom perh. had sinned after Judah's fashion, but had left no evidence in the woman's hands.

Tamar.—Under the arts of Tamar in regard to Judah there still lay concealed faith in the sanctity of the customs and ordinances of the chosen race of Israel. For this reason, too, Judah bore her testimony, "She is more righteous than I." At the same time we see with what honesty and candor the Holy Scripture paints mankind; how God chooses his people not for any apparent external virtues, but according to His own full grace; how the whole of the scheme for the recovery of sinful man is a work of free favor; and, in fine, how there was enough of sin in Israel's family to require a speedy and severe purification, which did not long tarry.—*C. G. Barth*.

27—30. (27) travail, labor, child-bearing. (28) midwife, *etc.*, thus careful to mark the first-born. (29) Pharez^a (*a breach*) called also Perez'. (30) Zarah^b (*splendor*), called also Zerah.^c

Woman's need of Christianity.—If there be any one in this world who more than another cannot afford not to be a Christian, it is a woman. If there be any one whose beauty fades as a flower and whose grace needs the sustenance of the ineffable; if there be any one whose power is in beauty, in purity, in goodness, it is a woman. If there be any one more than another upon whom blight falls more rudely; if there be any one more than another who is more burdened with grief or more wrung in sorrow, it is a woman. I marvel to see a woman that is not a Christian. The ladder between your souls and God is not half so long as that between our souls and God. God made woman to be better than man, and the perversion is in proportion when she is worse.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-NINTH.

1-6. (1) **and, etc.**, see on xxxvii. 36. **Pharaoh, (sun).** (2) **and . . man,** *lit.* a man causing to prosper. **house . . Egyptian,** *i. e.* a domestic servant. (3) **and . . saw,** *etc.*, the success of Joseph's administration was manifest; not that Potiphar believed in Jehovah, but he believed Joseph to be under Divine guidance. (4) **grace, favor. served, ministered. overseer,** steward. **all . . hand,** proof of confidence. (5) **and . . time,** change for the better in the affairs of Potiphar. **blessed . . sake,** not for Potiphar's sake: a master enriched by a faithful servant. (6) **left . . eat,** Potiphar's confidence exempted Joseph from making minute returns. The exception "was necessitated by the laws of caste which then prevailed among the Egyptians, and in particular by the fact that 'the Egyptians might not eat with the Hebrews' (ch. xliii. 32)."—*Pulp. Com.* **and . . favoured, lit.** was fair of form and fair of aspect.

Joseph carried down into Egypt (vs. 1). — I. The circumstances under which Joseph went to Egypt. 1. Not by his own choice; 2. Really, though not then apparently, by God. II. The lessons we may learn from these circumstances. 1. To acknowledge God in all our ways; 2. To confide in Him under all circumstances; 3. To recognize the Providence of God attending those that love Him.—*Blackley.*

Piety in unfavorable places.—Joseph's religion overcame all obstacles because there was real life in it. The other day I slackened my step opposite a garden to notice the crocuses raising their slender heads amid the heavy gravel on the walk. The tender plants, having real life, forced their way through the hard earth and conquered the very stones. So the heavenly plant of Joseph's piety displayed all its beauty and gave out its sweet odors in the wicked palaces of Potiphar and Pharaoh.—*Bib. Ill.*

7-10. (7) **and . . things,** Joseph had been in Potiphar's house about 10 years. (8) **wotteth, knoweth he. he . . hand,** great confidence should beget corresponding fidelity. (9) **there . . I,** to whom I must give account. **neither . . wife,** whom therefore I should regard with the greater respect. **how . . God?** a greater sin than a crime against his master. (10) **hearkened, consented. or . . her,** would not trust himself in the way of temptation.

A motherless boy.—"When I was a little child," said a good man, "my mother used to bid me kneel beside her, and to place her hand upon my head while she prayed. Before I was old enough to know her worth, she died, and I was left much to my own guidance. Like others, I was inclined to evil passions, but often felt myself checked, and, as it were, drawn back by the soft hand on my head. When I was a young man, I traveled in foreign lands, and was exposed to many temptations: but, when I would have yielded, that same hand seemed to be upon my head, and I was saved. I appeared to feel its pressure as in the days of my happy infancy, and sometimes there came with it a voice in my heart—a voice that must be obeyed—'Oh, do not this wickedness, my son, nor sin against thy God.'"

11-15. (11) **that . . business,** temptation should not force him fr. duty. **none . . within,** sinners shall not lack opportunities; this made appearances against Joseph. (12) **fled,** we must sometimes fly from, and sometimes fight, temptation. (13) **when she saw, etc.**, she would have revenge if not her desire, and she uses this mistake of Joseph to accomplish his ruin. (14) **she . . house,** lust changes to hatred. **see . . us,** note this woman's infernal cunning. **I . . voice,** she pretends to great chastity. (15) **garment, circumstantial evidence** against Joseph.

Conscientiousness.—Nicholas Biddle, we have been told, once had for a private secretary a Christian young man, whom he wished to keep at work on the Sabbath. The secretary objected to working on the Lord's Day. "I shall discharge you," said his employer, "if you do not conform to my wishes." The secretary was poor, and had, moreover, a widowed mother dependent upon him; but rather than violate his conscience by doing what he considered wrong, he gave up his place. A day or two after, Mr. Biddle was in the company of some gentlemen who proposed to start a new bank, and the question was, where should they find a suitable man to be its cashier? "I know

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Joseph becomes Potiphar's house-steward

a 1 S. xviii. 14; Ac. vii. 9.

b Ps. i. 3.

c Ge. xxx. 27.

Prosperity.—In a long sunshine of outward prosperity, the dust of our inward corruptions is apt to fly about and lift itself up. Sanctified affliction, like seasonable rain, lays the dust and softens the soul.—*H. G. Salter.*

God's presence can make up for any loss, and bless us in any place.

Potiphar's wife

d Pr i. 10; ii. 10-18; vii. 25-27.

e Pr. vi. 29; Le. xx. 10.

f Ge. xx. 6; Ne. v. 15; 2 S. xii. 13; Ps. li. 4.

g Pr. i. 15; v. 8; 2 Th. iii. 14; 2 Ti. ii. 22; Ps. i. 1; Ma. vi. 13; 1 Co. x. 13.

"Men are not made truly religious by performing certain actions which are externally good."—*Luther.*

Joseph is falsely accused

h Eccl. vii. 26; Pr. vi. 5.

"Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned, nor hell a fury like a woman scorned."—*Wm. Congreve.*

"Vice is attended with temporary felicity, piety with eternal joy."—*Bayard.*

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Joseph is cast into prison

a Ex. xx. 16; De. v. 20; Pr. xix. 9; Ps. cxx. 3; Jas. iii. 8.

b Is liv 17; Ma. v. 11, 12; 1 Pe. iii. 14, 17.

c Ps lxxvi. 10; Pr. vi. 34.

d Ps. cv. 18; 1 Pe. ii. 19.

"Distrust, bolts, and iron grating do not produce virtue in women and girls. It is honor which must keep them to their duty, and not severity." — *Molière*.

he finds favor with the jailer

e Pr. xvi. 7; Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6; cvi. 40; cxii. 4; Da. i. 9.

"Virtue is more to men than either water or fire. I have seen men die from treading on water and fire, but I have never seen a man die from treading in the paths of virtue." — *Confucius*.

"The virtue of a man ought to be measured not by his extraordinary exertions, but by his every-day conduct." — *Pascal*.

Pharaoh's butler and baker

"Even by the falling of waterdrops, a waterpot is filled; the wise man becomes full of good,

of one," said Mr. Biddle; and he recommended to them his late secretary, saying, "He had too much conscience for my work, but none too much for the more responsible office you have." And through his recommendation the place was given to him. — *A. H. Currier*.

16-20. (16) she . . her, nursing revenge; concocting her plan. (17) saying,^a etc., as if reproaching her husband for exposing her to insult. us, trying to make the wrong apply to the whole house. (18) and . . pass,^b etc., leaving me an example of injured innocence! (19) that . . kindled,^c against Joseph, though this is not said. (20) prison,^d roundhouse or dungeon, of wh. Potiphar had the official care.

The example of Joseph set before the young. — Let us attend to — I. The troubles which came upon Joseph. Hated by his brothers, sold in Egypt, cast into prison on a false charge. II. His consolations in his trouble, "The Lord was with him." — 1. By His grace. Joseph was under the government, and also under the comfort, of God's Spirit; 2. In His Providence. God made his good dispositions win the affection of the governor of the gaol. — *B. W. Noel*.

The unseen methods of Providence. — Some time ago, when in Manchester, the writer saw the men at work pulling down whole streets of houses to make room for a new railway station. All appeared ruin and disorder. Here was a party digging out foundations; in another place the bricklayers were building walls; elsewhere some one was setting out for other walls; beyond them they were still pulling down. It seemed like chaos, and yet in the architect's office could be seen the elevation and picture of the complete whole. Every man was working to a plan. And so God has His elevation, but He does not show it. "It doth not yet appear." When Joseph was in jail, he was in the path of Providence, and the fetters of iron were as much part of the plan as the chain of gold he wore when brought to the summit of greatness. — *T. Champness*.

21-23. (21) but . . Joseph, divine compensation. and . . mercy,^e fr. an unexpected quarter. keeper . . prison, *lit.* captain of the roundhouse. (22) keeper . . prison, made him an under-jailer. and . . it, the jailer gave him charge to see that all tasks were performed, and trusted him because of his integrity. (23) looked . . hand, having, like Potiphar, confidence in Joseph. the . . prosper, *see vs. 3*.

Joseph blessed in the prison (vss. 21-23). — Consider — I. Joseph as a prisoner for righteousness' sake. It was thus with Jeremiah, with John, with Paul and Silas, and with Daniel. Trial, in one form or another, is the portion of all the saints. II. God's presence and blessing with him in his confinement. His gracious presence ensures a blessing. — *J. J. Cort*.

Prisoner kindly treated. — It is said that when John Bunyan was in Bedford jail, some of his persecutors in London heard that he was often out of the prison; they sent an officer to talk with the gaoler on the subject, and in order to discover the fact he was to get there in the middle of the night. Bunyan was at home with his family; but so restless that he could not sleep. He, therefore, acquainted his wife that, though the gaoler had given him liberty to stay till the morning, yet, from his uneasiness, he must immediately return. He did so, and the gaoler blamed him for coming at such an unseasonable hour. Early in the morning the messenger came, and, interrogating the gaoler, said, "Are all the prisoners safe?" "Yes." "Is John Bunyan safe?" "Yes." "Let me see him." He was called, and appeared, and all was well. After the messenger was gone, the gaoler, addressing Mr. Bunyan, said, "Well, you may go in and out again just when you think proper, for you know when to return better than I can tell you." — *Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE FORTIETH.

1-4. (1) butler, cup-bearer, who handed the king his cup. baker, bread-maker (these were high officials in the court of Egypt). (2) officers, eunuchs (a term of wide meaning in the E.). (3) ward, guard. (4) captain, *i. e.* Potiphar. charged, *lit.* made to visit them. served, distributed rations, etc. season, *lit.* days, perh. a year as the Jews understood the term.

Religion in adversity. — I. A good man in a bad place. 1. He had not been guilty of any crime. Many good men have been in prison (Bunyan, Baxter

etc.); 2. The plots of the wicked seem to succeed for a season. II. A good man in prison not forsaking his religion — 1. Did not grow morose or churlish; maintained a cheerful disposition, and integrity of purposes; 2. Made himself useful to his jailer; 3. Was friendly and faithful to fellow-prisoners. III. A good man in adversity befriended by his God — 1. God could reach him even there; 2. God reached him through others — butler and baker, and by means of their dreams; 3. God's mercy was slow but sure.

Providence. — The manner in which the Divine Providence quietly and secretly makes the most insignificant things, apparently, the occasions and the cause of wonderful changes, appears very visible in our narrative. It would appear simply fortuitous that Pharaoh should have thrown into prison his two officers on account, perhaps, of some very trifling offense; still more accidental would it appear that Joseph should have charge of them, and that both should have had alarming dreams, and finally how extraordinarily fortuitous that Joseph, on entering, should have observed their depression in their countenances! But all this apparent chance was made a prerequisite, in the course of God's providence, for Joseph's exaltations, and Israel's redemption. "The Lord finds a thousand ways where reason sees not even one." — *Lange*.

5-8. (5) *each . . dream*, i. e. suited to each man's case and capable of sound interpretation. (6) *sad*, troubled, meaning of dream *perplexed* them. (7) *wherefore . . day?* Joseph's sympathy speedily aroused; not rendered unfeeling by injustice. (8) *interpreter*, diviner, astrologer. *do . . God?* he would lead their mind away from the human to the Divine revealer of secrets.

Sadness (vs. 7). — "Wherefore," etc. Here is — I. Irrepressible sadness betraying itself. II. Sympathy with sadness expressing itself. III. The remover of sadness declared. IV. Sadness proved to be without reason to the innocent; and less than it should be to the guilty.

Sympathy. — Young as Joseph was, he had seen enough sorrow to dispose him to sympathize with others in their affliction. More than thirty years ago, just at the beginning of my ministry, I was in the house of a beloved pastor, when he was called to pass through the greatest trial that a man can know, in the death of a truly good and noble wife. Two mornings after, the postman brought in a sheaf of letters. I think there were more than twenty of them, but each was from a brother minister, who had been led through the same dark valley, and who was seeking to comfort him with the comfort wherewith himself had been comforted of God. Only a few evenings ago I met a Christian lady, with whom I was comparing notes regarding the experience of the loss of little children, and she said to me, "I never see the death of a little child announced in the newspaper, but I have an impulse to write to the parents and speak comfortably to them." Thus we may console ourselves under our own trials with the thought that God is endowing us thereby with the gift of sympathy, and fitting us to become "sons of consolation" to others in affliction. The price is costly, but the learning is precious.

— *Bib. III.*

The philosophy of adversity. — The virtue of prosperity is temperance, the virtue of adversity is fortitude, which in morals is the more heroic virtue. Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament: adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction, and the clearer revelation of God's favor. — *Bacon*.

9-11. (9) *vine*, it was not strange that the butler should dream of these things; they were purely the effect of his waking thoughts. He had wished for restoration, and his fancy in time of sleep gratified him with the enjoyment of his desires. (10) *and . . branches, etc.*, the wonder of the dream was that the vine budded and produced ripe fruit so rapidly. (11) *and . . hand, etc.* I was cup-bearer once more. I . . *cup*, "The imagery of the dream is not intended to intimate that Pharaoh drank only of the fresh juice of the grape. It only expresses by a natural figure the source of wine, and possibly the duty of the chief butler to understand and superintend the whole process of its formation." — *Murphy*. *gave . . hand*, sign of restoration to royal favor.

The vine in Egypt. — Herodotus says that the culture of the vine was unknown in Egypt. But he was certainly mistaken for every kind of evi-

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even if he gather it little by little." — *Buddha*.

If the rainbow were always visible it might not be so assuring a token of the covenant. Hence the Lord often changes His hand, and blesses His people in another way, to let them see that He is thinking of them. — *Spurgeon*.

they are perplexed with dreams

a. Ge xli. 16; Da. ii. 28.

"A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness gathers love; pleasure bestowed upon a grateful mind was never sterile, but generally gratitude begets reward." — *Basil*.

"Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents, which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant." — *Horace*.

the butler relates his dream

"Ask the man of adversity how other men act towards him; ask those others how he acts towards them. Adversity is the true touchstone of merit in both; happy

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if it does not produce the dishonesty of meanness in one, and that of insolence and pride in the other."—*Ld. Greville.*

Joseph interprets it

a Re i. 20; xvi. 9, 10; Lu. xxii. 19
b Ps. iii. 8; Je. iii. 31.

c Jos. ii. 12; 1 Co. vii. 21.

d 1 Pe. iii. 17.

"It is only great souls that know how much glory there is in being good."—*Sophocles.*

"Good-nature is that benevolent and amiable temper of mind which disposes us to feel the misfortunes and enjoy the happiness of others, and, consequently, pushes us on to promote the latter and prevent the former."—*Fielding.*

the baker's dream and its interpretation

"The setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone, shadows of the evening fall around us. We look forward into the coming lonely night; the soul withdraws itself. The stars arise, and the night is holy."—*Longfellow.*

Pharaoh's birthday

e Ma. xlv. 6; Mk. vi. 21.

f Ma. xxv. 19.

g Job. xix. 14; Ps. xxxi. 12; Am. vi. 6.

"Verily, I swear, it is better to be born lowly, and range with humble livers in content, than to be perked up in

dence concurs to confirm the statement of Scripture. Indeed, other ancient writers even say that the Egyptians claimed for their Osiris the honor of being the first who cultivated the vine, and extracted wine from its fruit; and, Athenæus, Strabo, Pliny, and Clement of Alexandria, specify districts in which it was grown. Modern travelers still find the vine cultivated in some places; and vine branches, laden with ripe grapes, are among the ornaments of ancient Egyptian architecture. Egyptian paintings also have been found representing the vintage, with men occupied in pressing the ripe fruit. It is, nevertheless, true that the soil of Egypt is not generally favorable to the culture of the vine, and it does not appear that it thrived well except in some more elevated spots. — *Kitto.*

12-15. (12) *are*,^a *i. e.*, they signify. (13) *yet . . days*, a short space would prove the truth or otherwise of the interpretation. *lift . . head*,^b implies more than release from bondage; in addition promoting, raising to honor. (14) *think . . thee, lit.* remember me with thee. *mention*^c . . *Pharaoh*, as a wise man able to interpret dreams. *bring . . house*,^d *i. e.* cause me to be brought out. (15) *I was stolen . . the Hebrews*, perhaps an interpolation or evidence of a later authorship since this term *Hebrews* was not yet known. *here*, in Egypt. *done . . dungeon*,^d nothing deserving of such a punishment.

God's government in its great issues. — Consider His government of I. The smallest things. II. The proudest events. III. The most fallible judgments of men. IV. The darkest prison. V. The nightly life. VI. Hopes and fears in human need. — *Lange.*

Joseph's request. — He very naturally throws in a request on behalf of himself. There is no symptom of impatience in this; but patience itself may consist with the use of all lawful means to obtain deliverance. The terms in which this request are made are modest, and exceedingly impressive. He might have asked for a place under the chief butler, or some other post of honor or profit; but he requests only to be delivered from this house. He might have reminded him how much he owed to his sympathetic and kind treatment; but he left these things to speak for themselves. — *Fuller.*

16-19. (16) *good*, favorable to the dreamer. (17) *and . . basket*, contents alone explained because it only was subject to depredations of the birds. *all . . Pharaoh, lit.* food for Pharaoh, the work of the baker. *birds . . head* (comp. the wine in one case handed to the king, in the other his bake-meats caught away). (18) *answered*, with what reluctance may be imagined. *are, see vs. 12.* (19) *lift . . head*, he was to be beheaded and his body hung up in disgrace. *birds . . thee*, thou shalt be denied the rites of sepulture.

Birds carrying off food. — That which seems a strange incident to us is a very common one in such countries as Egypt, where the air teems with animal life. It may be doubted whether, in this case, the birds were kites, which make nothing of carrying off large joints wholesale, or lesser birds, which were content to pick away what they could not carry off. We incline to the former supposition, as we observe, from the mural paintings, that the Egyptians had not much taste for made dishes, but had their tables supplied chiefly with joints and large birds (such as geese) dressed whole, and very convenient, therefore, for kites to carry off. Their doing this is a matter of constant occurrence, and it is still a common complaint that such a man has lost his dinner from its having been seized and carried off by a kite, as he bore it upon his head, or even in his hands in the open air. — *Kitto.*

20-23. (20) *birthday*,^a a custom of long standing yet observed. *made . . servants*,^f commemorative of the event; also token of royal favor. *lifted . . servants*, some regard this phrase as elliptical, the full expression being to *lift up the head out of prison*, an appropriate one, as such places of confinement were usually under ground. — *Hom. Com.* (21) *restored, etc.*, his character vindicated. (22) *hanged, etc.*, his crime having prob. been proved. (23) *butler . . him*,^g as he had promised, yet God quickened his memory at the right time.

Ingratitude of Pharaoh's butler (vs. 23). — We observe — I. That gratitude is but a feeble principle in the human mind. Corrupt practices are too strong in the heart — ambition, pride, covetousness, envy, wrath, revenge, hope and fear. II. That its operations are rather weakened than promoted by pros-

perity. III. That the want of it is hateful in proportion to the obligations conferred upon us. — *C. Simeon*.

Birthdays in the East. — The king "gave a feast unto his servants." Great men give an entertainment to their domestics on the first day of ploughing, when they all come together in their master's house, and have great enjoyment. His pleasure consists chiefly in hearing himself praised. The guests refer to feasts of former days, when the host was young, when he was shaved for the first time, when he put on the ear-rings, or when he was married. They talk over the events of those days, and refer to the exploits of their master. He listens with delight, and lives his youthful days again. Should there be anything which his servants formerly did that is worthy of being referred to, they too are reminded of it, and they feel themselves highly honored by such attention. — *Roberts*.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIRST.

1-4. (1) *end . . years, i. e., fr. the time that Joseph was put into, or the butler taken out of prison. river, the Nile.* (2) *kine*, "According to Plutarch and Clement of Alexandria, the heifer was regarded by the ancient Egyptians as a symbol of the earth, agriculture, and the nourishment derived therefrom. It was therefore natural that the succession of seven prosperous years should be represented by seven thriving cows. That they appeared ascending from the river is explained by the circumstance that the Nile by its annual inundations is the cause of Egypt's fertility." — *Pulp. Com.* *meadow, R. V.*, "fed in the reed-grass." (3) *seven . . river, note*, the river associated both with plenty and famine, the latter in case it failed to overflow its banks. *stood . . river*, but the first seven had eaten up the grass. (4) *and . . kine*, being without food. *did . . kine*, the great wonder of the dream, *awoke*, perplexed, wondering.

The kine coming out of the river. — I couldn't understand Pharaoh's other dream respecting the fat and lean cattle which he said he saw "come up out of the river . . . and they fed in a meadow." But, in going along the Nile, the puzzle was solved in the following manner: — Being seated on the deck of the steamer, I heard the Arabs belonging to the vessel shouting and making a great noise; then the steam whistle sent forth its shrillest shriek, and, as the engineers were English, I heard the familiar words, "Ease her," and shortly afterwards, "Stop her." Wondering what was amiss, I went to the front, and saw from twenty to thirty black knobs sticking out of the water, nearly as large as the crown of a hat. When the vessel got closer to them they began to rise and assume the form of buffaloes which had gone into the river with the double object of cooling their bodies, and, freeing themselves from their great tormentors, the flies of Egypt. When first seen there was nothing visible but the noses of these animals; but when they raised their bodies they moved very leisurely to the bank, and walked out into the meadow, in the same way as seen by Pharaoh, in his dream. — *Hegcock*.

5-7. (5) *dreamed . . time*, for reason of this recurrence see vs. 32. *seven . . stalk*, prob. the *triticum compositum*, or Egyptian wheat. (6) *sprung . . them*, prob. fr. the same stalk. (7) *thin . . ears*, the thin ears absorbing the others without increasing in bulk. *behold . . dream*, which dwelt in his memory and perplexed his mind.

"*East wind*." — It has been urged that this displays a gross ignorance of the nature of the climate in Egypt (Bohlen), since a wind directly east is rare in Egypt, and when it does occur is not injurious to vegetation; but it is open to reply (1) that direct east winds may be rare in Egypt, but so are dearth and famine such as that described in the narrative (Kalisch); (2) that the Hebrews having only names to describe the four principal winds, the *kadim* might comprise any wind blowing from an easterly direction (Hengstenberg); and (3) that the south-east wind is one of the most injurious winds (Hävernicks). — *Pulp. Com.*

8-13. (8) *troubled*, smitten as with a hammer; stunned. *magicians*, sacred scribes; professed interpreters of hidden things. *and . . Pharaoh*, God, the only revealer of secrets. (9) *faults*, whether his ingratitude to Joseph or offense against Pharaoh is not clear; perh. the latter. *day, time*

B. C. cir. 1715.

a glistering grief,
and wear a
golden sorrow."
— *Shakespeare*.

"Every anniversary of a birthday is the dispelling of a dream."
— *Zschokke*.

"I am satisfied that we are less convinced by what we hear than by what we say." — *Herodotus*.

Pharaoh's
dreams
—
the first
dream

"Animals of the buffalo kind in hot countries seem almost amphibious; they delight to stand for hours in the water, with their bodies immersed except the head."
— *Kitto*.

"Dr. Royle thinks that the word translated meadow is a plant, perhaps the *cyperus esculentus*, or some species of panicum which forms excellent pasture in warm countries." See Dr. Kitto, *Royal Dreams*, &c., in *Daily Bibl. Illus.* i. 411.

the second
dream

"The south-east wind, here called the east wind, blowing in March and April is one of the most injurious winds, and of longest continuance, while the shelter that Egypt has from it, by means of the Mokatten chain of mountains, is only partial." — *Hävernicks*.

Joseph is
remembered
by the butler
a Job. vii. 13, 14.
b Is. xlix. 14.

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"Memory can glean, but can never renew. It brings us joys faint as is the perfume of the flowers, faded and dried, of the summer that is gone."—*Beecher*.

"A scent, a note of music, a voice long unheard, the stirring of the summer breezes, may startle us with the sudden revival of long-for-gotten feelings and thoughts."—*Talfourd*.

Joseph is sent for

a Ps cxlii. 7; 1 S. ii. 8.

b Ps. xxv. 14.

c Da. ii. 20; Ac. iii. 12; 2 Co. iii. 5; Da. ii. 22, iv. 2. On the monuments, when it was intended to convey the idea of a man of low condition, he was represented with a beard.

Pharaoh relates his dreams to Joseph

"To make anything very terrible, obscurity seems, in general, to be necessary. When we know the full extent of any danger, a great deal of the apprehension vanishes."—*Burke*.

Joseph interprets the dreams

a Re. iv. 1.

"One might as well attempt to calculate mathematically the contingent forms of the tinkling bits of glass in a kaleidoscope as to look through the tube of the

Divinely chosen: memory Divinely prompted, (10, 11) The butler rehearses the prison incident. (12) Hebrew, the faith of Joseph prevented him fr. being ashamed of a name that was despised in Egypt. (13) restored, i. e., predicted the restoration, etc.

The remembrance of sin (vs. 9.)—I find in these words—I. The recognition of the true moral character of a past act. II. The confession of a sin. 1. The lateness of the confession. 2. The confession though late, was honest and full. III. The causes that led to this confession being made—"this day." Why this day? 1 An overruling Providence so ordered it; 2. The law of the association of ideas; Pharaoh's dream reminded the butler of his own.

Confession of sin difficult.—Many years ago, a minister put up for the night with a man who was supposed to possess but little of what people call "common sense." Just as he was about to retire for rest, the man said: "Tell me, sir, what three words in the English language it is the most difficult to pronounce?" "I don't know that I can," was the reply. "Well," said the man, "I'll give you till to-morrow morning to answer me." The minister thought no more of the question till it was proposed to him again in the morning, when he carelessly said he had not thought of it. "Then," said the man, "I will tell you. They are—I am wrong."—*Bib. Ill.*

14-16. (14) they . . hastily,^a *lit.* caused him to run. and . . Pharaoh having fitted himself for the king's presence. (15) that . . it,^b *lit.* thou wilt hear a dream to interpret it, i. e., the interpretation was to Joseph as easy as the hearing. (16) it . . me,^c modesty of Joseph comp. with presumption of astrologers. God, whom Joseph never forgets. give . . peace, an answer that will prove for the welfare of Pharaoh.

Joseph shaving himself.—"The fact of Joseph having shaved himself is in striking accord with the Egyptian custom, which was to let the beard and hair grow in mourning only—otherwise most scrupulously shaving; whereas the Hebrews cultivated the hair and beard and shaved in token of mourning. He changed his raiment, from the ordinary habit of the prison to that of ordinary life or even of festal rejoicing. The fact of his having it in his power to do so shews that he was not treated as ordinary prisoners are.—*Alford*.

17-24. (17, 18) See vs. 1-4. (19) such . . badness, where he must have seen many bad ones. (20) See vs. 4. (21) it . . them, etc., ill, so with some men who are not benefited by the best food—mental, spiritual. (22, 23) See vs. 5-7.

Pharaoh's dream: I. Apparently insignificant events may often grow into an important part of the world's history. II. God chooses the instruments of revelation according to His own good pleasure. III. God can suddenly arrest the attention of those who are the farthest removed from every earthly fear.—*T. H. Leale*.

Pharaoh's dreams.—It was happy for Pharaoh and for Egypt that the magicians confessed their incapacity to interpret this dream. Had they pretended to give some meaning to it out of the imagination of their own hearts, it is probable that he would have rested satisfied with it, and sought no further. Consequently when the seven years of plenty came, the abundance might have been spent in dissipation, and no provision made against the long and terrible famine. But when he was convinced that the mind of God was not with the magicians, he was forced to seek for light where he could find it. *Bush*.

25-28. (25) the . . one, i. e., one in purport. God . . do,^d the dream a picture of Divine Providence. (26) are, see xl. 12. (28) this, etc. i. e., I have told Pharaoh the Divine purpose only.

Mercy of God to heathen people (vs. 28).—I. This is seen in that He left not Himself without a witness among them (Ac. xiv. 7) as prophets (Jonah, Daniel), dreams (Pilate's wife, and here Pharaoh) II. Mercy to the heathen subservient to the cause of His own people. As now, a famine is revealed to forward the cause of Israel.

Joseph's boldness and directness.—The true prophet has no fear of man. He speaks the word which God hath given him, regardless of consequences. He is ready to reprove even kings—to utter truths, however unwelcome. It required some courage to enter upon the perilous task of announcing to

this Egyptian despot a famine of seven years. But Joseph had all the boldness of a man who felt that he was inspired by God. Joseph spoke out at once, without any hesitation. There was no shuffling to gain time; no muttering — no incantations, after the manner of heathen oracles and prophets. This simple and clear directness is the special characteristic of Holy Scriptures; and by which they are distinguished from the literature of the world, which upon the deepest and most concerning questions never reaches a stable conclusion. — *Hom. Com.*

29-32. (29) **plenty** . . **Egypt**, the largest corn producing country in the world at that time. (30) **all** . . **forgotten**, as past benefits are forgotten in present sorrow. **and** . . **land**,^a *i. e.* the people of the land. (31) **grievous**, *lit.* very heavy; yet Egypt was oft, called the granary of the world. (32) **doubled** . . **established**,^b repetitions in Scripture suggestive of confirmation of facts stated, also denote the nearness of the event.

Present trouble obliterating the memory of past mercy (vs. 30). — I. In the case before us. Care and hunger in time of famine induced forgetfulness of previous plenty. II. So in their troubles men forget their happy past. Jacob had had some bright seasons, yet called his days few and evil.

The nature of dreams. —

Know that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties, that serve;
Reason as chief: among these Fancy next
Her office holds: of all external things
Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, airy shapes,
Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm, or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion: then retires
Into her private cell, where nature rests.
Oft in her absence mimic Fancy wakes
To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams;
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late. — *Milton.*

33-36. (33) **now, etc.**, Joseph, taught of God, advises Pharaoh. **man**, whom Pharaoh was to choose, while God guides the king. **discreet, etc.**, suitable human qualities, fitting instruments of Divine Providence. **set** . . **Egypt**, a responsible official rather than an irresponsible and divided council. (34) **him** . . **land**, *i. e.* Pharaoh's viceroy to appoint *overseers*. **take** . . **part**, "which was double the annual impost exacted from Egyptian farmers, but which the unprecedented fertility of the soil enabled them to bear without complaint, if, indeed, adequate compensation was not given for the second tenth." — *Rosenmüller.* **in** . . **years**, *i. e.* year by year. (35) **hand**, authority. **and** . . **cities**, as fortified granaries, safe fr. clamorous and hungry mobs. (36) **food** . . **store**, prudential forethought an evidence of trust in Providence.

Joseph as the adviser of Pharaoh. — I. His presence of mind. Equal to the situation. II. The kindness and openness of his nature. III. His self-command. IV. His practical good sense. — *T. H. Leale.*

Self-imposed taxes — "Friends," says he, "the taxes are indeed very heavy; and, if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay; we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride, and four times as much by our folly; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot ease or deliver us by allowing an abatement. However, let us hearken to good advice, and something may be done for us; 'God helps them that helps themselves,' as poor Richard says." — *Franklin.*

37-40. (37) **good**, suitable to the occasion. **eyes**, judgment, opinion. (38) **can** . . **is**, his equal, not to say his superior. **in** . . **is**,^c since Pharaoh was an idolater a better rendering would be, "In whom is the spirit of the gods." (39) **God** . . **this**, the king acknowledges the source of Joseph's wisdom. **there** . . **art**, God being the special Teacher of no other. (40) **house, affairs.** **unto** . . **ruled**,^d *lit.* at thy mouth shall all my people kiss, *i. e.*

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future and foretell its pattern." — *Beecher.*

"Futurity is impregnable to mortal ken."

the famine predicted

a Ge. xlviii. 13.

b Nu. xxiii. 19; Is. xlvii. 10; 1 Ki. xi. 9; Job xxxiii. 14; Ps. lxii. 11.

"One month in the school of affliction will teach thee more than the great precepts of Aristotle in seven years; for thou canst never judge rightly of human affairs unless thou hast first felt the blows and found out the deceits of fortune." — *Fuller.*

Joseph's advice to Pharaoh

The counsel of Joseph stands good both in regard to earthly and heavenly things; and is all the more necessary, for men generally make a bad use of abundance.

vs. 38, *J. Saurin, Disc. Hist. i. 463; Bp. Mont. ii. 21; and ii. 1.*

Joseph is made viceroy of Egypt

c Nu. xxvii. 18; Job xxxii. 8; Pr ii. 6; Ps. lxxxiv. 11. d Job xxxi. 27; cf. 1 S. x. 1; 1 Ki. xix. 18; Ps. ii. 12.

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Leaders of men.—
“The greatest part
of men live by
faith in powerful
men. A small
number of indi-
viduals lead the
human race.”—
Vinet.

The saving hand
is full and benefi-
cent; the squan-
dering hand is not
only empty, but
unjust. — *Lange.*

Joseph's change of name and marriage

a Ps. cv. 21, 22.

b Est. iii. 10; Da.
v. 29; Ac. vii. 9, 10.

c Acc. to *Coptic*,
“a revealer of
secrets;” acc. to
Gesenius, “sus-
tainer of the age;”
acc. to *Vulgate*,
“the saviour of the
world;” prob. the
true meaning is,
“the food of the
living.”

d Jer. xlii. 13.

“Honors soften
fatigue. It is
easier riding in a
gilded and em-
bossed saddle.
Atlas, while he
sustains the
world upon his
shoulders, is him-
self sustained by
the admiration his
feat excites.”—
Bovee.

Joseph gathers the corn

e “In a tomb at
Beni Hassan is a

in token of reverence, submission, obedience. **only . . . thou, only** as to the kingly office; superior to every other subject.

Joseph's exaltation (vss. 39, 40).—Look at his exaltation—I. As considered in itself. Grounded in his destiny. Accomplished by his innocent sufferings and his good account. Carried out by God's grace and wisdom as a Divine miracle in His most special providence. Its principal object the preservation of Israel and of many nations. Its further object, Israel's education in Egypt. Its imperishable aim the glory of God, and the edification of the people of God by means of the fundamental principle,—through humiliation to exaltation. II. In its typical significance: the seal of Israel's guidance in Egypt, of the guidance of all the faithful.—*Lange.*

Ability discovered.—In 1831 there was a musical society in Milan which was preparing to bring out Haydn's “Creation,” when all of a sudden the *maestro* in charge took fright at the difficulty of his task, and laid down his bâton. One Massini, a singing teacher, who was to direct the choral part, said to the committee, “I know but one man here who can help us out of our plight.” “Who is he?” said Count Borromeo, the president. “His name is Verdi, and he reads the most puzzling scores at sight,” was Massini's answer. “Well,” said the count, “send for him.” Massini obeyed, and Verdi soon made his appearance. He was handed the score of “The Creation,” and he undertook to direct the performance. Rehearsals commenced, and the final rendering of the oratorio was set down as most creditable to all concerned. From that time Verdi's reputation was assured.—*One Thousand New Illustrations.*

41-45. set,^a *lit.* I have given, *i. e.* established. He is now vizier or prime minister. (42) ring,^b signet-ring, special symbol of authority. linen, *i. e.* the byssus or fine linen of Egypt: the priestly dress. chain, to denote distinction: mark of royal favor. (43) second . . . had, “which is another genuine Egyptian custom, for on the monuments the king consistently appears in his war-chariot.”—*Hävernick.* bow . . . knee, Heb. *abrech*, prob. an Egyptian word, similar in sound to the Hebrew word meaning “to kneel.”—*R. V., margin.* (44) lift . . . foot, proverbial expression for absolute universal authority. (45) Zaphnath--paaneah,^c (*rescuer of the world*). Asenath, (*she is of Neith*, the Egyptian Minerva). Potipherah (*devoted to Ra, i. e. the sun*). On, Heliopolis (*the city of the sun*) or Bethshemesh,^d on E. bank of Nile, few ms. N. of Memphis; a red granite obelisk still marks the site.

Joseph's advancement (vs. 41).—Observe—I. That we can be in no state, however desperate, from whence God cannot speedily deliver us. II. That God is never at a loss for means whereby to effect His gracious purposes. III. That we are never in a fairer way for exaltation to happiness than when we are waiting God's time, and suffering His will. Learn—To submit with cheerfulness to all the dispensations of providence.—*Simeon.*

Heliopolis.—Six or seven miles from Cairo, the eye lights on the spot where stood of old that On or Heliopolis, the far-famed city of the sun, the daughter of whose high-priest became the wife of Joseph. Some traces of the temple still remain. There is a pool of water, with a few willows weeping over it—that pool was the spring, or fountain of the sun. There is a solitary obelisk rising amid ruins, and surrounded by garden shrubs that have been growing wild for ages. That obelisk, and another, the base of which alone remains, confronted the ancient temple of On; and there it has stood for well-nigh four thousand years. It was there when Abraham came down into Egypt to escape the famine that desolated Canaan. It may have been beneath its shadow that Joseph first beheld his future wife Asenath. Often must Moses have stood beside it. . . . Herodotus makes mention of its existence: so that it was already old before any other history than that which the Bible contains had yet been written. Plato, the greatest of the sages of ancient Greece, made a pilgrimage to see it. It has survived the dynasties of the Pharaohs, the Ptolemies, and the Cæsars and bids fair to survive that of the Mohammeds too.—*Buchanan.*

46-49. (46) was . . . old, having now been thirteen years in Egypt went . . . Egypt, in discharge of his vice-regal duties. (47) handfuls,^e *i. e.* in great abundance. (48) food . . . same, that there might not be far to carry it, and for convenience of distribution. (49) sand . . . sea, image of great

abundance. **for . . number**, the quantity exceeded the power of Egyptian computation.

The young minister of state (vs. 46). — I. His rise to power. 1. Without influence or friends; 2. Through trial; 3. By force of character; 4. By the blessing of God. II. His administration. 1. For the time apparently oppressive: heavy taxation; 2. For the ultimate advantage of all. III. His title "the preserver of life." Compare with power, rule, and title of Christ.

The fertility of Egypt. — This I witnessed. I plucked up at random a few stalks out of the thick corn-fields. We counted the number of stalks, which sprouted from single grains of seed, carefully pulling to pieces each root, in order to see that it was but one plant. The first had seven stalks, the next three, the next nine, then eighteen, then fourteen. Each stalk would bear an ear. — *Jowett*.

50-52. (50) **two . . came**, *i. e.* during the yrs. of plenty. (51) **Manasseh** (*causing to forget*). **forget . . house**,^a not absolutely, but relatively; the pressure of his former affliction was relieved by his present happiness. (52) **Ephraim** (*doubly fruitful*). **for . . affliction**, the season of affliction oft. the time of spiritual fruitfulness.

Use of troubles. — "When in Amsterdam, Holland, last summer," says a traveler, "I was much interested in a visit we made to a place then famous for polishing diamonds. We saw the men engaged in the work. When a diamond is found it is rough and dark like a common pebble. It takes a long time to polish it, and it is very hard work. It is held by means of a piece of metal close to the surface of a large wheel which is kept going round. Fine diamond dust is put on this wheel, nothing else being hard enough to polish the diamond. And this work is kept on for months and sometimes several years before it is finished." Jesus calls His people His jewels. To fit them for beautifying His crown, they must be polished like diamonds, and He makes use of the troubles He sends to polish His jewels. — *Old Test. Anecdotes*.

53-57. (53) **ended**, times of prosperity intermittent. (54) **and . . lands**,^b they had no Joseph to instruct them. **but . . bread**, through the "preserver of life." (55) **people . . bread**, they had not prepared in the years of plenty. **go . . do**, a national reputation for wisdom and prudence. (56) **all . . earth**, *i. e.* the known world. **Joseph . . Egyptians**, filling the public treasury. (57) **all . . corn**, hunger drove men fr. great distances and through many difficulties; Canaan amongst these countries.

Joseph, the wise ruler. — I. The qualities demanded in a wise ruler. 1. Natural ability. 2. The ability to bear up under troubles. 3. Inspired wisdom. II. The character of Joseph's administration. 1. It was characterized by a wise economy. 2. It was characterized by a wise method. Frugality was to be enforced by lawful means. Joseph and his officers, scattered over all the empire, outgeneraled all the ignorance of the realm. For this he was as truly inspired as ever was Isaiah. — *D. O. Mears*.

Egyptian granaries. — These granaries appear to have been erected apart from the house, and enclosed within a separate wall. Some of them had vaulted roofs, which were filled through an aperture near the top, to which the men ascended by steps, and the grain, when wanted, was taken out from a door at the base. Several of this kind exist at old Cairo, the erection of which tradition ascribes to Joseph. The Romans formed granaries in seasons of plenty to secure food for the poorer citizens, and all who wanted it were provided with corn from these reservoirs in necessitous times. There were 120 such storehouses in Rome. Even in England, in the time of James I., twelve new granaries were built at Bridewell, in which 6,000 quarters of corn were stored, to prevent the sudden dearthness of this article arising from the very rapid increase of population." — *Bibl. Treas.*

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SECOND.

1-4. (1) **how . . saw**, *i. e.* perceived by the preparations others were making to buy corn in Egypt. — *Lange*. **why . . another?** in such a helpless and undecided manner. (2) **heard**, fr. passing caravans; he had prob. also seen his neighbors departing. **corn**, *lit.* a breaking. *i. e.* a breaking of hunger. (3) **and . . brethren**, Joseph is at present the principal character in the

B. c. cir. 1715.

painting of a storehouse, before the door of which lies a heap of grain already winnowed. Near by stands the bushel with which it is measured, and the registrar who takes the account." — *Kitto*.

birth of Manasseh and Ephraim

a Job xl. 16.

"The domestic relations precede and, in our present existence, are worth more than all our other social ties. They give the first throb to the heart and unseal the deep fountains of its love." — *Channing*.

the famine begins

b "In the year of the Hejira 444, a famine took place in Egypt on account of a deficiency in the increase of the Nile, which at the same time extended over Syria and even to Bagdad." — *Kitto*.

Although the area of Egypt capable of cultivation is about 16,000 sq. ms. only, E. was in ancient times one of the granaries of the world.

B. c. cir. 1707.

the sons of Jacob sent to buy corn

"The more weak-ness, the more

B. C. cir. 1707.

falsehood;
strength goes
straight; every
cannon-ball that
has in it hollows
and holes goes
crooked." —
Richter.

a Ge. xlii. 21.

"Fear hath the
common fault of a
justice of peace,
and is apt to con-
clude hastily from
every slight cir-
cumstance, with-
out examining the
evidence on both
sides." — *Felding.*

they are
recognized
by Joseph

b Ge. xxxvii. 7.

c Pr. xviii. 19.

"The Orientals
bring their fore-
head to the ground,
and before resum-
ing an erect posi-
tion, either kiss
the earth or the
feet or border of
the garment of the
king or prince,
before whom they
are allowed to ap-
pear." — *Kitto.*

Joseph
charges them
with being
spies

"Memory, like
books which re-
main a long time
shut up in the
dust, needs to be
opened from time
to time; it is neces-
sary, so to speak,
to open its leaves,
that it may be
ready in time of
need." — *Seneca.*

story. went . . Egypt, and to fulfil the dream. (4) Benjamin, the reason he did not go is prob. due to the fact that since Joseph's departure he had taken his place in his father's affection; not on acct. of his youth, since now he was a man and a father.^a lest . . him, twenty yrs. had not obliterated the memory of Joseph.

Forebodings of conscience. — It was not altogether the great calamity of famine that made them so helpless and afraid. Conscience was now awake and filled them with other fears. Why must they wait for Jacob to tell them that there was corn in Egypt, and to suggest the obvious course of going down thither to buy? They surely must have heard this, and have known that in their very neighborhood a caravan of travelers was already making preparation for that journey. (ver. 5.) The news that there was plenty of food in Egypt would naturally spread rapidly all over the country. Distress has a quick ear. Why, then, are Jacob's sons of all others the last to bestir themselves to seek help? Alas! to their guilty conscience, Egypt is a dreaded name, a threatening calamity, a foreboding evil. To them the road to Egypt is haunted by the memory of an awful crime. — *Hom. Com.*

5-8. (5) among . . came, fr. Canaan and elsewhere. (6) governor, "The word rendered governor, *Shalit*, is, except here, said to be only found in the books contemporary with and following the Captivity. *Salatis* is given by Josephus as the title of the first shepherd-king." — *Alford.* he . . sold, *i. e.* superintended the selling. bowed . . earth,^b the dream fulfilled. (7) spake . . them,^c *lit.* spake hard things with them. "What, then, were his motives for assuming this stern demeanor? Partly, no doubt, to obtain a much-desired information in respect to his father and his father's family, without prematurely making himself known, and partly to humble them by affliction, and bring them to a sense of the evil of dealing unjustly and harshly with himself." — *Bush.* said, to test their penitence. (8) Joseph . . brethren, prob. he was expecting them, since many others had come from Canaan. but . . him, they did not recognize the Heb. shepherd in the Egyptian prince.

Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him (vs. 8). — From the text, consider — I. Our heavenly Joseph's knowledge of us. This was most blessedly perfect long before we had a being in the world. He never mistook His chosen, but always beheld them as objects of His infinite affection. II. Our ignorance of our royal brother. Out of this ignorance grew a host of sins. We withheld our hearts from Him; we mistrusted Him, and we rebelled against Him. We have but begun to study Him, but He knoweth us altogether. — *Spurgeon.*

Joseph. — What must have been his feelings! The remembrance of the manner in which he parted from them two and twenty years ago, the events which had befallen him, their prostration before him, and the absence of Benjamin, from which he might be apprehensive that they also had made away with him — altogether must have been a great shock to his sensibility. Let him beware, or his countenance will betray him. He feels the danger of this, and immediately puts on a stern look, speaks roughly to them, and affects to take them for spies. By this innocent piece of artifice, he could interrogate them, and get out of them all the particulars that he wished without betraying himself, which he could not have done by any other means. — *Fuller.*

9-13. (9) remembered . . them, he had never forgotten, but now sees their fulfilment. ye . . come, "This dynasty, we are told by Manetho, was ever in fear of invasion from the then powerful Assyrians, and Josephus says that on that account they fortified the eastern side of Egypt. Hence men arriving from Asia, and especially Jacob's sons, who from their Chaldaic origin were more like the eastern Semitic peoples than Canaanites, might well arouse suspicion as to their being Assyrian spies." — *Alford.* (10) lord . . servants, "They were not filled with resentment at the imputation cast upon them by Joseph; or if they were angry, their pride was swallowed up by fear." — *Lawson.* (11) we, *etc.*, not likely that one man would allow ten of his sons to undertake the perilous duties of spies. (12) and, *etc.*, he professes not to be convinced, to lead to further explanations. (13) youngest . . father, they might have added, He will not trust him with us. and . . not, implying that he was dead, as prob. they believed him to be.

Ye are spies. — Such an imputation as this remains to this day, that to which a stranger is continually exposed in the East. The Orientals generally have

no idea that people will make a journey unless from urgent necessity, or on gainful speculations. Curiosity, or the desire of collecting information, are motives perfectly incomprehensible to them, and are always treated as shallow and childish pretenses. They ask triumphantly whether you have no trees, birds, animals, rivers, or ruins at home to engage your attention, that you should come so far to look for them. — *Bush*.

14—16. (14) *Joseph . . them*, he professes not to believe they are the sons of one man. His aim prob. was to bring them to a right state of mind. (15) *proved, tried, tested. by . . Pharaoh,*^a a strong asseveration.^b The Egyptians always swore by their king. *except . . hither*, he would assure himself of the safety of Benjamin. (16) *send . . you*, leaving them to select the messenger: whom he would perceive to be the son in whom the father had most confidence.

Joseph and his brethren (on *vss.* 14—24).—Consider some of the leading ideas suggested by these verses. — I. The unflinching fulfilment of the Divine word. Joseph's brethren bow before him. II. The reproaching power of a guilty conscience. III. The unerring certainty of the punishment of sin. IV. The suspicion that always attaches to men who have sinned greatly, whether they be guilty or not. V. The merciful love of injured virtue. — *W. S. Bailey*.

By the life of Pharaoh. — Extraordinary as the kind of oath which Joseph made use of may appear to us, it still continues in the East. Mr. Hanway says, the most sacred oath among the *Persians* is "by the king's head." And Thevenot says, "if they swear *by the king's head*, their oath is more authentic, and of greater credit, than if they swore by all that is most sacred in heaven and upon earth." — *Burder*.

17—20. (17) *together*, prob. because they were not willing to agree to his proposal. *ward . . days*,^c to promote repentance; and reflection. (18) *Joseph . . day*, he visits them in prison. *for . . God*,^d and will therefore be merciful: his fear of God spared them; their lack of it sacrificed him. (19) *let . . prison*, growing leniency; one would be accepted as a hostage. *go . . houses*, his thoughtful care of their families. (20) *so . . verified*, they may have wondered how he should know him to be their brother. *and . . so*, *i. e.* they agreed to do so.

The effect of mercy. — A soldier in our army heard of the severe sickness of his wife. He applied for leave of absence, but was refused. He left the army; but was retaken, and brought in as a deserter. He was tried, found guilty, and summoned before the commanding officer to receive his sentence. He entered the tent, saluted, and stood perfectly unmoved while the officer read his fearful doom, — "To be shot to death with musketry on the next Friday." Not a muscle of his face twitched, not a limb quivered. "I deserve it, sir," he replied respectfully: "I deserted from my flag. Is that all, sir?" "No," replied the officer: "I have something else for you;" and, taking another paper, he read aloud the doomed man's pardon. The undaunted spirit which severity had failed to move was completely broken down by clemency. He dropped to the ground, shaking, sobbing, and overcome; and, being restored to his regiment, proved himself grateful for the mercy shown him, and was soon promoted for good conduct.

21—24. (21) *we . . brother*,^e the end is accomplished; their consciences are awakened; they see in this the hand of a retributive providence. *saw . . hear*, this presents a vivid picture of the scene by the pit's mouth. *therefore . . us*,^f and is no more than we deserve. (22) *spake . . hear?* (see xxxvii. 21, 22). *therefore . . required*,^g this was in accordance with the Noachic law with which they must have been acquainted. (23) *knew . . them*, they addressed each other in Hebrew. *for . . interpreter*, as if he knew not their language. (24) *Simeon . . eyes*, passing over Reuben who had sought to save him, and taking the next eldest, who was among the guilty ones.

The memory of conscience. — I. It is sure to awaken, though it may slumber long. II. It is sometimes awakened by outward trouble. III. It is faithful and just. 1. In that it brings the past accurately to mind. 2. In that it connects the penalty with the sin. IV. It converts moral direction and remonstrance into reproach and upbraiding. Reuben became to his brethren what conscience becomes to the sinner. V. It reminds us of moral processes now at work in the world. God's searching providence is ever bringing past sins to light. — *T. H. Leale*.

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Joseph demands proof of their honesty

a Jas. v. 12.

b "Had he said, 'As the Lord liveth,' his speech would have betrayed him." — *Bush*.

"If we have need of a strong will in order to do good, it is more necessary still for us in order not to do evil."

he orders that one shall remain as hostage

c "I should have handled them more roughly." — *Luther*.

d Le. xxv. 43; Ne. v. 15.

"Be stirring as the time, be fire with fire, threaten the threatener, and outface the brow of bragging horror; so shall inferior eyes, that borrow their behaviors from the great, grow great by your example and put on the dauntless spirit of resolution." — *Shakespeare*.

Simeon is chosen

e Job xxxvi. 8, 9; Nu. xxxii. 23; Hos. v. 15.

f Pr. xxviii. 13; xxi. 13; Ma. vii. 2; Jas. ii. 13.

g Ge. ix. 5; Ps. ix. 12.

"He who is conscious of secret and dark designs, which, if known, would blast him, is perpetually shrinking and dodging from public observation, and is afraid of all

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around him, and much more of all above him."—*Wirt.*

"Think not that guilt requires the burning torches of the Furies to agitate and torment it. Their own frauds, their crimes, their remembrances of the past, their terrors of the future,—these are the domestic furies that are ever present to the mind of the impious."—*R. Hall.*
 "Let wickedness escape as it may at the bar, it never fails of doing justice upon itself, for every guilty person is his own hangman."—*Seneca.*

they find the money in the sack's mouth

a Ma. v. 44, 45; Ro. xii. 17-21.

b Gk "their heart was astonished;" Chal., the knowledge of their heart departed."

"Conscience is, at once, the sweetest and most trouble-some of guests. It is the voice which demanded Abel of his brother, or that celestial harmony which vibrated in the ears of the martyrs and soothed their sufferings."—*M de Swetshine.*

they relate their adventures to Jacob

c Pr. xiii. 15, xxii. 1.

"Fear is implanted in us as a preservative from evil; but its duty, like that of other passions, is not to overbear reason, but to assist it; nor should it be suffered to tyrannize in the imagination, to raise phantoms of horror or to beset life with supernumerary distress."—*Johnson.*

The memory of sin.—A rich landlord once cruelly oppressed a poor widow. Her son, a little boy of eight years, saw it. He afterwards became a painter, and painted a life-likeness of the dark scene. Years afterwards he placed it where the man saw it; he turned pale, trembled in every joint, and offered any sum to purchase it, that he might put it out of sight. Thus there is an invisible painter drawing on the canvas of the soul a life-likeness reflecting correctly all the passions and actions of our spiritual history on earth. Eternity will reveal them to every man. We must meet our earth-life again.
A burdened memory.—A dying man, floating about on the wreck of the *Central American*, thought he heard his mother's voice saying, "Johnny, did you take your sister's grapes?" Thirty years before his sister was dying of consumption, and he had secretly eaten some choice grapes sent her by a friend. For twenty years the words had passed from his recollection. What have we really forgotten?—*Bib. Ill. Conscience reviewing.*—When it comes night, and the streets are empty, and the lights are out, and the business and the driving and gaiety are over, and the pall of sleep is drawn over the senses, and the reason and the will are no longer on the watch, then, conscience comes out solemnly, and walks about in the silent chambers of the soul, and makes her survey, and her comments; and sometime sits down and sternly reads the records of a life that the waking man would never look into, and the catalogue of crimes that are gathering for the judgment.
 —*Cheever.*

25—28. (25) sacks, Heb. *vessels*, i. e. any article in wh. grain might be carried. restore . . sack, Joseph "feels it impossible to bargain with his father and his brethren for bread."—*Baumgarten.* and . . way,^a over and above what they had purchased. (26) they . . thence, leaving Simeon behind, and oppressed with the memory of strange treatment. (27) inn, *lit.* lodging-place, prob. camping-ground, not *caravanserai* or *chan*, wh. prob. did not at that time exist. (28) their . . failed,^b *lit.* went out, i. e. they had no courage left. what . . us? in all that had happened they saw the finger of God.

Demetrius and the Athenians.—It is related of Demetrius (surnamed the *Conqueror of Cities*), that having received a marked and undoubted provocation, he laid siege to the city of Athens. The inhabitants made a desperate resistance; but were at last obliged to surrender, in consequence of great scarcity of provisions. Demetrius then ordered them, with the exception of the women and children, to be assembled together in one place, and to be surrounded with armed soldiers. Every one was in the greatest fear, conscious how much they had injured him, and expecting every moment to be put to death. It is not surprising that they were overwhelmed with joy and admiration, when they heard him with a magnanimity honorable to human nature, thus address them:—"I wish to convince you, O Athenians, how ungenerously you have treated me; for it was not to an enemy that your assistance was refused, but to a prince that loved you, who still loves you, and who wishes to revenge himself only by granting your pardon, and being still your friend. Return to your own homes: while you have been here my soldiers have been filling your houses with provisions."

29—34. (29) told . . them, in Egypt and on the way. (30—33) see *vss.* 9—16. (34) so . . land, the deliverance of their brother was to secure their return to Egypt. It is noticeable that they say nothing of Joseph's first proposal, and that they do not mention the name of Simeon; prob. they desired to soften the blow as much as possible.

The ridiculousness of fear.—My friend Jones told me, that after several months of extremely hard headwork, which had lowered his nervous system, he found himself getting into a way of vaguely dreading what might come next, and often received his letters in the morning with many anticipations of evil. But, happily, a friend came to visit him who carried all this about a hundred degrees farther; who had come through all his life expecting at least an earthquake daily, if not the end of the world. And Jones was set right. In the words of Wordsworth, "He looked upon him, and was calmed and cheered." Jones saw how like a fool his friend seemed, and there came a healthy reaction; and he opened his letter-box bravely every morning, and was all right again. Yes: let us see the Helot drunk, and it will teach us to keep sober. My friend Gray told me, that, for some little space, he felt a growing tendency to scrubbiness in money matters; but, having witnessed

pinning and paring (without the least need for them) carried to a transcendent degree by some one else, the very name of economy was made to stink in his nostrils; and he felt a mad desire to pitch half-crowns about the streets wherever he went. In this case the reaction went too far; but, in a week or two, Gray came back to the middle course, which is the safest and best. — *Boyd*.

35-38. (35) **sack**, Heb., *sack*, same word as in Eng. **afraid**, full of apprehension. (36) **bereaved**, he connects them with the absence of Joseph and Simeon. **ye . . away**, farther than Egypt he suspected. **against**, *lit.* upon me, *i. e.* a burden too heavy to bear. "A great portion of our present trouble arises from our not knowing the whole truth." — *Bush*. (37) **saying, etc.**, "However well meant, this was a rash speech on the part of Reuben. When men use this kind of language, their words are scarcely to be understood in the literal sense. They are only strong assertions, tinged with somewhat of a profane levity of mind. It does not become the lips of a serious man to say, 'I will give you leave to take away my life unless I do this or that.'" — *Bush*. (38) **alone**, of the children of his dear Rachael. **gray hairs**,^b he would have them consider the few comforts left him in his old age.

The smiling face behind the frowning providence. — I. We have unqualified assurance that God is the friend of His people, and that He is directing and controlling all things for their highest good. Why, then, should we ever fall into despair? II. We have the evidence of God's love to us in the death of His Son on our behalf. We may, therefore, rest satisfied that He will not harm us by any of the events of His providence. There are not two Gods, one of providence and one of grace. III. We have the testimony of many of God's people to the fact that those things which were apparently hardest in their lots, were after all most blessed to them. IV. You may find from your own past experience that your trials will end in your spiritual profit. — *W. M. Taylor*.

The lost boat. — A South Sea islander who had been converted through the efforts of a good missionary, was once attempting to cross from one island to another, when a gale arose and swept him far out at sea. For eight weeks he was tossed up and down, enduring the greatest privations and sufferings; but at last his boat was thrown upon a reef, and he and three surviving companions were saved. The natives of the island showed them great kindness, and with hearts overflowing with thankfulness to God for His wonderful preservation, they were ready to proclaim His Word to these willing listeners. He preached Christ to them faithfully, and began schools, all the time praying earnestly for a missionary to be sent to them. As early as he could he went to the island of Samoa, six hundred miles away; and told them of this field the Lord had so wonderfully opened. They sent a good missionary back with him and two native helpers, and what was their surprise and pleasure to find that all spoke the Samoan language. They could go to work at once, and teach them to read the Bibles and tracts prepared in the dialect of that island. What a blessing that little wrecked boat cast up on their shores had brought to them. How wonderfully God works, by all the agents of nature to accomplish His pleasure with regard to Christ's kingdom. He had guided that little bark in all its wanderings. He had preserved it amidst all dangers. He had even selected the two men who were to be preserved alive in it, and who were to proclaim His Gospel in that still darkened land. So our seeming disasters often work out the highest good for ourselves as well as others.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-THIRD.

1-5. (1) **famine . . land**, the seven years dragged slowly on. (2) **and . . pass**, we have no means of determining how long after their return this was, since we have no account of the quantity they brought or the numbers that ate, but prob. some months elapsed. **go . . food**, he said not a word of Benjamin. (3) **Judah, Reuben having tried ineffectually. did . . protest**, *lit.* protesting he protested; even with an oath (*see* Gen. xlii. 15). (4) **if . . we, etc.**, the only condition on which they would undertake the journey. (5) **but if, etc.**, we may as well perish in Canaan as in Egypt.

Famines in the East. — Twice only, in the eleventh and in the twelfth cen-

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"Fear is far more painful to cowardice than death to true courage."
— *Sir P. Sidney*.

Jacob's complaint

a 1 S. xxvii. 1; Job vii. 7; xlii. 10; Ps. xxxiv. 19; Ro. viii. 28; 2 Co. iv. 17. 6 Is. xli. 4.

"Misfortune is never mournful to the soul that accepts it; for such do always see that every cloud is an angel's face. Every man deems that he has precisely the trials and temptations which are the hardest of all others for him to bear; but they are so, simply because they are the very ones he most needs." — *Mrs. Childs*.

"Misfortune makes of certain souls a vast desert through which rings the voice of God." — *Balsac*.

"It is seldom that God sends such calamities upon man as men bring upon themselves and suffer willingly." — *Bp. J. Taylor*.

"Is a man placed in great difficulty, and does he make a solemn promise, in which another person is also involved; he will say, 'A! if I do not this thing, then kill my children.' 'Yes, my lord, my children shall die if I do not accomplish this object.' 'A! my children, your lives are concerned in this matter.'" — *Roberts*.

Jacob proposes the return of his sons to Egypt

"If all men would bring their misfortunes together in one place, most would be glad to take his own home

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again, rather than to take a proportion out of the common stock."—*Solon.*

"There is a certain sort of man whose doom in the world is disappointment, and whose luckless triumphs in his meek career, I have often thought, must be regarded by the kind eyes above with as much favor as the splendid success of coarser and more prosperous men."—*Thackeray.*

they demand
the company
of Benjamin

α Phil. 18, 19.

"Every human being has a work to carry on within, duties to perform abroad, influences to exert which are peculiarly his, and which no conscience but his own can teach."—*Channing.*

"Much misconstruction and bitterness are spared to him who thinks naturally upon what he owes to others, rather than what he ought to expect from them."—*Mde. Guizot.*

"The margin has, for, words, 'mouth.' Send a messenger with a message to deliver, and ask him on his return what he said, he will reply, 'According to your mouth!'"—*Roberts.*

Jacob
consents,
and sends a
present

turies of the Christian era, such a catastrophe is described by Arabian historians, in terms which give us a full conception of the calamity from which Joseph delivered the country. The first lasted, like that of Joseph, for seven years. Of the other the most fearful details are given by an eye-witness:—"Thus the year presented itself as a monster, whose wrath must annihilate all the resources of life and all the means of subsistence. The famine began. Large numbers emigrated. The poor ate carrion, corpses, and dogs. The eating of human flesh became so common as to excite no surprise. As for the number of the poor who perished from hunger and exhaustion, God alone knows what it was. A traveler often passed through a large village without seeing a single living inhabitant. In one village we met the families of each house extended dead, the husband, the wife, and the children. We were here reminded of the text of the Koran, "One single cry was heard," and "they all perished." The road between Egypt and Assyria was like a vast field sown with human bodies or rather like a plain which has just been swept by the scythe of the mower. It had become as a banquet-hall for the birds, wild beasts, and dogs, which gorged on their flesh." These are but a few of the horrors which Abd-el-Latif details, and which may explain to us how "the land of Egypt fainted by reason of the famine."—*Stanley.*

6-10. (6) Israel, he who *prevailed* with God argues ineffectually with man. (7) *asked, lit.* asking he asked, *i. e.* close scrutiny." *state . . brother*, this the first we hear of Joseph's inquiries. *we . . tenor, lit. acc. to the mouth, i. e.* as to the nature of his questions. *could . . know*, had they known it they would have made fewer admissions; they could not foresee the use which would be made of this information. (8) *lad*, Heb. not *yeled*, lad; but *naar*, young man. *die . . ones*, better the life of one to be in peril than the lives of many. (9) *surety*, while Reuben pledged his children, Judah pledged himself. *bear . . blame, lit.* I will be a sinner to thee. He would consent to be reputed guilty of his plighted faith. (10) *lingered*, through fear or through the consciousness that it would be a mere "fool's errand" without Benjamin. *surely . . time*, wh. shows that they had eked out to the utmost the corn previously bought.

Israel's character.—We here (*vss.* 6-14) recognize Israel's character, especially in the following traits: I. Not to his other sons does he entrust Benjamin, not even to Reuben, but only to Judah, whose honesty and strength seem to inspire him with courage. II. He again employs his old weapon, the sending of presents; this time sending quality, not quantity. III. With a severe uprightness does he require his sons to return the money found in their sacks. IV. He entrusts to them Benjamin *as their brother*. V. He commits himself to the protection of Almighty God. VI. He resigns himself to God's providence, even at the risk of becoming childless. — *Lange.*

Anxious fear.—It is curious to think how often these needless fears, which cause so much unnecessary anxiety and misery are the result of pure miscalculation. I have a friend who told me this. When he was married, he had exactly five hundred pounds a year, and no means of adding to that income. So, as he could not increase his income, his business was to keep down his expenditure below it. But neither he nor his wife knew much about household management; and he was a good deal victimized by his servants. After doing all he could to economize, he found, at the end of the third month of his financial year, that he had spent exactly one hundred and twenty-five pounds. Four times one hundred and twenty-five pounds he calculated, made six hundred pounds a year; which was just one hundred more than he had got. So the debtor's prison appeared to loom in view, or some total change in his mode of life, which it seemed almost impossible for him to make without very painful circumstances; and for weeks the thought almost drove him distracted. At length, one day, brooding over his prospects, he suddenly discovered that four times one hundred and twenty-five made just five hundred, and not six hundred; so that all his fears were groundless. — *Boyd.*

11-14. (11) *best . . land, lit.* of the song of the land, *i. e.* that on account of which the land was praised; "fruits celebrated in song." *balm*, see xxxvii. 25. *honey*, prob. not of bees, but juice of grapes boiled down to syrup. *spices . . myrrh*, see xxxvii. 25. *nuts*, pistachia-nuts. "These are the same (excepting in two cases) with the articles conveyed to Egypt by the Ishmaelites (Gen. xxxvii. 25). These are articles that grow best in a drought."

— *Jacobus*. (12) **take . . money**, *lit.* money of repetition. **oversight**, rather than a design as feared at first. (13) **take . . brother**, a reluctant consent. (14) **Almighty**,^a all things possible to God. **mercy**, *lit.* bowels, the inward parts were considered to be the seat of the emotions. **bereaved, etc.**, blending of sorrow and resignation.

The pressure of want, and its power in the hands of Providence. — I. How inexorable in its demands. Jacob is to deliver up Benjamin. II. How full of grace in its designs. By it alone can Jacob's house be delivered from the burden of deadly guilt. — *Lange*.

Bereaved indeed. — That Joseph was not dead, after all, makes no difference in our estimate of the father's grief. Entirely convinced of the death, as entire was his fellow-feeling with a modern's note of explanation, varying in but one little word, after allowing for the difference of an unrecovered and unburied corpse —

“ But he is in his grave, and oh,
The difference to me!”

And therefore did he not only refuse to be comforted when all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he declared that he would go down into the grave unto his son mourning.

“ It is too true an evil; gone he is;
And what's to come of my despised time
Is nought but bitterness.”

15-18. (15) **and . . Joseph**, with the evidence of their truthfulness. (16) **bring . . home**, they are now taken to Joseph's house. **slay**, *lit.* kill a killing. “ The objection which has been here found, that the higher castes of the Egyptians ate no animal food, only shows the ignorance of the objectors. We know abundantly from Herodotus and other authorities that it was only from certain animals that the royal and priestly castes abstained, and only certain among them that abstained altogether; and the eating of birds was general.” — *Alford*. (17) **man . . house**, they become the guests of their banished brother. (18) **afraid . . house**, “ A more natural picture of the conduct of men from the country, when taken into the house of a superior, cannot be drawn. When they are told to go inside they at once suspect that they are about to be punished or confined.” — *Roberts*.

Joseph's brethren under the influence of a guilty fear. — I. They dread some great misfortune. They are driven to Egypt by a dire necessity. A presentiment of disaster weighs upon their hearts. They expect no favorable solution of their mysterious treatment. II. They are possessed by an inveterate spirit of mistrust. They interpret adversely even the most favorable appearances. The generous reception which was given them only serves to raise their worst suspicions and to alarm their fears. They cannot get rid of the belief that Joseph meant to entrap them by a cunning device. III. They are haunted by the memory of an old crime. They are innocent respecting this money in their sacks, and yet they feel themselves to be guilty men. Conscience makes cowards of them everywhere.” — *T. H. Leale*.

19-25. (19) **steward . . house**, the slave has now servants under him in his own house. **they . . house**, fearing to enter. (20) **O sir, etc.**, they wished to clear themselves of all suspicion. (21) **we . . sacks**, we have read that they opened one sack; we cannot say, however, that they gave a false account. **our . . weight**, not rejected because deficient. **we . . hand**, as not belonging to us. (22) **we . . sacks, i. e.**, we did not purloin it. (23) **and he said, etc.**, the steward was evidently in his master's secret. **God . . father**, a supposition that Joseph had taught his steward in the fear and trust of the Hebrew God. **I . . money, i. e.**, “ you cannot be called to account for the money, for I had it. Whatever became of it afterwards, I hereby acknowledge the receipt of it for the corn. You are credited with payment in full; therefore give yourselves no uneasiness on that score.” — *Bush*. **he . . them**, happy reunion of the brothers. (24) **water . . feet**, cust. rite of hospitality.^a (25) **ready**, arranged it. **present, see vs. 11. heard . . there, prob.** were informed by the steward.

The money found in the sacks. — According to this verse, the sons of Jacob tell Joseph's steward that they had opened their sacks at the inn, and found every man's money then, whereas it would seem, from the account in chap.

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a Ne. i. 11; Ps. xxxvii. 5.

“ The iron hand of necessity commands, and her stern decree is supreme law, to which the gods even must submit. In deep silence rules the uncounselling sister of eternal fate. Whatever she says upon thee, endure; perform whatever she commands.” — *Gibbs*.

“ When God will educate a man, He compels him to learn bitter lessons. He sends him to school to the necessities rather than to the graces, that by knowing all suffering he may know also the eternal consolations.” — *Celia Burleigh*.

Joseph invites his brethren to dine with him

b Ps. liiii. 5.

“ What a strange thing an old dead sin laid away in a secret drawer of the soul is! Must it some time or other be moistened with tears, until it comes to life again?” — *Holmes*.

they tell Joseph's steward the story of the money

c Ge. xviii. 4; xxiv. 32.

“ It is with honesty in one particular as with wealth — those that have the thing care less about the credit of it than those who have it not. No poor man can well afford to be thought so, and the less of honesty a finished rogue

B C. cir. 1707.

possesses the less he can afford to be supposed to want it."—*Colton*.

Joseph inquires concerning his father

"It is proof of boorishness to confer a favor with a bad grace. How little does a smile cost!"—*La Bruyère*.

"He gives not best that gives most; but he gives most who gives best. If then I cannot give bountifully, yet I will give freely; and what I want in my hand, supply by my heart,"—*A. Warwick*.

Joseph recognizes Benjamin

a Jer xxxi. 20; 1 Ki. iii. 26.

"Joy is the happiness of love. It is love exulting. It is love aware of its own felicity, and resting in riches, which it has no fear of exhausting. It is love taking a view of its treasures, and surrendering itself to bliss without foreboding."—*Rev. J. Hamilton*.

the banquet and Benjamin's mess

b Ex. viii. 26.

c Ge. xli. 34; xlv. 22; xlvii. 2, 24; Is xix. 18.

"The reason is stated to have been that the Egyptians recognized only five planets,"—*Alford*.

xlii., only one sack was opened at the inn, and the rest found their money on opening their sacks at home. Keil observes that there is no real difficulty. The one sack opened at the inn had the money in its mouth, the rest, surprised at this, also opened their sacks, but found no money; it was only on emptying their sacks that they discovered theirs. So he proposes to translate, "A man's money was in the mouth of his sack"—every not being in the Hebrew.

26-28. (26) bowed . . earth, dream fulfilled once more. (27) Is . . well? *lit.* is there peace to your father? (28) they . . alive, good news fr. a far country. bowed . . obeisance, token of respectful homage.

Joseph's banquet:—1. The banquet of Joseph's joy, of his hope, of his trying watch. 2. The feast of reviving hope in Joseph's brethren. 3. Their participation without envy in the honoring of Benjamin. 4. An introduction to the last trial, and a preparation for it. 5. The successful issue in the fearful proving of Israel's sons.—*J. P. Lange*.

Joseph and his brethren.—In all Joseph's treatment of his brethren in Egypt up to this point, there was nothing arbitrary or unkind. It was throughout justified by the circumstances as they appeared. Joseph was always ready to listen to reason, and to give due consideration to any explanation that might be offered. He was considerate and patient towards these suspicious men in giving them time to clear themselves. This steward reflected so much of his master's character that he was also considerate and patient in his treatment of these men. The circumstances were suspicions, and they felt that their conduct needed an explanation. He listened to them in the spirit of a just and merciful man. Most men of his class are full of the insolence of office; but here was a man of a better sort, and chiefly made such, as we have reason to believe, through the good influence of his master.—*Hom. Com.*

29-31. (29) God . . son, express, denoting not diff. of age but rank. Benjamin was but one year old when Joseph was sold. (30) bowels, *a. i. e.* heart, feelings (*see on* xliii. 14). he . . there, privacy: tears of joy. This is the second time that his emotions overcome him (*see* xlii. 24). (31) he . . face, to remove signs of tears. and . . himself, regaining his self-composure. set on bread, an expression among modern Egyptians for bringing dinner.

Joseph's state of soul at the appearance of Benjamin (*vs.* 30).—I. His joy. II. His deep emotion. III. His doubt, and the modes of testing it. 1. His joy. 2. The cup; 3. The claim to Benjamin. If at the first meeting with his brethren Joseph had to struggle with his ill-humor, he has now to contend with the emotions of fraternal love.—*Lange*.

Eastern salutations.—"The forms of salutation in the East wear a much more serious and religious air than those in use among the nations of Europe. 'God be gracious unto thee, my son,' were the words which Joseph addressed to his brother Benjamin. In this country, it would be called a benediction; but Chardin asserts, that in Asia, it is a simple salutation, and used there instead of those offers and assurances of service which it is the custom to use in the West. The Orientals, indeed, are exceedingly eloquent in wishing good and the mercy of God on all occasions to one another, even to those they scarcely know; and yet their compliments are as hollow and deceitful as those of any other people."—*Paxton*.

32-34. (32) set . . himself . . themselves . . Egyptians, Joseph keeps strictly to the Egyptian mode; the law of caste separated Joseph also from the other Egyptians. Egyptians . . Hebrews. *i. e.* it was contrary to custom wh. is "the king of men." that . . Egyptians, who regarded peculiar religious ceremonies in eating. Prob. Joseph had respect to the feelings of his brethren.^b (33) and . . sat, unlike other Orientals who reclined at meals, the Egyptians sat, as is indicated also by the monuments. firstborn . . youth, they were arranged acc. to age. men . . another, wondering how their age had been discovered. (34) five, the Egyptian special number.^c drank . . merry, *lit.* they drank freely.

Mysterious selections (*vs.* 34).—Some persons in the world have five times as much as others. These differences in human circumstances—I. Often excite wonder. II. Are often the effect of a Divine purpose. III. Need not prevent the real enjoyment of those who have least; they all "were merry," yet only one had the sign of great favor.

A brother's kindness. — As one of the water-bearers at the fountain of the Faubourg St. Germain, in Paris, was at his usual labors, in 1766, he was taken away by a gentleman in a splendid carriage, who proved to be his own brother, and who, at the age of three years, had been carried to India, where he acquired considerable wealth. On his return to France, he had made inquiry respecting his family; and hearing that he had only one brother alive, and that he was in the humble condition of a water-bearer, he sought him out, embraced him with great affection, and brought him to his house, where he gave him bills for upwards of a thousand crowns per annum.—*Anec. on Old Test.*

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"A well-governed appetite is a great part of liberty."
— *Seneca.*

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FOURTH.

1-5. (1) *steward . . house, lit.* him that was over his house. (2) *cup,*^a bowl. *he . . spoken,* the steward was in Joseph's confidence. (3) *soon . . light,* that they might travel in the cool of the day. With joyful spirits they went; Simeon was restored and Benjamin was safe. The . . away, the failure of Joseph to reveal himself was not due to callousness, but the brethren had not been sufficiently tested. (4) *when . . city,* so that the event would not be publicly observed. *wherefore . . good,* reminding them of the good they had received fr. Joseph, (5) *divineth.*^b

The more haste the less speed (vs. 3).—I. The hasty start: 1. Early morning: 2. Glad to leave Egypt behind; 3. Hopes of soon arriving at home; 4. Joy at success of their mission. Benjamin safe. II. The unexpected overtaking: 1. The race is not to the swift; 2. Man proposes, God disposes; 3. Providence sometimes checks the rapid progress of men.

Divining cups.—This cup or goblet, which is described as a well-known possession of Joseph's, is called a divining vessel. The word literally means to "whisper" or "mutter incantations," and it was applied to a kind of divination which proceeded by signs or symbols. There were two ways in which the goblet was used. In the first, they poured clean water into it, and then looked into the water for representations of future events. In the second, they filled the vessel with water, and then dropped into it pieces of gold, silver, or precious stones, and, by the appearances which these produced, prognostics were formed. — *Delitzsch.*

Joseph orders his cup to be put into Benjamin's sack

^a "The Egyptians drank out of brazen cups." — *Havernick.*

^b "Not that Joseph practised any kind of divination; but as the whole transaction was merely intended to deceive his brethren for a short time, he might as well affect divination by his cup, as he affected to believe they had stolen it." — *Clarke.*

6-9. (6) *spake . . words,* with assumed roughness of manner. (7) *God . . thing,* they professed to live in the fear of God. (8) *behold, etc.,* they appeal in self-vindication to this proof of honesty. (9) *both . . bondmen,* so vehement of their honesty, and so thoughtless of the terrible consequences.

Scrupulous honesty. — A Russian was traveling from Tobolsk to Beresow. On the road, he stopped over night at the hut of an Ostiack. In the morning, on continuing his journey, he discovered that he had lost his purse, containing about one hundred rubles. The son of the Ostiack, a boy of fourteen years of age, found the purse while out hunting; but, instead of taking it up, he went and told his father, who was equally unwilling to touch it, and ordered the boy to cover it with some bushes. A few months after, the Russian returned, and stopped at the same hut; but the Ostiack did not recognize him. He related the loss he had met with. The Ostiack listened very attentively; and, when he had finished, "You are welcome," said he. "Here is my son, who will show you the spot where it lies. No hand has touched it but the one which covered it, that you might recover what you had lost." — *Percy.*

they are pursued and charged with theft

"Honest policy is a good friend both to our safety and to our usefulness."

"If the thing you desire be good, I will do it without any bribe, because it is good; if it be not honest, I will not do it for all the goods in the world." — *Epaminondas.*

10-13. (10) *now . . words,* rash speech taken advantage of. (11) *speedily,* with the promptitude of conscious honesty. (12) *began . . youngest,* though he knew where it was: he keeps up the appearance of justice. *and . . sack,* just where it had been placed. There is considerable method on the part of the steward in seemingly being ignorant of the scheme. (13) *they . . clothes,* overwhelmed with sorrow and wonder that the cup was found at all, and more especially here. *laded . . city,* though at liberty to depart they would learn the fate of Benjamin.

The final trial of Joseph's brethren. — I. The severity of the trial. 1. It was unexpected. 2. It exposed them to the agony of suspense between hope and fear. 3. They were conscious of innocence. 4. The trial touched them in the sorest place. 5. The bringing them into their present difficulty seemed to

the cup is found

"The next natural beauty in the world is honesty and moral truth. For all beauty is truth." — *Shaftesbury.*

When God comes to turn the bottom of the bag upwards, all will be

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out. Sin not, therefore, in hope of secrecy; at the last day all packs shall be opened.—*Trapp.*

"Honest and courageous people have very little to say about either their courage or their honesty. The sun has no need to boast of his brightness, nor the moon of her effulgence." *H. Ballou.*

they are brought before Joseph

a Nu. xxxii. 23.

"The sacred cup is a symbol of the Nile, into whose waters a golden and silver patera were annually thrown."—*Piny.*

"Honesty needs no disguise nor ornament. Be plain."—*Otway.*

Judah's intercession

b Ge. xxxvii. 3.

"Has a beloved son been long absent, does the father anxiously desire to see him, he says, 'Bring him, bring him. that the course of my eyes may be upon him.' 'Ah, my eyes, do you again see my son? Oh, my eyes, is

have the sanction of religion. 6. They regard their case as hopeless. II. The purpose of the trial. 1. To stir up their consciences to the depths. 2. To show whether they were capable of receiving forgiveness.—*T. H. Leale.*

Money in the sack.—Frederick, King of Prussia, one day rung his bell, and nobody answering, he opened his door, and found his page fast asleep in an elbow chair. He advanced towards him and was going to awaken him, when he perceived part of a letter hanging out of his pocket. His curiosity prompting him to know what it was, he took it out and read it. It was a letter from this young man's mother, in which she thanked him for having sent her a part of his wages to relieve her misery; and finished with telling him that God would reward him for his dutiful affection. The king, after reading it, went back softly into his chamber, took a bag full of ducats, and slipped it with the letter into the page's pocket. Returning to the chamber, he rang the bell so loudly, that it awakened the page, who instantly made his appearance. "You have had a sound sleep," said the king. The page was at a loss how to excuse himself; and putting his hand into his pocket by chance, to his utter astonishment, he there found a purse of ducats. He took it out, turned pale, and looking at the king, shed a torrent of tears without being able to utter a single word. "What is that," said the king, "What is the matter?" "Ah, sire," said the young man, throwing himself on his knees, "somebody seeks my ruin! I know nothing of this money, which I have just found in my pocket." "My young friend," replied Frederick, "God often does great things for us, even in our sleep. Send that to your mother; salute her on my part, and assure her that I will take care of both her and you."—*Mor. and Relig. Anecdotes.*

14-17. (14) for . . there, awaiting their return, and . . ground, "Thus," says an ancient father, "they bow down to him whom they sold into slavery lest they should bow down to him." (15) wot . . divine? he "here adapts himself and his language to his character as it would naturally appear in the eyes of his brethren."—*Spk. Com.* "Though Joseph uses this language, and is represented by his steward as possessing a divining cup, there is no reason to suppose that he was in the habit of practicing this heathen superstition."—*Pulp. Com.* (16) Judah, as esp. interested in the safety of Benjamin because he was responsible for him. what . . ourselves? his words show the utmost perturbation of mind. iniquity,^a he cannot regard this as an accident, nor perceive any human purpose. we . . found, they will not separate themselves fr. Benjamin. (17) God . . so, punish the innocent with the guilty. but . . found, and he alone. he . . servant, Benjamin, to whose safety they were pledged. get . . father, without Benjamin as once they had gone without Joseph. Thus they were once more tested as to whether they could, as before, callously deliver up their father's favorite, and so bring down the grey hairs of their father to the grave, or would heroically and self-sacrificingly offer their own lives and liberties for his protection. How nobly they stood the test Judah's pathetic supplication reveals."—*Pulp. Com.*

Prostration.—In 1823 two globe lamps were stolen from the Wesleyan chapel in Trincomalee. Being convinced that it was some of the workmen, the constable was directed to fetch the men immediately. About ten o'clock at night they were all brought on the premises. Seeing one of them much agitated, I inquired of him if he did not think I knew something about it. He fell at my feet like a person dead, and cried out, "True! true! I have done it! I have done it!"—*Roberts.*

18-21. (18) Judah, who pleaded for the slavery of Joseph now an advocate for the liberation of Benjamin. came . . him, stepping forward in advance of the rest. let . . servant, now pleading for one who appears to be guilty. for . . Pharaoh, i. e. invested with all but royal authority. (19) saying . . brother, he recalls a former interview. (20, 21) and we said,^b etc., "it hence appears that it was the exact state of the case, or Judah would not have ventured to appeal to Joseph's recollection of it."—*Alford.*

The chief speaker.—In India a company of people have always some one amongst them who is known and acknowledged to be the chief speaker; thus, should they fall into trouble, he will be the person to come forward and plead with the superior. He will say, "My lord, I am indeed a very ignorant man, and am not worthy to speak to you: were I of high caste, perhaps my lord would hear me. May I say two or three words?" Some of the party

will then speak in an encouraging tone, "Yes, yes, our lord will hear you." He then proceeds, — "Ah, my lord! your mercy is known to all; great is your wisdom; you are even as a king to us: let, then, your servants find favor in your sight." After this introduction, like that of Judah, he relates the whole affair, forgetting no circumstance which has a tendency to exculpate him and his companions; and everything which can touch the feelings of the judge will be gently brought before him. As he draws to a conclusion his pathos increases, his companions put out their hands in a supplicating manner, accompanied by other gesticulations; their tears begin to flow and with one voice they cry, "Forgive us this time and we will never offend you more." — *Roberts*.

22—26. (22) if . . die, compared with his own case Joseph would now see that their hearts were changed towards their father. (23) except . . more, his presence therefore is a proof of our dire necessity. (24—26). They assured Joseph that they had faithfully reported his words.

Judah's intercession. — His heart full of love and sorrow of repentance and grief, finds vent in speech, which, like a pent up stream, breaks through the dam — artless and simple, but impressive and convincing, eloquent and irresistible, as scarce speech had ever flowed from man's lips. The vividness of his description is inimitable. — *Kurtz*. We can imagine nothing more perfect than this address of Judah for the object of overpowering the sensibilities of him to whom it was spoken. In simplicity and touching pathos it excels every composition I have ever met; nor can I figure a combination of traits and circumstances more fitted to tell on the heart of Joseph, and to operate as a fit precursor for the emotions which he could no longer repress. — *Chalmers*. Kalisch justly calls this pleading speech of Judah's "one of the masterpieces of Hebrew composition." Its beauty mainly consists in the simple and pathetic statement of facts. Luther says, "I would that I could pray so well to our Lord God, as Judah prays here to Joseph, for it is a perfect example of prayer and of the earnestness which should be in prayer." — *Alford*.

27—29. (27) wife, he speaks of Rachel with an affection that excluded the rest fr. his thoughts. (28) surely . . pieces, "fr. these words prob. for the first time Joseph learns what had been Jacob's belief as to his son's fate." — *Spk. Com.* (29) and if, etc., see xlii. 38.

Filial and fraternal affection. — A short time since, just at sunset on a summer's day, I went to the grave of a dear sister of mine. Her two little boys went with me. When we had arrived there, I saw four little rose-bushes standing, two at the head, and two at the foot of the grave, bending over, as if to meet and hang over the grave. "That is her grave — our mother's grave," said one of the boys. "And those rose-bushes?" said I, as the tears started in my eyes. "Those," said the eldest "brother and I and father set soon after she was laid there. Those two at the head she planted in the garden herself, and we took them up and set them there, and call them 'Mother's bushes.'" "And what do you remember about your dear mother, my boys?" "Oh! everything." "What in particular?" "Oh, this, uncle, that there never was a day since I can remember in which she did not take us to her closet, and pray with us, unless she was sick on the bed." — *J. Todd*.

30—34. (30) life . . life, *lit.* his soul is bound up in his (the lad's) soul. (31) servants . . grave, a politic taking of the consequences upon themselves. (32) surely, see xliii. 9. (33) servant . . brethren,^b "There was no duty that imperiously prohibited Judah from taking the place of his unfortunate brother. His children, and even his wife, if he had been in the married state, might have been sent to Egypt. He was so far master of his own liberty that he could warrantably put himself in Benjamin's room, if the governor gave his consent." — *Lawson*. (34) evil . . father, *lit.* wh. shall find my father, *i. e.* the sorrow wh. shall consume him.

Paternal and filial affection (vs. 30). — I. This fact may be viewed from the father's side. We see fathers whose lives seem to be bound up in their sons' lives. 1. This often altogether apart from the character of the son. The father loves him though he may be very foolish and wicked (David and Absalom); 2. It is seen in the father's earnest and continued labor that the son may be clothed and educated; 3. It is also seen in the father's solicitude when his son is ill. II. This fact may also be viewed from the son's side. 1. ^b Ex. xxxii. 32,

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not this pleasure for you?" — *Roberts*.

"A sentence well couched takes both the sense and the understanding. I love not those cart-ropes speeches that are longer than the memory of men can fathom." — *Fetham*.

he recalls the former visit

"It was necessary that Judah should remind the Egyptian lord that it was by his express command their father had been compelled to consent to the departure of Benjamin." — *Kittó*.

"The man who melts with social sympathy, though not allied, is than a thousand kinsmen of more worth." — *Euripides*.

he describes his father's reluctance to part with Benjamin

"Affection in a philosophical sense, refers to the manner in which we are affected by anything for a continuance, whether painful or pleasant; but in the common sense, it may be defined to be a settled bent of mind towards a particular being or thing." — *C. Buck*.

he offers to be bondman in place of Benjamin

^a "Judah is fearful of giving offense by plainly stating that the death which threatened their father might be considered as caused by the Egyptian's unjust and unfounded suspicions." — *Raphall*.

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"There is so little to redeem the dry mass of follies and errors from which the materials of this life are composed that anything to love or to reverence becomes, as it were, the Sabbath for the mind."—*Lytton*.

Elder children should be especially tender to the younger, for the father's sake as well as their own. 2. All children should be kind and dutiful to their parents, seeing how one life should be bound up in another. — *The Hive*.

A son's affection.—While Octavius was at Samos after the battle of Actium, which made him master of the universe, he held a council to examine the prisoners who had been engaged in Antony's party. Among the rest there was brought before him an old man, Metellus, oppressed with years and infirmities, disfigured with a long beard, a neglected head of hair, and tattered clothes. The son of this Metellus was one of the judges; but it was with great difficulty he knew his father in the deplorable condition in which he saw him. At last, however, having recollected his features, instead of being ashamed to own him, he ran to embrace him, and begged Cæsar that they might be put to death together. — *Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE FORTY-FIFTH.

Joseph reveals himself

α Ge. xlii. 8; Ac. vii. 13.

"He was not willing that any should be witnesses of his own passion, or his brethren's former faults."—*Kidder*.

"The very society of joy redoubles it; so that, whilst it lights upon my friend it rebounds upon myself, and the brighter his candle burns the more easily will it light mine."—*South*.

"Joys are our wings, sorrows are our spurs."—*Richter*.

he comforts his brethren

β Is. xl. 2; 2 Co. ii. 6, 7.

c Ge. i. 20; Ps. cv. 17-19.

"The decrees of Providence are inscrutable, in spite of man's short-sighted endeavors to dispose of events according to his own wishes."—*J. Morier*.

"There's a divinity that shapes

1-3. (1) Joseph . . refrain, from giving away to the impulse of love. **cause . . me**, the scene too sacred for merely curious eyes. **Joseph . . brethren,** they being known to him all along. (2) **and . . aloud,** *lit.* gave forth his voice in weeping. **and . . heard,** the officials outside heard and reported it to the house of Pharaoh. (3) **I am Joseph,** "The effect of this announcement can be better imagined than described. Hitherto he had been known to his brethren as Zaphnath-paaneah. Now the voice and the appearance of their long-lost brother would rush upon their minds at the first sound of the familiar name, and fill them with apprehension. Probably Joseph's discernment of this in their countenances was the reason why he asked so abruptly after Jacob."—*Pulp. Com.* **doth . . live?** his first question is concerning his father. **and . . him,** their memory silenced them. **for . . presence,** not knowing but he would avenge himself.

The lost brother found.—(vs. 3).—I. The time having come for him to reveal himself, he commanded all to go out—1. That none of his subordinates might see the great minister of state unmanned; 2. That none might witness the abject repentance of his brethren, and learn their crime. II. The disclosure itself. 1. I am Joseph (*ill.* "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest"); 2. His first question. III. Its effect. 1. Silence (*ill.* "and he was speechless"); 2. Confusion of face; 3. Fear. They knew not what might be done to them.

Joseph's delicacy of feeling.—"He cried, cause every man to go out from me; and there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren." (Verse 1.) The deepest and tenderest feelings of the heart are not to be exposed to strangers. Hence all such witnesses of his emotion were to be put away. There are some who love to expose their feelings to others, who express their various emotions without reserve. They feel a sense of luxury in the display of grief. But the greatest and most exalted minds shrink from thus vulgarizing their feelings. They respect the sacredness of human sorrow. Our Lord, who took our human nature upon Him, and who was the highest example of that nature, did not announce His deepest truths and feelings to the multitude, but reserved them for His disciples. — *Hom. Com.*

4-8. (4) **come . . you,** they prob. shrank back afraid. **and . . near,** trembling but hoping against hope. **brother,** hitherto a brother disguised. **whom . . Egypt,** fr. whom therefore ye may justly expect punishment. (5) **for . . life,** sin overruled by Divine mercy, and made subservient to the ends of infinite benevolence. (6) **earring,** this word from an Anglo-Saxon root wh. means "to cut;" therefore "to plough." (7) **preserve . . earth,** *lit.* to make you a remnant in the earth, save the family from extinction. **save . . deliverance,** *lit.* to preserve your lives to a great deliverance providential. (8) **so . . God,** he interprets his painful past by the light of Providence. **father,** one commentator (Murphy) interprets this term as meaning the "second author of life," in that Joseph had saved him from famine.

"Be not angry with yourselves."—At first sight this might seem to be an injudicious speech, calculated to make the brethren think lightly of their guilt, and to remove the just impressions they now entertained of the unbrotherliness of their conduct to Joseph. And it might have been an injudicious speech to impenitent men; but no further view of sin can lighten its heinous-

ness to a really penitent sinner. Prove to him that his sin has become the means of untold good, and you only humble him the more, and more deeply convince him that while he was recklessly gratifying himself and sacrificing others for his own pleasure, God has been mindful of others, and, pardoning him, has blessed them.—*Exp. Bib.*

9-11. (9) say . . him, the bearers of ill news shall be the messengers of glad tidings. (10) **Goshen**, sometimes called the "Land of Rameses." "It was to the east of the Nile, as lying nearest to the immigrants from Canaan; and neither at this time, nor in the history of the exodus, do we hear of any crossing of the river. But it must have extended to the Nile—witness the hiding of the infant Moses, and the regrets for the fish which they used to eat in Egypt. (Num. xi. 5)." — *Alford*. (11) **lest . . poverty**, he preferred personal care to the precarious sending of occasional supplies.

"*My son Joseph*."—Better than abundance of corn is it, to be assured that the lord of the granaries is his son Joseph. How blessed to know from the Gospel that the dispenser of universal providence and the proprietor of the universe is our God, for ever and ever—that our elder brother is exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high. And then the message *come down unto me—tarry not*. (So John xiv.) Faith in the Father and the Son is the cure for heart trouble. "I will surely come again to take you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also."—*Jacobus*.

12-15. (12) Benjamin, who as a witness Jacob would more readily believe. **mouth . . you**, in your own language by an interpreter no longer. (13) tell . . seen, not the boy they sold into slavery but the chief counsellor of a king. (14) feel . . wept, loving his brother for his own and his father's sake. (15) kissed . . them, not bestowing all his love on Benjamin alone. **after . . him**, mutual congratulations, perfect reconciliation, home news, bright anticipations.

Reconciliation (vs. 15).—I. Not solicited by the guilty parties: the injured made the first overture. II. Not urged by circumstances; as nearness of death, etc. III. Not marked by any reservation. It was full and complete: so full that his brothers thought it impossible; and, seventeen years after, begged the assurance of Joseph's forgiveness.

Joseph's forgiveness.—The history of Jacob's household had hitherto been full of sins against family life. Now, at last, they taste the sweetness of fraternal love. Joseph, against whom they had sinned, takes the initiative, flinging himself with tears on the neck of Benjamin, his own mother's son, nearer to him than all the others, crowding his pent-up love in one long kiss. Then, with less of passionate affection, but more of pardoning love, he kisses his contrite brothers. The offender is ever less ready to show love than the offended. The first step towards reconciliation, whether of man with man or of man with God, comes from the aggrieved. So was it in Pharaoh's throne-room on that long past day: so is it still in the audience chamber of heaven.—*A. Maclaren*.

16-20. (16) fame, report, history. **it . . well, lit.** it was good in the eyes of Pharaoh. (17) Pharaoh considerably meets Joseph's probable delicacy in inviting strangers, by inviting them himself. (18) **give . . Egypt**, a royal recompense to Joseph. **eat . . land**, the very best of the productions. (19) **wagons**, wheeled vehicles anc. used in Egypt. (20) **regard . . stuff**, be not parsimoniously anxious to gather all together, and thus delay the journey. **good . . yours**, the good of the future should exempt us fr. anxiety concerning present things.

Royal bounty (vs. 20).—I. What Pharaoh did to Joseph was for Joseph's sake. What he did for Joseph's brethren was not for their sake, but Joseph's. II. What the Great King does for us is for the sake of our Brother, not for our own.

Pharaoh's invitation.—His invitation is accompanied with more liberal offers than those of his trusted servant. Joseph only desired them to bring all the property they had; but Pharaoh bids them disregard their household goods, as he himself would make for them an abundant and sufficient provision. (Verses 10-20.) The "good of all the land of Egypt" was theirs. Pharaoh will even have them brought to Egypt with all possible speed and comfort. He gives orders for wagons to fetch them. They could only have

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our ends, rough-hew them how we will."—*Shakespeare*.

he sends a message to his father

Christ seems to send from heaven, and say unto us in like sort, God hath made me lord of all; come up unto me, tarry not.—*Trapp*.

"Kind hearts are more than coronets, and simple faith than Norman blood."—*Tennyson*.

he embraces all his brethren

a Ac. vii. 14, 15.

b Ps. xxx 5.

"The cheapest of all things is kindness, its exercise requiring the least possible trouble and self-sacrifice. 'Win hearts,' said Burleigh to Queen Elizabeth, 'and you have all men's hearts and purses.'"—*Smiles*.

"When people meet after long absence they fall on each other's shoulder or neck, and kiss or smell the part."—*Roberts*.

Pharaoh's command to Joseph

c Nu xviii. 12, 29. Stuff (Ge xxxi. 37; 1 S. x. 22, xxv. 13, etc.), furniture baggage of an army or traveler.

"The people are fashioned according to the example of their king; and edicts are of less power than the model which his life exhibits."—*Claudius*.

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Joseph's
parting
injunctiona 2 Kl. v. 22; Zech.
iii. 4.

"The last, best fruit which comes to late perfection, even in the kindest soul, is tenderness toward the hard, forbearance toward the unfortunate, warmth of heart toward the cold, philanthropy to ward the misanthropic."—*Richter*.

they return
to Jacobb Lu xxiv. 11, 34,
41; Ps. cxxvi. 1.

c Ge xlv. 30.

"'Tis strange — but true; for truth is always strange; stranger than fiction."—*Byron*.

"Though it be honest, it is never good to bring bad news. Give to a gracious message an host of tongues; but let ill tidings tell themselves, when they be left."—*Shakespeare*.

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God
encourages
Jacob to go
into Egyptd Ge. xxviii. 10, 13,
xxvi. 23-25, xxxi.
42.e Ge. xxviii. 15.
Ex. iii. 18.

f Ac. vii. 15.

g Ge. xlv. 20.

this favor by royal command, for it was strictly forbidden that wagons should be taken out of Egypt. His great liberality towards this family tells us how high Joseph was in his esteem. He wanted to express the gratitude of the nation to so great a benefactor."—*Hom. Com.*

21-24. (21) gave . . way, for the journey two and fro. "The carriages here referred to were small two-wheeled vehicles suitable for a flat country like Egypt, or for traversing roadless deserts. They were usually drawn by cattle, and employed for carrying agricultural produce."—*Pulp. Com.* (22) gave . . raiment, such presents still common in the E. Benjamin . . raiment,^a as an evident token to Jacob that he sympathized with him in his love to Benjamin. (23) sent . . manner, etc., as a pledge and foretaste of better things in store. (24) see . . away, *lit.* be not stirred, *i. e.* do not fall into contentions; do not give way to criminations and recriminations. Joseph had not forgotten their old quarrelsome disposition.

Christians walking harmoniously on the road of life.—They whom Joseph thus addressed were all—I. Members of the same family. Brethren: the relations Christians bear to each other (1 Pet. iii. 6; Rom. xii. 10; Heb. xiii. 1). II. Partakers of the same grace, forgiven ourselves, we are to be forgiving. III. Associates in the same service, concerted action is required of us. IV. Traveling to the same home.—*J. F. Poulter*.

Trivial dissensions.—Dr. Cannon was once appealed to by a certain church where there was a great commotion in regard to the point, whether in newly painting their church edifice the color should be white or yellow. When the committee had stated their case, and with an emphasis, not to say acrimony, which gave sad proof of the existence of a fearful feud upon the unimportant question, the doctor quietly said, "I should advise you, on the whole, to paint the house black." It is cheap, and a good color to wear, and eminently appropriate for a body that ought to go in mourning over such a foolish quarrel among its members."—*Homiletic Encyclopædia*.

25-28. (25) came . . father, and to his great delight Benjamin was safe. (26) fainted,^b *i. e.* could scarcely believe so strange a tale. (27) told, *i. e.* about Joseph's invitation and promise (*see vs. 9-11*). saw . . revived, "Warmth and life returned to his spirit,"—*Alford*. His doubts removed and his soul was cheered by what he saw. (28) said . . enough, I am convinced and satisfied. see . . die,^c the sight of the prosperity of one so dear will make death easy.

The joyful news told to Jacob.—I. It is, at first, received with incredulity. II. It is afterwards accepted upon outward evidence. III. It enabled Jacob to vindicate his old character. 1. His faith triumphs. 2. His dark destiny is about to be cleared up. 3. He anticipates his peaceful end.—*T. H. Leale*.

Jacob—Nothing is said of his reception of the gifts, nor is it intimated that he was particularly affected by the report of his son's glory in Egypt; it was enough for him that he was *alive*. Though the sight of Benjamin, an hour before this time, would have appeared to him a sufficient happiness for this world, yet now he enjoys not only that, but cherishes the hope of seeing and embracing once more the son whose loss he had mourned year after year in bitterness of soul.—*Bush*.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SIXTH.

1-7. (1) Beersheba . . Isaac,^d a place hallowed by sacred memories where Abraham and Jacob had acknowledged God. (2) Israel . . Jacob, called by his old name bec. he would not at first prevail in Egypt. (3) fear . . Egypt, seasonable encouragement. He perhaps remembered Abraham's peril in the land of the Pharaohs. (4) down . . again,^e the Divine presence a guarantee of safety. Joseph . . eyes, *i. e.* when dying, Joseph shall stand beside thee, and perform the last office of filial piety in closing thine eyes. (5) sons . . father,^f they cared for him as the chief thing they brought fr. Canaan. (6) goods,^g leaving behind only what was valueless or immovable. (7) daughters, wh. implies that there were more than the one named. all . . Egypt, in all seventy souls.

Fear not to go down into Egypt (vs. 3).—I. The position in which Jacob was placed. He must have shuddered at the thought of going to dwell among

heathen strangers. 1. It was a new scene and likely to be a trying one; 2. Yet the way was evidently appointed for him, and therefore he resolved to go. II. What is frequently the position of believers now; they are called to perils and temptations altogether untried. At such seasons let them—1. Imitate Jacob's example; then shall they have—(1) His companion; (2) His promise. 2. Exercise his confidence. — *Spurgeon*.

Emigrate, but not without God. — Horace Greeley, long ago, set the fashion of saying, "Go West, young man, go West;" and there is wisdom in the advice, provided it be conjoined with the admonition, "But don't go without your God." Perhaps some here are meditating on the propriety of their pushing away into the places where the labor market is not overstocked, and the opportunities are far better than they are in a comparatively crowded city such as this. Nor do we say a word against the project. Go, by all means, if you are not afraid to work; but remember the sacrifice at Beer-sheba, and don't go without your God. Too many have done that, and have gone to ruin. But take Him with you, and He will be "your shield and your exceeding great reward." — *W. M. Taylor*.

8—15. (8) names . . Egypt, must be construed with considerable latitude, since Joseph is enumerated with those who "came in." (9) Hanoah^a (*initiated*). Phallu (*distinguished*) or Pallu. Hezron^b (*enclosed*). Carmi (*vine-dresser*). (10) Jemuel^c (*day of God*) or Nemuel. Jamin (*right hand*). Chad (*united*). Jachin (*firmness*) or Jarib. Zohar (*whiteness*) or Zerah. Shaul (*desired*). (11) Gershon^d (*expulsion*) or Gershom. Kohath^e (*assembly*) fr. whom descended the Kohathites, one of the three grt. fams. of the tr. of Levi. Merari^f (*unhappy*). (12) Er . . Canaan, *see* xxxviii. 6-10. Hamul (*spared*). (13) Tola (*a worm*). Phuvah (*mouth*) also Pua^g and Puah.^h Job (*? desire*) or Jashub (*he turns*). Shimron (*watch post*). (14) Sered (*fear*). Elon (*an oak*). Jahleel (*whom God has made sick*). (15) all . . three, *i. e.* including Jacob, but exclusive of Er, Onan, and prob. Leah herself.

The children of Israel in Egypt. — This document is one that would be of the highest importance to the Israelites when taking possession of Canaan, being, as it were, their title-deed to the land. Accordingly we find that it is drawn up in legal manner, representing as sons some who were really grandsons, but who took as heads of families the place usually held by sons. We next find that it represents them all as born in Canaan, not in a natural sense, but as the rightful heirs of the country. Technically, every head of a family was born in Canaan, and thus the danger was obviated of an objection to the possession of this rank being accorded to one born in Egypt. — *R. P. Smith*.

16—18. (16) Ziphion (*a looking out*) or Zephon.^j Haggi^k (*festive*). Shuni (*quiet*). Ezbon (*a worker*) or Ozni.^k Eri (*watching*). Arodi (*wild ass*) or Arod.^l Areli (*lion of God*). (17) Jimnah^m (*good fortune*) or Imna.ⁿ Isuah^o (*level*). Beriah (*son of evil*). Serah (*abundance*) or Sarah. Heber (*society*). Malchiel (*God's king*). (18) whom . . daughter, *see* xxix. 24.

The province of history. — Under the green foliage and blossoming fruit trees of to-day, there lie, rotting slower or faster, the forests of all other years and days. Some have rotted fast, plants of annual growth, and are long since quite gone to inorganic mold; others are like the aloe, growths that last a thousand or three thousand years. You will find them in all stages of decay and preservation; down deep to the beginnings of the history of man. Think where our alphabetic letters came from, where our speech itself came from; the cookies we live by, the masonries we lodge under! You will find fibrous roots of this day's occurrences among the dust of Cadmus and Trismegistus, of Tubalcain and Triptolemus; the tap-roots of them are with Father Adam himself and the cinders of Eve's first fire! At the bottom there is no perfect history; there is none such conceivable. All past centuries have rotted down, and gone confusedly dumb and quiet, even as that seventeenth is now threatening to do. Histories are *as* perfect as the historian is wise, and as he is gifted with an eye and a soul! For the leafy blossoming present time springs from the whole past, remembered and unrememberable, so confusedly as we say:—and truly the art of history, the grand difference between a Dryasdust and a sacred poet, is very much even this:—To distinguish well what does still reach to the surface, and is alive and frondent for us; and what reaches no longer to the surface, but molds safe underground, never

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"Who is it that called time the avenger, yet failed to see that death was the consoler? What mortal afflictions are there to which death does not bring full remedy? What hurts of hope and body does it not repair? 'This is a sharp medicine,' said Raleigh, speaking of the axe, 'but it cures all disorders.'" — *Simms*.

the names of the Children of Israel

the children of Leah

^a Ex. vi. 14; Nu. xxvi. 5; 1 Ch. v. 3.
^b Nu. xxvi. 6; 1 Ch. v. 3.

^c Nu. xxvi. 12; 1 Ch. iv. 24.

^d 1 Ch. vi. 16.

^e Ex. vi. 16, 18; Nu. iii. 17, 19, 27.

^f Ex. vi. 16, 19; 1 Ch. vi. 1, 16.

^g Nu. xxvi. 23.

^h 1 Ch. vii. 1.

ⁱ Nu. xxvi. 24; 1 Ch. vii. 1.

the children of Zilpah

^j Nu. xxvi. 15.

^k Nu. xxvi. 16.

^l Nu. xxvi. 17.

^m Nu. xxvi. 44.

ⁿ 1 Ch. vii. 30.

^o Nu. xxvi. 46.

"It was a charming fancy of the Pythagoreans to exchange names when they met, that so they might partake of the virtues each admired in the other. And, knowing the power of names, they used only such as were musical and pleasing." — *A. B. Alcott*.

"Favor or disappointment has been often conceded as the name of the claimant has affected us; and the accidental affinity or coincidence of a name, connected with ridicule or hatred,

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with pleasure or disgust, has operated like magic." — *Disraeli*.

the children of Rachel

a Nu. xxvi. 38, 40; 1 Ch. vii. 6, 7; viii. 1, 3.
b Nu. xxvi. 38, 41; 1 Ch. viii. 1.
c Nu. xxvi. 38.
d 1 Ch. vii. 12.
e 1 Ch. viii. 1.
f 1 Ch. viii. 5.

"In honest truth, a name given to a man is no better than a skin given to him; what is not natively his own falls off, and comes to nothing." — *Landor*.

"The present state of things is the consequence of the past. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent, if entrusted with the care of others it is not just." — *Johnson*.

the children of Bilhah

g Nu. xxvi. 42.

h 1 Ch. vii. 13.

"To study history is to study literature. No trifle is to be neglected. A mouldering metal is a letter of twenty centuries. Antiquities which have been beautifully called history defaced, compose its fullest commentary." — *Wilmott*.

meeting of Joseph and Jacob

i "A word almost reserved for Divine appearances; and Knobel thinks it is used here according with the royal pomp with which Joseph was invested." — *Alford*
j As men say, "See Naples and die,

to send forth leaves or fruit for mankind any more: of the former we shall rejoice to hear; to hear of the latter will be an affliction to us. — *Carlyle*.

19-22. (19) Rachel . . wife, his wife par excellence. (20) Manasseh (*who makes forget*). Ephraim (*very fruitful*). (21) Belah (*destruction*) or Bela.^a Becher (*a young camel*), elsewhere omitted.^b Ashbel (*opinion of God*). Gera (*a seed*) Naaman (*pleasantness*). Ehi (*my brother*), also Ariram^c and Aher,^d and Aharah.^e Rosh (*chief*). Muppim or perh. Shuphan (*serpent*) and Shephuphan.^f Huppim (*coverings*). Ard (*fugitive*). (22) fourteen, *i. e.* Rachel's two sons and their children.

The family migration. — I. The departure from Canaan. II. The reunion in Egypt. III. The abode in Goshen. Why was Joseph so anxious to establish his father's family in Goshen? Joseph felt that there were many dangers incident to the sojourn of the "Hebrews," his kinsfolk, in Egypt. 1. The danger of quarrels. The Egyptians might become jealous of the foreigners in their land. 2. The danger from heathenism. There was much idolatry and animal worship in Egypt. 3. The danger of his kinsmen forgetting Canaan as the land where their lot as a nation was fixed by God. He did not want them to be Egyptianized. They must as far as possible, be kept a "separate" people. — *W. S. Smith*.

What is in a name? — An answer to this question depends upon the name which you mean. Give me the name of some men, and I immediately think of virtue, intelligence, charity, eloquence, &c., as associated with them; the name of other men, and the opposite associations are awoke within me. Speak or write the name of God, and what grand ideas are couched within it! The name of Jesus, what endless beauties, mercies, &c., are embodied there! The "new name" which is given to the Christian conqueror, how full of gracious and happy meaning! As there is so much importance in a name, every man ought to guard his name. Every Christian should be jealous to retain his name in untarnished honor and purity. As no heir can claim the inheritance if he have not the *proper* name, so no man can claim heaven if he have not the *right* name in his heart, and in the Lamb's Book of Life. — *Bate*.

23-27. (23) Hushim (*the hastening*) or Shuhan.^g (24) Jahzeel (whom *God allots*). Guni (*colored*). Jezer (*imagination*). Shillem (*requital*) or Shalum.^h (25) Laban . . daughter, *see* xxix. 29. (27) all . . ten, *i. e.* Joseph and his father and two sons.

Small beginnings (vs. 27). — Only 70 souls; yet — I. The foundation of a nation. II. Destined presently to overturn the power and pride of Egypt. III. Designed, in the providence of God to give to the world its only inspired teachers and its great Redeemer.

"*Three score and six.*" — According to the LXX. the number of Joseph's sons was nine; and the number of those who came with Jacob into Egypt seventy-five, a number adopted by Stephen (Acts vii. 14). The apparent confusion in these different numbers, sixty-six, seventy, seventy-five, will disappear if it be observed that the first takes no account of Jacob, Joseph, Manasseh, and Ephraim, while they are as palpably included in the second computation, and that Stephen simply adds to the seventy of ver. 27 the five grandsons of Joseph who are mentioned in the Septuagint version, from which he quoted, or to the sixty-six of ver. 26 the nine mentioned above, consisting of Jacob, Joseph, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Joseph's five grandsons, thus making seventy-five in all. There is thus no irreconcilable contradiction between the Hebrew historian and the Christian orator. — *Pulp. Com.*

28-30. (28) to Goshen, *i. e.* in order that Joseph might point out to Judah the land of Goshen. (29) made . . chariot, *lit.* bound his chariot. *i. e.*, harnessed his horses to it. presented,ⁱ appeared. fell . . neck, commentators generally agree that it was Joseph who fell upon Jacob's neck, but Maïmonides regards Jacob as the subject. The construction in the Heb. permits either. (30) now . . alive, he had lived to see all he wished in this world.^j

Duty and filial piety combined. — A beautiful combination of official duty and filial piety! The whole land of Egypt is suffering from famine. Joseph is the controller and administrator of the resources of the land. He does not abandon his position and go away to Canaan; but he gets the chariot out and he must go part of the road. "I know I am father to Pharaoh and all his great people. I shall not be away long; I shall soon be back again to my

duties. I must go a little way to meet the old man from home." Yes, I don't care what our duties are, we can add a little pathos to them if we like; what ever we be in life, we can add a little sentiment to our life. And what is life without sentiment? What are the flowers without an occasional sprinkling of dew? It may be a grand thing to sit on high stool and wait till the old man comes upstairs. But it is an infinitely grander thing, a "lordlier chivalry," to come off the stool and go away to meet him a mile or two on the road. Your home will be a better home — I don't care how poor the cot — if you will have a little sentiment in you, a little tenderness and nice feeling. These are things that sweeten life. I don't want a man to wait until there is an earthquake in order that he may call and say, "How do you do?" I don't want a man to do earthquakes for me. Sometimes I want a chair handed, and a door opened, and a kind pressure of the hand, and a gentle word. And as for the earthquakes, why — wait until they come. — *J. Parker.*

31-34. (31) shew, inform. (32) shepherds . . cattle, Joseph does not conceal his extraction. (33) what . . occupation? this question was rendered necessary by the strict distinction of caste prevalent in Egypt. (34) thy . . cattle, "This would be the sufficient ground on which the district of Goshen would be granted to them, as keeping them more by themselves, and out of contact with the Egyptian people. — *Jacobus.* for . . shepherds, who for the most part led a nomadic life. abomination, object of contempt, scorn. Egyptians, who lived in cities.

Not ashamed of parentage. — Joseph, a prince, was no whit ashamed of the poor old shepherd, before so many of his compeers and other courtiers, that accompanied him, and abominated such kind of persons. Colonel Edwards is much commended for his ingenious reply to a countryman of his, newly come to him, into the low countries, out of Scotland. This fellow, desiring entertainment of him, told him, my lord, his father and such knights and gentlemen, his cousins and kinsmen, were in good health. "Gentlemen," quoth Colonel Edwards to his friends by, "believe not one word he says; my father is but a poor banker, whom this knave would make a lord, to curry favor with me, and make you believe I am a great man born." The truly virtuous and valorous are no whit ashamed of their mean parentage. — *J. Trapp.*

CHAPTER THE FORTY-SEVENTH.

1-4. (1) Joseph . . Pharaoh, loyal to the king as well as kind to his family. (2) some . . five, not a selected five. The number five is a favorite number with the Egyptians. (3) what . . occupation? the question Joseph expected. they said, etc., their reply indicates their confidence in the wisdom of Joseph. (4) for . . come, an unconscious fulfilment of an ancient prophecy (see ch. xv. 13). for . . flocks, two years of famine had exhausted their own land.

Pharaoh's question to the brethren of Joseph (vs. 3). — The words of the text — I. Imply that each of us has, or is intended to have, an occupation. II. Lead us to inquire into the nature of this occupation, with respect to different classes of individuals. Look at — 1. The man whose whole time is taken up in the accumulation of earthly wealth; 2. He whose thoughts and time are engrossed with the pursuit of worldly glory; 3. He who devotes himself to earthly pleasures and sinful enjoyments; 4. The Christian. What is his occupation? He is "about his father's business." — *Coates.*

Importance of an occupation. — Seventeen years ago there was a fair girl so pure, so lovely, so refined, that she still rises to my mind as almost akin to angels. She was wooed and ultimately won by a handsome young man of considerable wealth. He sported a fine team, delighted in hunting, and kept a fine pack of hounds. He neither played cards, drank wine, nor used tobacco. He had no occupation, no calling, no trade. He lived on his money, the interest of which alone would have supported a family handsomely. I never saw the fair bride again until a few days ago. Seventeen years had passed away, and with them her beauty and her youth; her husband's fortune and his life, during the latter part of which they lived in a log-cabin on the banks of the Ohio river, near Blennerhasset's Island; a whole family in one single room, subsisting on water, fat bacon, and corn bread. The husband had no business capacity. He was a gentleman of education, of refinement, of noble impulses;

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meaning that there is nothing more beautiful to be seen. "There appears much joy in him, even so much, that joy could not show itself modest enough without a badge of bitterness. A kind overflow of kindness, — there are no faces truer than those that are so washed." — *Shakespeare.*

his advice to his brethren

"The Egyptians detested the very sight of a shepherd, from a remembrance of the injuries which they had recently sustained from the pastoral kings; for when the sons of Jacob stood before Pharaoh, these oppressors had only vacated the country about 36 years.

Pharaoh inquires their occupation

"He that hath a trade hath an estate; and he that hath a calling hath a place of profit and honor. A ploughman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees." — *Franklin.*

"There is nothing so useful to man in general, nor so beneficial to particular societies and individuals, as trade. This is that *alma mater* at whose plentiful breast all mankind are nourished." — *Fielding.*

"I protest against the unfair distribution of the world's work, which can only be well done when

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every man and woman is fitted to work, left free to chose the field in which to work, and condemned by public opinion if they refuse to work."—*Celia Burleigh.*

Pharaoh gives them the land of Goshen

a Pr. xxii. 29.

b "Prob. the aged patriarch, with the conscious dignity of a prophet prayed for blessings upon Pharaoh."—*S p k. Com.*

meeting of Pharaoh and Joseph

c Ge. xxxv. 28; Job xiv. 1; Ge. xxv. 7.

d He. xiii. 14; 1 Pe. ii. 11; Ps. xxxix. 5; xc. 10, 12; Jas. iv. 15; He. xi. 13; 1 Ch. xxix. 15; Ps. cxix. 19.

"The Jews speak of Jacob's seven afflictions: (1) the persecution of Esau; (2) the injustice of Laban; (3) the result of his wrestling with the Angel; (4) the violation of Dinah; (5) the loss of Joseph; (6) the imprisonment of Simeon; (7) the departure of Benjamin for Egypt. They might well have added the death of Rachel."—*Schu-mann.*

Joseph provides for his brethren

e 1 Ti. v. 4, 8.

"You are so to put forth the power that God has given you; you are so to give, and sacrifice

but when his money was gone, he could get no employment, simply because he did not know how to do anything. For a while he floundered about, first trying one thing, then another, but "failure" was written on them all. He, however, finally obtained a situation; the labor was great, the compensation small; it was that or starvation; in his heroic efforts to discharge his duty acceptably he overworked himself and died, leaving his widow and six girls in utter destitution. In seventeen years the sweet and joyous and beautiful girl had become a broken-hearted, careworn, poverty-stricken widow, with a houseful of helpless children.—*Hall.*

5—7. (5) saying,^a etc., words of congratulation. (6) land . . thee, to select from. Goshen . . dwell, settled in a border province they might serve as a protection for Egypt. activity, the idea of that is strength, as of twisted rope. (7) Jacob . . Pharaoh, this a visit of ceremony: the former one of business. blessed,^b not merely salutation, but a prayer to God in behalf of the person saluted.

Filial conduct.—The story is told of the Dean of Canterbury, afterwards Archbishop Tillotson, that one day after he had attained his churchly honors, an old man from the country, with uncouth manners, called at his door and inquired for John Tillotson. The footman was about to dismiss him with scorn, for presuming to ask in that familiar way for his master, when the Archbishop caught sight of his visitor and flew down the stairs to embrace the old man before all the servants, exclaiming with tones of genuine delight, "It is my beloved father!"—*F. E. Clark.*

8—10. (8) how . . thou? the king impressed with the venerable aspect of the patriarch. This question is yet customary among Orientals. (9) pilgrimage, *lit.* sojournings. few,^c as comp. with those of his ancestors. evil, full of sorrow. have . . been, he reckoned life by days as well as years. have . . pilgrimage,^d old as I appear, my ancestors have yet lived to a greater age. (10) went . . Pharaoh, to die in Goshen seventeen yrs. after.

Old year's theme; "How old art thou?"—I. A common question. II. A solemn question. 1. It is the solemnity of memory. 2. It is the solemnity of responsibility. 3. The question ought to create a solemn gratitude. III. Jacob's answer. IV. His life measured. "Days." It is best not to take life in the lump, but to study it in detail. V. His life described. VI. His life short. 1. He compared them with the ages of his fathers, and they seemed few. 2. Compared with the solemn eternity, how short is our mortal career! VII. His life evil. A biography whose lines were written in tears. VIII. His life a pilgrimage.—*Chas. F. Deems.*

Two ways of measuring life.—There was a very old man—eighty-three years of age—and somebody said to the old man, "How old are you?" He said, "I am three years old." "Three years old?" was the reply, "Why, you are eighty-three!" "No," he said. "My body is eighty-three years old, but my soul is only three years old. My old life is eighty years old, but my new life is three years old. I did not begin to live till three years ago. So my soul is only three years old." A person was asked, "Where were you born—in Brighton?" The man said, "I was born in London, and I was born in Liverpool!" "How can you be born in two places?" was the reply. "If you were born in London, you could not be born in Liverpool." "I was," said the man, "and I will let you see how that was. My body was born in London, but my soul was born in Liverpool. It was not till I lived in Liverpool that I cared about my soul!"—*J. Vaughan.*

11—12. (11) placed, caused to dwell. Rameses, a city wh. may not now have existed, but named by anticipation. (12) according . . families,^e i. e. acc. to the mouth of the little ones, i. e. their number and their wants.

Abd-el-Kader's intercession.—Amongst the incidents connected with the life of that extraordinary man, Abd-el-Kader, there is one which shows with what an extraordinary power of eloquence he was endowed, even while yet little more than a boy. It seems that his father, Sidi Ma-hi-el Din, who was one of the most celebrated marabouts, or priests, of the province of Oran, organized a conspiracy, the object of which was to free the Arabs from the dominion of Turkey, and to form their straggling and dispersed tribes into one mighty nation, his favorite son being pointed out as their destined leader and liber-

ator. Before the time for striking the decisive blow had arrived, however, the conspiracy had become known to the Bey Hassan, who was governor of the province; and he resolved to rid himself and his master of their powerful enemy. The marabout, Ma-hi-el Din, was entrapped into the power of the Bey, and thrown into prison to die. To rescue him, either by stratagem or by force of arms, was impossible; and all had been lost but for the daring resolve and subduing eloquence of his son. Abd-el-Kader, at the imminent hazard of his own life, presented himself before the tribunal of the Bey, and there he pleaded the cause of his father with such power, that he at once obtained an order for his liberation. The Bey was subdued by the eloquence of the noble youth, and the father was set at liberty, upon condition that he should at once quit the country,

B. C. cir. 1706.

to give, as to earn the eulogium pronounced on the woman, 'She hath done what she could.' Do it now. If you intend to do a mean thing, wait till to-morrow; if you are to do a noble thing, do it now! — *Guthrie*.

13-17. (13) **no . . land**, *i. e.* none comparatively. **fainted**, the people prostrated and spiritless. (14) **brought . . house**, who in this matter was Pharaoh's steward. (15) **give**, the buyers become beggars. (16) **cattle**, this a wide measure resulting in the preservation of the cattle. To a famishing people cattle have no value, and must necessarily die of starvation. (17) **horses**, first mention of the horse in the Bible.

the history of the famine

the cattle bought

The horse.—Heb. words trans. horse in Bible are *sus* = heavy H. for war-chariot, and *parash* = H. for riding, esp. cavalry. The original country of H. not known. In regard to claim of Arabia, see Kitto on Jos. xi. 6. Until then H. not named, save in Egypt (Ge. xlix. 17; Ex. ix. 3, xv. 21; De. xvii. 16). Strabo (time of Christ) describes Arabia as without H. This may explain why Moses did not contemplate that the Jews would ever go to Arabia, but Egypt, for H. (De. xvii. 16), and why Solomon, 460 yrs. after, obtained his cavalry from that country (1 K. x. 28, 29).—*Topics*.

"This gives the force to the strong—that the multitude have no habit of self-reliance or original action."—*Emerson*.

18-22. (18) **ended . . year**, *i. e.* from the failing of their money. **lands**, wh. they were no longer able to cultivate. (19) **die . . land**, we by starvation, and our land perish through lack of tillage. **desolate**, barren and depopulated. (20) **bought . . land**, which seems to indicate that Pharaoh had not up to this time been the absolute possessor of the land. (21) **removed . . thereof**,^a brought them fr. outlying districts near to the stores of corn, to furnish them more easily with food, and with occupation. (22) **land . . not**,^b "The Egyptian priesthood was already placed by Pharaoh upon an independent and separate basis. *Wilkinson* shows from the monuments that only the kings and priests and the military (who held lands of the king) are represented as landowners. *Heeren* finds in his researches that a greater, perhaps the greatest and best, part of the land was in the possession of the priests."—*Jacobus*.

the land bought

a Gen. xli. 48.

b Ezra vii. 24.

Joseph's administration.—The famine was sore in the land. The private supplies of the people being exhausted, they were obliged to purchase. Joseph's foresight had filled the granaries with corn, and therefore to him the people applied. The inhabitants, with the nations around first parted with their money, for the necessities of life must be had. This enriched the king's treasury; and without injustice, for the corn which was stored up was bought with his own private money. When the people's money failed they brought their cattle. And when they had parted with these, they brought their land; and, lastly, their persons. The effect of all this was, that everything became the property of the state. On behalf of Pharaoh, Joseph could say, "I have bought you." But thereby they did not become bondsmen. The term signifies rather, "I have acquired you." There is simply to be a fixed income tax. — *Hom. Com.*

"The amelioration of the condition of mankind, and the increase of human happiness ought to be the leading objects of every political institution, and the aim of every individual, according to the measure of the power."—*Hamilton*.

23-26. (23) **seed . . land**, this was undoubtedly the last year of the famine; perh. their cattle were restored also to work it. (24) **fifth . . own**, "The royalty here proposed for the occupiers of the land to pay does not, says Knobel, appear exorbitant. The tenth of the produce of the soil, and also of the flocks, seems to have been a common royal tribute (1 Sam. viii. 15, 17; Levit. xxvii. 30). The kings of Syria received from the conquered Jews (1 Macc. x. 3) a third part of the seed, (*i. e.* cereal crops), and half the fruit of the trees. — *Alford*. (25) **thou . . lives**, hence we gratefully obey. (26) **law . . part**, ever after, though the land became the people's, the fifth part of the produce went into the coffers of the State.

Joseph gives seed to sow the land

"A statesman, we are told, should follow public opinion. Doubtless, as a coachman follows his horses; having firm hold on the reins, and guiding them."—*Hare*.

The monuments and the history of Egypt.—It is hardly possible to imagine

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"A generous nation is grateful even for the preservation of its rights, and willingly extends the respect due to the office of a good prince into an affection for his person."—*Juntius*.
 "The rude reproaches of the rascal herd for the selfsame actions, if successful, would be as grossly lavish in their praise."
 —*Thomson*.

approaching death of Jacob

a Job xiv. 14; Ps. xxiii. 4.

b De. xxxi. 14; 1 Ki ii. 1.

c Ge. 1. 25.

d Ge. 1. 12, 13.

e He. xi. 21.

"This death which some repute the most dreadful of all things, who does not know that others call it the only secure harbor from the storms and tempests of life."—*Montaigne*.

B. C. 1689.

Joseph's interview with his dying father

f Ge. xxviii. 19; xxxv. 6, 9.

"Friend to the wretch whom every friend forsakes, I woo thee, Death! Life and its joys I leave to those that prize them. Hear me, O gracious God! At Thy good time let Death approach; I reckon not, let him but come in genuine form, not with Thy vengeance armed, too much for man to bear."
 —*Bp. Porteus*.

a greater contrast than is presented between the *Monuments* and the *History* of Egypt. The monuments tell of a native monarchy flourishing among the great empires of the East; its kings little less than demi-gods; its priesthood endued with a sanctity revered in distant lands; its chariots and horses pouring out to battle under the banners of a thousand gods; the nations of the earth bringing tribute; and art and luxury carried to an extent only possible to a numerous population, with abundant material resources and a high mental development. This testimony is confirmed by the position of Egypt in the Holy Scriptures, where her rulers are found showing hospitality to the father of the faithful, or reducing his descendants into bondage. Still, we only know that Egypt was a great power before Israel was a nation. It gleams out of a remote antiquity with a splendor that cannot be denied; but the splendor is a prehistoric memory, separated from authentic chronology by a gulf which nothing but the Bible can span. With the first page of secular history Ancient Egypt is already dead. The Pharaohs have become a tradition, the temples and altars are shrouded in mystery, the fleets and armies have disappeared, the people are reduced to inexorable servitude. — *Canon Trevor*.

27—31. (27) dwelt, *etc.*, anticipatory, see Ex. i. 7. multiplied, beginning of the promise (ch. xvi. 3). (28) so . . years,^a see vs. 9. (29) must die,^b as all must. put . . thigh, see Ge. xxiv. 2. bury . . Egypt,^c he firmly believed his posterity would inherit the land of Canaan. (30) bury . . place,^d Machpelah. I . . said, a son's solemn promise to a dying father; sacredly kept. (31) swear, to give his father the fullest satisfaction. Israel . . head,^e prob. worshipping God. The LXX. has the rendering "on the top of his staff," which is given in Heb. xi. 21. This is obtained by a mere change in the vowel pointing.

The children of Israel in Goshen. — I. Their quiet possession of the land. They had the means and appliances of prosperity. 2. They enjoyed their freedom by a firm and honorable tenure. II. Their prosperity. — *T. H. Leale*.

Love of home in death. — It is almost the universal custom in America for great men to be buried in the place where they have mostly lived, and among their own kith and kin. Washington lies at Mount Vernon; Lincoln at Springfield; Emerson and Hawthorne under the pines of New England; Irving on the banks of the Hudson; Clay in Kentucky. They are laid to rest not in some central city or great structure, but where they have lived, and where their families and neighbors may accompany them in their long sleep. — *One Thousand New Illustrations*.

CHAPTER THE FORTY-EIGHTH.

1—4. (1) that . . Joseph, occupied with affairs of State. Joseph still kept up communication with his kindred. look . . Ephraim, prob. intending that they should share in Jacob's dying blessing. (2) strengthened, revived by the tidings of Joseph's approach. (3) Luz,^f Bethel. (4) and . . said, *etc.*, Jacob repeats the promise to strengthen the faith of Joseph. Jacob has in mind the theophany at Bethel on his return from Padan-Aram.

Jacob's great experience. — "God appeared to me at Luz." This one, first, and great appearance of God was memorable in all his life because it was the first. Others came after, without a doubt. Dreams and visions, supplementary intimations, he had. But there is something in a full first experience which nothing can ever rival or supersede. Many results come so gradually that we watch their unfolding as we do that of a flower whose seed we plant, and all of whose stages we watch and help, and whose blossoming, though it be a pleasure, is never a surprise. But now and then a great experience comes, unexpected and unsought. It touches the greater chords of the soul, and lifts it above the common level of emotion, outruns all former knowledge, and fills the soul and overflows it, and amazes it with its own capacity of joy, or love, or grief, or fear, or awe. In the presence of its own intense and surpassing emotions the soul is conscious of nothing else in life. It seems to itself to be the height and centre of the universe, and all other things fall off and grade away from it. The reality of immortality, the indestructibility of the soul's life, is revealed to it in some of these higher and transcendent experiences, that seem not to have come from natural causes, but to have been let down from above by Divine inspiration. — *H. W. Beecher*.

5-7. (5) mine, as if lit. so. as . . mine,* "They shall not be two branches, merely, of one tribe, but two fully-recognized tribes of Jacob and Israel, equal in this respect to the firstborn Reuben and Simeon."—*Lange*. (6) issue . . thine, if Joseph had any we do not hear of it. (7) Rachel, etc., the old man recounts to his son the story of his mother's death and burial. by me, not in the mere sense of nearness of space, but "on account of me," "for my sake."

"*Rachel died*."—Jacob was the better for the loss of his beloved Rachel; he thence became less selfish than before; accordingly when he came to Egypt there was no unseemly rejoicing as there would otherwise have been, over the brilliant prospects of his race, and the latter part of his life was that of affection, rather than as formerly, of avarice. There is something in this long continuance of affection for a lost wife that seems to tell us of the possibility of reunion. Upon this subject, Scripture tells us almost nothing. When we look at the analogy of this world, and mark the growth of our affections as they develop in our life, first to parents, then to brother, and then to wife, and then to child, each in some measure supplanting the other, we might be inclined to believe that there would be a perpetual growth of attachments to spirits higher and higher still; but when we see a feeling like this of Jacob's, we cannot but hope that that which had lasted so near to the grave might survive the grave. We know not, God grant that it may!—*Robertson*.

8-11. (8) beheld, the failing sight of the patriarch prob. was the reason why he did not sooner recognize these sons of Joseph. (9) bring . . them, did this remind Jacob of the time when he obtained the blessing fr. his blind father. (10) dim . . see, but the inner man was full of light. (11) and lo, etc., God is better to us than our hopes.

Joseph's sons.—No doubt the highest posts in Egypt were open to his sons; they might have been naturalized as he himself had been, and, throwing in their lot with the land of their adoption, might have turned to their advantage the rank their father held, and the reputation he had earned. But Joseph turns from this attractive prospect, brings them to his father, and hands them over to the despised shepherd life of Israel. One need scarcely point out how great a sacrifice this was on Joseph's part. So universally acknowledged and legitimate a desire is it to pass to one's children the honor achieved by a life of exertion, that states have no higher rewards to confer on their most useful servants than a title which their descendants may wear. But Joseph would not suffer his children to risk the loss of their share in God's peculiar blessing, not for the most promising openings in life, or the highest civil honors.—*M. Dods*.

12-14. (12) brought . . knees, i. e. Jacob's. He was in a sitting posture, and in embracing them had drawn them between his knees. he . . earth, in respect to his father, and in reverence to the blessing. (13) Ephraim . . him, the eldest son to Jacob's right hand. Joseph assigned them to their proper places as the adopted sons of Jacob, giving to Manasseh his proper place as the eldest. (14) stretched . . head, passing Ephraim. This is the first instance of the laying on of hands as a symbol of blessing. left . . head, crossing the other hand. wittingly, knowingly, intentionally. for . . born, therefore a strange act, but with a purpose.

The precedence of Ephraim (vs. 14).—How God sometimes prefers the younger to the elder, we may see in the case of Shem preferred to Japheth; in the case of Isaac, who was preferred to Ishmael; of Jacob, who was preferred to Esau; of Judah and Joseph, who were preferred to Reuben; of Moses, who was preferred to Aaron, and, finally, of David, who was preferred to all his brethren.—*Starcke*.

Laying on of hands.—Imposition of hands was a Jewish ceremony, introduced, not by any Divine authority, but by custom; it being the practice among those people whenever they prayed to God for any person, to lay their hands on his head; it was also employed as a mark of favor. The right hand was regarded as the more honorable of the two; thus, when Jacob laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it was expressive of what he designed. Our Saviour observed the same custom when conferring His blessing on children, but when healing the sick sometimes added prayers to the ceremony. The apostles likewise laid hands on those upon whom they bestowed the Holy Ghost; and they themselves underwent the imposition of hands afresh, when

B. C. cir. 1669.

Jacob adopts the sons of Joseph

a Jos. xlii. 7; xiv. 4.

"I think that to have known one good old man—one man who, through the chances and mischances of a long life, has carried his heart in his hand, like a palm-branch, waving all discords into peace—helps our faith in God, in ourselves, and in each other more than many sermons."—*G. W. Curtis*.

and proposes to bless them

"O, the eyes' light is a noble gift of heaven. All beings live from light: each fair created thing, the very plants turn with a joyful transport to the light."—*Schiller*.

"Sight is by much the noblest of the senses. We hear, we feel, we smell, we taste, by touch. But sight rises infinitely higher. It is refined above matter, and equals the faculty of spirit."—*Sterne*.

Joseph brings his sons to Jacob

Grace observes not the order of nature nor does God prefer those whom we think fittest to be preferred, but as it pleases Him. It is observable, how often God, by the distinguishing favors of His Covenant, advanced the younger above the elder. He led the Jews to observe the birth-right (Deut. xxi. 17), but He never tied Himself to observe it.—*M. Henry*.

B. C. 1689.

Jacob blesses Joseph

a Ps. xxxvii. 3; Ma. vi. 31, 32; 1 Ti. vi. 8.

b Ge. xvi. 7; xxxii. 24-30; Mal. iii. 1

c "Considered as my sons."—*Maurer*.

d "The issue of Joseph by his two sons amounted in the time of Moses to 85,200, a number surpassing that of any of the rest of the tribes."—Nu. xxvi. 34, 37.

"May they be worthy of having their names coupled with my own and those of Abraham and Israel."—*Raphall*.

"May my name be named through them."—*Knobel*.

"A proper secrecy is the only mystery of able men; mystery is the only secrecy of weak and cunning ones."—*Chesterfield*.

Jacob blesses Ephraim and Manasseh

e Nu. i. 33, 35; De. xxxiii. 17; Re vii. 4-8.

f Ge. xxviii. 15; xvi. 4; De. xxxiii. 14; Ge. i. 24; De. xxxi. 8; Josh. xxiii. 14.

g 1 Ch. v. 2, Ex. xlvii. 13.

h Ge. xv. 16; Ju. xi. 20-23; Josh. xvii. 14-18; Am. ii. 9-10.

"Talent and worth are the only eternal grounds of distinction. To these the Almighty has affixed His everlasting patent of nobility."—*Miss Sedgwick*.

entering upon any new design. In the ancient church imposition of hands, was even practiced on persons when they married, and the same custom is still observed by the Abyssinians. — *Bibl. Treas.*

15-18. (15) he . . Joseph, in blessing his sons. God . . day,^a *lit.* who acted as the shepherd towards me, feeding and leading. (16) angel . . evil,^b the Angel of the covenant. Not a created being, but God Himself. let . . them, let them be called by my name,^c *i. e.* Israel: and let them be counted Abraham's seed and Isaac's. let . . earth, *lit.* let them multiply like fish.^d (17) displeased, men often displeased with what they do not understand. Prob. supposed it was a mistake. held . . head, as men sometimes think to improve upon the Divine will. (18) put . . head, "From Joseph's behavior we cannot certainly infer that, like Isaac, he loved the firstborn better than the youngest; but he was sorry that an honor was not given to the eldest which he would naturally expect, and bestowed on the youngest, who did not expect it, and who would not have been hurt by the want of it."—*Lawson*.

An old man's blessing.—I. A distinction of blessing. Jacob was, doubtless, divinely guided to make this distinction. The choice he made was inspired by God; and God's will was discerned and obeyed. We may learn to avoid pride, envy, and ambition, and to abide by God's will and the Divine disposal of events and circumstances (comp. 1 Sam. ii. 7; Ps. lxxv. 6, 7; 1 Cor. xii. 11).

II. A continuity of blessing (read verses 15 and 16, and note the reference to Abraham and Isaac). III. A futurity of blessing. IV. A unity of blessing. The lots of one and another among God's people may differ. But all that is good, and hopeful, and blessed, comes from the One source of blessing—the One God, Guide, Deliverer. Conclusion: Let us ask ourselves these questions: Are we trying to learn from our elders God's truth? Are we seeking to live as those who look for God's blessing as the best thing? Do we wish to hand down the truth and promises of the Lord to those that come after us (Ps. lxxviii. 3, 4)?—*W. S. Smith*.

The dying blessing.—A few days previous to his death, Dr. Belfrage, of Falkirk, hearing his infant son's voice in an adjoining room, desired that he should be brought to him. When the child was lifted into the bed the dying father placed his hands upon his head, and said in the language of Jacob: "The God before whom my fathers did walk, the God who fed me all my life long to this day, the Angel who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lad." When the boy was removed he added: "Remember and tell John Henry of this; tell him of these prayers, and how earnest I was that he might become early acquainted with his father's God." Happy are they who have their parents' prayers. — *Bib. Ill.*

19-22. (19) said, *etc.*, *i. e.* this act is intentional, not accidental or an error. he . . great, *i. e.* Manasseh is not forgotten. but . . nations,^e he spoke with prophetic light. (20) in . . bless, "The tribe of Joseph was only regarded as an *example* of prosperity for the rest of the Hebrews, whereas the Israelites were viewed as the cause of blessing for all the other nations."—*Kalisch*. set . . Manasseh, assigning the pre-eminence to Ephraim. (21) behold . . you,^f earthly fathers die, the Heavenly Father lives. bring . . fathers, whither the earthly father cannot guide. (22) given . . brethren,^g *i. e.* Joseph had a double portion in the persons of his sons. He was to have two lots in the land of promise. which . . bow,^h "The designation of the land as taken out of the hand of the Amorite by Jacob's sword and bow is spoken of in the anticipatory spirit of a prophet, assuming as done that which his descendants should do. See the expression repeated in form of expression almost verbatim (Josh. xxiv. 12)." — *Alford*.

Death contemplated (vs. 21).—What do these words, "Behold, I die," thus uttered, imply? They imply—I. An absorbing crisis. Death is an absorbing crisis, if you consider—1. Its nature; 2. Its cause; it is the result of sin; 3. Its consequences: at death, the day of grace is over. II. An awakening consideration. "Behold." That word suggests to us suitable preparation. In prospect, then, of that amazing hour, we ought—1. To review our past lives; 2. To think of our future prospects. — *C. Clayton*.

Premunitions of death.—Mozart wrote his Requiem under the conviction that the monument he was raising to his genius, would, by the power of association, prove a universal monument to his remains. When life was fleeting very fast, he called for the score, and musing over it, said, "Did I not tell

you truly that it was for myself that I composed this death chant?" Another great artist in a different department, convinced that his hand was about to lose its cunning, chose a subject emblematical of the coming event. His friends inquired the nature of his next design; and Hogarth replied, "The end of all things." "In that case," rejoined one, "there will be an end of the painter." What was uttered in jest was answered in earnest, with a solemn look and heavy sigh: "There will," he said, "and the sooner my work is done the better." He commenced next day, labored upon it with unremitting diligence, and when he had given it the last touch, seized his pallet, broke it in pieces and said: "I have finished." The print was published in March under the title of "Finis;" and in October, the curious eyes which saw the manners in the face were closed in the dust. — *T. Walker.*

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John Owen, two days before he died, thus wrote in a letter to a friend: "I am leaving the ship of the Church in a storm; but whilst the great Pilot is in it, the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable." — *Old Test. Anec.*

CHAPTER THE FORTY-NINTH.

1—4. Jacob . . sons, by messengers. last days,^a "in the future generally, but with special ref. to times of Messiah." The expression is found generally in prophetic passages. (2) gather . . Jacob, imagine the scene. hearken . . father, a father's dying words, benediction and prophecy. (3) the . . strength, *i. e.* the first fruits of my vigor. (4) unstable as water,^b *lit.* thou boildest over like water, *i. e.* a man of sudden passions, impetuous. thou . . excel, no share in the dignity and privilege of the firstborn. because,^c *etc.*, see xxxv. 22.

Instability a foe to excellence. — I. All are under obligations to excel. This arises from our duty towards God, others, and ourselves. It is taught in every department of nature, every scriptural command, every instinct of the soul. II. All excellence has a deadly foe in instability. How strikingly does St. James speak of the waverer (James i. 6). Double minded-man, unstable ways. Wrong in religion, wrong in everything. III. This deadly foe of instability may be vanquished. In the gospel there is all that is necessary for conquest. It is the wisdom and power of God. 1. It points direct to God Himself. 2. It changes man's very nature (*cf.* Isa. xi. 6 with 1 Pet. i. 16). — *J. Barber.*

Example of indecision. — He was — *i. e.* Balaam — as an old writer remarks, one of those unstable men whom the apostle calls "double-minded," an ambidexter in religion, like Redwald, king of the East Saxons, the first that was baptized, who (as Camden relates) had in the same church one altar for the Christian religion, and another for sacrificing to devils; and a loaf of the same leaven was our resolute Rufus, that painted God on one side of his shield and the devil on the other, with this desperate inscription, *In utrumque paratus* — "ready for either." — *Bib. Ill.*

5—7. (5) brethren, not only in parentage, but also in deeds. instruments . . habitations,^d *R. V.*, "Weapons of violence are their swords." (6) secret, council: he disclaims any participation in their act. digged . . wall, *R. V.*, "houghed an ox." (7) divide . . scatter,^e in wickedness they had been confederate; in the inheritance they should be disjoined.

The folly and wickedness of anger (vs. 7). — Consider — I. The nature of this passion. It is — 1. Foolish; 2. Sinful; 3. The prelude of great crimes. II. The effects which followed it in this particular case. 1. The destruction of a city; 2. The massacre of a tribe. III. The punishment which the cruel wrath of the brothers brought upon themselves. 1. Loss of blessing; 2. Division among the tribes. — *J. A. Willis.*

Capricious anger. — Richard II. showed his affection as a husband and his weakness as a man, in cursing the palace of Sheene, and ordering it to be destroyed, merely because it was the place of his amiable queen's death. *Recreat. Rev.*

8—12. (8) Judah . . praise,^f *lit.* Judah, thou, thy brethren shall praise thee. Jacob speaks to Judah and of the others. hand . . enemies,^g victorious warriors. father's . . thee,^h Judah elevated to be the royal tribe. (9) Judah . . whelp,ⁱ lion, the king of beasts; so Judah to be the king of the tribes. sceptre,^j lawgiver,^k unto . . be,^l *lit.* unto him shall be the obedience of the nations. (11) foal . . vine, the fathers said that the vine = the Jews, and the wild ass the Gentile converts; prob. this is a picture of

Jacob
blesses his
other sons
—
Reuben

^a He i. 1, 2; Am. iii. 7; Nu. xxiv. 14; Ac. ii. 17.
^b "The fig is taken fr. water in a boiling caldron, foaming and bursting over its bounds." — *Knobel.*

^c De. xxvii. 20; Ju. v. 15.
^d The characteristic peculiarity of the founder of each tribe was to find its reflection in his posterity." *Havernick*
^e "I hate to see things done by halves. If it be right, do it boldly; if it be wrong, leave it undone." — *Gilpin.*

Simeon
Levi

^f Ge. xxxiv. 25—30.

^g Nu. xxvi. 14. Simeon not mentioned in Moses' blessing, De. xxxiii; Nu. xviii. 23; Josh. xxi. 3.

Judah

^h De. xxxiii. 7; Hos. xi. 12.
ⁱ Nu. x. 14; Ju. i. 1—4; Ps. xviii. 40.
^j 1 Ch. v. 2; Phil. ii. 10; He. x. 13.
^k Re. v. 5; Nu. xxiii. 24, xxiv. 9.
^l Nu. xxiv. 17.
^m Ps lxv. 7.
ⁿ Ma. xxi. 9; Is. lx. 1—5; lv. 4, 5; xl. 10; xlii. 1, 4; Mk. xvi. 15.

B. C. cir. 1689.

a De. xxxiii. 28;
Ex. iii. 8; 2 Ki.
xviii 3i, 32.

"They that govern most make least noise. You see when they row in a barge, they that do drudgery work, slash and puff, and sweat; but he that governs sits quietly at the stern and scarce is seen to stir."—*Selden*.

"An established government has an infinite advantage by the very circumstance of its being established—the bulk of mankind being governed by authority, not reason."—*Hume*.

Zebulun Issachar

b Josh. xix. 10.
c De. xxxiii. 18, 19.

d Josh. xix. 17—22.

"Nature seems to have taken care to disseminate her blessings among the different regions of the world, that the nations of the several parts of the globe might have a kind of dependence upon one another, and be united together by their common interest."—*Addison*.

Dan

e Jud. xiii. 2, 24;
xv. 20; xvi. 21, 30
f "Straight on
Hebward spires he
glides, and bites
the horse's leg or
cattle's sides."
g Ps xxv. 5; cxix
166, 174; cxxx. 5, 6;
Is. xxv. 9; xxvi. 8;
Lu. ii. 25, 38.

the peace and plenty of Messiah's days. **he . . grapes**, this language is to be understood as meaning the most remarkable richness of soil. (12) **red . . milk**,^a *lit.* his eyes shall be redder than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk. "Not only would Judah's soil be so fertile that its vines should be employed for tying asses and colts to their branches, but the grapes of those vines should be so plentiful and luscious as to make wine run like the water in which he washed his clothes, while the wine and milk should be so exhilarating and invigorating as to impart a sparkling brilliance to the eyes and a charming whiteness to the teeth. The aged prophet has here no thought of debauchery, but only paints before the mind's eye a picture of the richest and most ornate enjoyment."—*Lange*.

Shiloh (vs. 10).—I. Using the word prophecy in its predictive sense, this is the language of unquestionable prophecy. II. This prophecy contains a revelation of Christ. The name here given to the Saviour we understand to signify "The Peaceful One." III. This revelation of Christ is connected with the announcement of the particular time when He was to appear. IV. This announcement is connected with a statement showing in what way His people will come to Him. "To Him shall the gathering of the people be." This is at once predictive and descriptive. 1. It predicts the allegiance Christ will certainly receive; 2. It describes the quality of this allegiance.—*C. Stanford*.

"*Sceptre shall not depart from Judah*."—"These words are very generally understood to mean that Judah's supremacy would continue until it culminated or flowered into the personal reign of Shiloh; in other words, that Judah's sovereignty was to be perpetuated in the person of Jesus Christ. So that this prediction is but the first whisper of that which was afterwards so distinctively declared, that David's seed should sit on the throne for ever and ever. It was not accomplished in the letter, any more than the promise to David was; the tribe of Judah cannot in any intelligible sense be said to have had rulers of her own up to the coming of Christ, or for some centuries previous to that date."—*Exp. Bib.*

13—15. (13) **haven . . ships**,^b *lit.* shore of the sea, and he shall be for a shore of ships, *i. e.* a landing place for ships. Zebulun was to represent the commerce of Israel. **and . . Zidon**,^c *lit.* his side shall be towards Zidon. "Since the territory subsequently allotted to Zebulun neither actually touched the Mediterranean, nor reached to Zidon, this circumstance may be noted as an indirect hint that this prophecy was not spoken, or even first written, after the occupation of the land."—*Pulp. Com.* (14) **is . . ass**, "The figure here employed has nothing mean about it. The Oriental ass is a more stately animal than the Western."—*Lange*. **crouching . . burdens**, *lit.* crouching down between the cattle-pens which received and protected the flocks by night. (15) **rest**,^d *i. e.* his place of rest. **became . . tribute**, *i. e.* he submitted to the drudgery of a servant.

The blessings of Zebulun, &c.—Consider these blessings—I. In their variety. 1. Maritime power. 2. Husbandry. 3. Political sagacity. 4. The power to conquer by perseverance. 5. Plenty. 6. Eloquence. 7. The warlike character. II. In their unity. Unity in variety. This diversity in the distribution of gifts and endowments contributes to human happiness and to human prosperity.—*T. H. Leale*.

Issachar.—Issachar was to manifest a keen appreciation of the land or portion of territory that should be assigned to him, and to renounce the warlike spirit and military enterprises of his brethren for the indolent and luxurious repose of his fat pastures, crouching between his sheep-folds, or rejoicing within his tents, like a lazy ass, capable indeed of mighty efforts, but too self-satisfied to put forth much exertion, devoting himself to agriculture and pastoral pursuits, and preferring rather to pay tribute to his brethren, in order to secure their protection, than to leave his ploughshare and cast aside his shepherd's crook to follow them into the tented field of war, as the patriarch next describes."—*Pulp. Com.*

16—18. (16) **shall . . people**,^e *lit.* the judger shall judge. (17) **adder**, *Heb. shephiphon*, the coluber *cerastes* of Linnæus. "The well-known horned snake, a small serpent of a sandy color. Its habit is to coil itself, usually in the camel's footmark, in the sand, and thence suddenly to dart out on any passing animal."—*Tristram*. **that . . heels**,^f horses are filled with terror at the sight of one. (18) **waited . . Lord**,^g the great salvation for which Jacob waited as distinguished fr. the lesser deliverance of his prosperity.

The believer waiting for God's salvation (vs. 18).—We may consider this passage as expressive of—I. The living saint's character. He is one who is "waiting for the salvation of God." II. The dying saint's comfort. Jacob's peace, hope, and joy, were now, in his dying circumstances, derived from having waited for, and being in immediate prospect of enjoying, the salvation of God. To him death was no new subject; the grave no strange country; salvation no unknown theme; heaven not an unlooked for home. He avows therefore his hope, his trust, and his confidence — *W. Snell*.

I have waited for Thy salvation. — Probably Jacob, having, as it were, projected himself forward into those stirring and warlike times he has been speaking of, so realizes the danger of his people, and the futility even of such help as Dan's when God does not help, that, as if from the midst of doubtful war, he cries, as with a battle cry, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O God." His longing for victory and blessing to his sons far overshot the deliverance from Philistines accomplished by Samson. That deliverance he thankfully accepts and joyfully predicts, but in the spirit of an Israelite indeed, and a genuine child of the promise, he remains unsatisfied, and sees in all such deliverance only the pledge of God's coming nearer and nearer to His people, bringing with Him *His* eternal salvation. — *Exp. Bib.*

19—21. (19) troop . . last,^a 'troops shall press on him, but he shall press upon their rear, *i. e.* Gad would follow and harass the retreat of Arab tribes. (20) **bread . . dainties,**^b allusion to fertility of territory of Asher; it was rich in corn, wine and oil. Solomon supplied the family of K. Hiram from this district (see 1 K. v. ii). (21) **is . . loose,**^c timid. swift of foot. **he . . words,** more famous in council than war (see Judg. iv. 5).

Lines of circumvallation. — These words (vs. 19) may be used as graphically descriptive of the defeat of Christ followed by His successes. The human heart is defending itself against Christ, and it has run out several lines of circumvallation; these must, one by one, be taken. There is the line of—I. Prejudice against ministers and churches. II. Social influence—evil companionship, etc. III. The intellectual difficulties of religion—infidelity, scepticism, and the like. IV. Pernicious habits. V. The pride and rebellion of the natural heart. — *Talmage*.

Gad, Asher, and Naphtali. — Gad, whose name signifies "a troop," was to become a warlike tribe. Though he might be often vanquished, yet he was to overcome at last. He would have the rewards of patient continuance. The promise of final victory would enable him to bear present defeat. The name "Asher" signifies *the happy, or making happy*. He was destined to enjoy great temporal prosperity. His lot was to be a rich one, yielding him not only necessities, but dainties, even royal dainties. Naphtali is compared to "an hind let loose." His tribe was to be distinguished by vivacity, timidity, and softness of manners. Yet he was to be renowned for that wonderful gift of eloquence which would invest him with a sovereignty over the minds and hearts of men. This tribe was famous for eloquence both in prose and poetry. Witness the poetic effusion of Barak—the war-song of the Naphtalite hero and Israel's deliverer. (Judges v.). — *Hom. Com.*

22—26. (22) is . . bough,^d ref. to prosperity of house of Joseph. **even . . well,**^e rendered even more fruitful by situation. **whose . . wall,** ref. to great increase of Joseph's posterity. (23) **archers,**^f *lit.* lords of arrows, or arrowmasters. **have . . him,** Joseph himself seems here to be pointed at; if so, a prob. ref. to his early trials. (24) **bow . . strength,**^g his resolution and perseverance invincible. **arms . . strong,** *Chal.* "Therefore gold was put upon his arms; he strengthened and confirmed his kingdom, which was given him from before the Most Mighty One of Jacob." **from . . Israel,** "If the clause is parenthetical, it may signify either that from the time of Joseph's exaltation he became the shepherd (who sustained) and the stone of (*i. e.* the rock which supported) Israel, or that from God, the Mighty One of Jacob, Joseph received strength to become the shepherd and stone of Israel, in which capacity he served as a prefiguration of the Good Shepherd, who was also to become the Rock or Foundation of his Church." — *Pulp. Com.* (25) **even . . father,** or, fr. the God of thy father. **with . . above,**^h *i. e.* rain and dew. **deep . . under,**ⁱ productions of soil. **blessings . . womb,**^k strong and numerous offspring. (26) **blessings . . hills,** *i. e.* Jacob's blessing on Joseph greater than Abraham's and Isaac's on Jacob, and lasting as the mountains. **separate . . brethren,**^l advanced to pre-eminence by the providence of God.

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"Men of genius do not excel in any profession because they labor in it, but they labor in it because they excel."—*Hazlitt*.

Gad, Asher, Naphtali

a De. xxxiii. 20; 1 Ch. v. 18.

b De. xxxiii. 24; Josh. xix. 24, 26; Is. xxxv. 2. See also Stanley, "Sin and Pal." 265.

c De. xxxiii. 23.

"I conceive that words are like money, not the worse for being common; but that it is the stamp of custom alone that gives them circulation or value. I am fastidious in this respect, and would almost as soon coin the currency of the realm as counterfeit the King's English."—*Hazlitt*.

Joseph

d De. xxxiii. 13-17. e Ps. i. 3.

f Ge. xxxvii. 4, 24, 28; Ps. cxviii. 13. g Ps. xviii. 32, 34; xvii. 14; Job xxix. 20; Col. i. 11.

h Je. v. 24. i De. viii. 7.

k Ps. cxxviii. 3. l De. xxxiii. 16; Ge. xxxvii. 4.

"A good inclination is but the first rude draught of virtue, but the finishing strokes are from the will; which, if well disposed, will by

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degrees perfect; if ill disposed, will by the superinduction of ill habits quickly deface it." — *South.*

"For some men, like unskilful jockeys, give up their designs when they have almost reached the goal; while others, on the contrary, obtain a victory over their opponents by exerting, at the last moment, more vigorous efforts than before." — *Polybius.*

Benjamin— Summary

α Jud. xx. 14-25.

"Boldness is ever blind, for it sees not dangers and inconveniences. Whence it is bad in council, though good in execution. The right use of bold persons, therefore, is that they never command in chief, but serve as seconds, under the direction of others. For in council it is good to see dangers, and in execution not to see them unless they are very great." — *Bacon.*

Jacob's dying charge

h He. xii. 23; Ps. xxxvii. 37.

"O, if the deeds of human creatures could be traced to their source, how beautiful would even death appear; for how much charity, mercy, and purified affection

Joseph's blessings. — In this blessing we have four leading ideas — I. Fruitfulness, or temporal prosperity. Here is — 1. The fruitfulness itself — "a fruitful bough"; 2. The source of this fruitfulness — "a well"; 3. Its great extent — its "branches run over the wall"; 4. Its strong supports — it leans upon a wall. II. Persecution consequent upon prosperity. III. Triumphant endurance of persecution — "his bow abode in strength." His faith rises superior to all trials. IV. Great and general blessings following this endurance. — 1. Blessings of heaven — dew and rain to cheer the thirsty land; 2. Blessings of the deep — fountains and wells of water; 3. Blessings in the increase of descendants; 4. Blessings greater than any yet enjoyed by his forefathers; 5. Blessings durable as the hills themselves. — *J. Hoatson.*

Over-the-wall fruitfulness. — The good Samaritan in his kindness to the Jew that had fallen among thieves, was a branch that ran over the wall. Our Lord's deed of mercy to the Syro-Phœnician woman was a branch that ran over the wall. And whilst it is right to give the harvest of our life to those who have claim on the vine, it must be right to let some shoots trail to the larger world outside, and to the very grating of the prisoner's cell. The text was suggested in passing a vineyard on the south side of the Alps, as outside the enclosure some unpruned shoots, with their just-formed grapes, were waving in the wind, to be perhaps a refreshment to some traveler in the summer's heat. It is the picture of a Christian whose abundant inner life comes out unawares, as it were, for the benediction of any who may pass that way. Tired pilgrims pass us every hour, some oppressed with their burden, some parched with the world's dust, some who have lost their strength in conflict, and some who thirst but for a tender look, a friendly utterance, a sympathetic grasp, and with these would go their way revived. Think of such finding this reviving in us! — *C. New.*

27, 28. (27) ravin,^a plunder, destroy. **wolf**, once abundant, now seldom seen, in Palestine. **morning . . spoil**, allusion to the rapacious habits of wolves, as ill, of boldness and ferocity of Benjamin. It was manifested in Ehud, the judge (Judg. iii. 15), and Saul (1 Sam. xi. 6-11, etc.), who were both descendants of Benjamin. (28) **tribes**, to whom the blessings had respect rather than to their founders. **one . . them**, *i. e.* the blessing fulfilled corresponded with the blessing predicted.

The wolf. — The wolf is weaker than the lion or the bear, and less courageous than the leopard; but he scarcely yields to them in cruelty and rapaciousness. So Benjamin, although not destitute of courage and address, nor disinclined to war, possessed neither the strength, nor the manly spirit of Judah, whose symbol was the lion's whelp; but yet he was greedy of blood, and delighted in rapine; and in the early periods of Jewish history, he distinguished himself by an active and restless spirit, which commonly, like the wolf among lambs and kids, spent itself in petty or inglorious warfare, although it sometimes blazed forth in deeds of heroic valor, and general utility. He had the honor of giving the second judge to the nation of Israel, who delivered them from the oppressive yoke of Moab; and the first king who sat on the throne of that chosen people, whose valor saved them from the iron sceptre of Ammon, and more than once revenged the barbarities of the uncircumcised Philistines upon their discomfited hosts. But the tribe of Benjamin ravened like wolves, that are so ferocious as to devour one another, when they desperately espoused the cause of Gibeah, and in the dishonorable and bloody feud reduced their own tribe to the very brink of ruin, and inflicted a deep wound on the other members of the state. — *Paxton.*

29-33. (29) **he . . them**, they were to share in the duty enjoined on Joseph. **bury, entomb**. (30) **cave, etc.**, he specifies the spot minutely to show that it will not suffice simply to carry him to Canaan. (31) **there . . Leah**, doubtless he would like to have said Rachel also. (32) **purchase . . Heth**, a reminder that the burial-place was really theirs. (33) **when . . sons**, these his last words: he died soon after. **gathered . . bed**, sitting to bless he now laid down to die. **was . . people**, *i. e.* he was now gathered to his people in the better country.

Jacob's death-bed (vs. 33). — Three things here deserve our attention: — I. His affection for the living. II. His sympathy with the dead. The feeling which he now expresses concerning his burial, suggests — 1. That there is something in man stronger than logic; 2. That the dead exert a powerful

influence upon the living. III. His magnanimity in all things. Two things alone can explain his calmness : faith in — 1. His future existence ; 2. The happiness of that existence. — *Thomas.*

Machpelah.—

And yonder glooms Machpelah's ancient cave,
The bartering sons of Heth to Abraham gave ;
Now giant stones protect that spot so blest,
Where the great sire and Hebrew mother rest ;
Nor yet perchance the rock betrays its trust,
Though forty ages brood above their dust. •

But sealed to Christians is that cell of gloom,
The Turk's proud crescent glittering o'er the tomb ;
For Moslems guard the spot with jealous care,
And burn their lamps and read their Koran there,
And pray to Allah in that worshipped place,
E'en while they scorn and hate the Patriarch's race.

— *Nicholas Michell.*

CHAPTER THE FIFTIETH.

1—6. (1) **Joseph . . face, etc.**, and closed his eyes, as Jacob had been promised, see xvi. 4. (2) **physicians**, Heb. *ropheim*, healers. The Egyptians had special healers for every disease. **embalm**,^a Joseph having an eye to the removal of the body. (3) **forty . . embalmed**, the time occupied in the process. **Egyptians**, out of respect for Joseph. **mourned . . days**,^b the cust. royal mourning in Egypt. This included the forty days of embalming. (4) **spake . . Pharaoh**, to the chief officers of his court, and prob. more especially to the priests, whose religious ideas might be different from those which should actuate him in the burial rites of his father. (5) **father . . swear**, but for a father's wish it might seem strange to Pharaoh that Joseph should wish to bury any of his kindred out of Egypt. (6) **go . . swear**, he regarded a promise to a dying father as sacred.

Ceremonies after death. — 1. When the extinction of the vital breath could no longer be doubted, the relatives began a preliminary mourning, perhaps observed during the day of death only (vs. 1). 2. Then the body was delivered up to the embalmers, who, in the case of Jacob, completed their work in forty days (vs. 3), though it more frequently required seventy. 3. Simultaneously with the operations of embalming commenced the chief or real mourning, which, lasting about seventy days (vs. 3), usually ended together with the process of mummification, but which, in the instance of the patriarch, exceeded it by thirty days. 4. The body, after having been enclosed in a case of wood or stone (vs. 26), was then either deposited in the family vaults (vs. 13), or placed in a sepulchral chamber of the house of the nearest relative (vs. 26). — *M. M. Kalisch.*

7—10. (7) **went . . Egypt**, one of the most extraordinary funeral processions on record. (8) **house . . house, i. e.** all the adults among the kindred of Jacob. (9) **went . . horsemen**, Egyptian respect for the great prime minister. **and . . company, lit.** the encamping host was very heavy. (10) **the . . Atad, lit.** the threshing-floor of thorns, “*i. e.* to a once open campaign tract now grown over, or it may be, compassed about and hedged in, with thorns. It was undoubtedly an extensive level plat of ground like the spots which were prepared for threshing-floors, or it may have been a place formerly used for that purpose. At any rate it was a spot sufficiently large for a camping ground for the whole host.” — *Bush.* **which . . Jordan, i. e.** to the W. of Jordan. **there . . lamentation**, Egyptians in their mourning exhibited grt. external demonstrations of sorrow (Herodotus ii. 85). **made . . days,** the Jewish mourning.

Jacob's funeral. — Of the funerals of the kings of Judah usually no more is said than this, *They were buried with their fathers in the city of David* ; but the funeral of the patriarch Jacob is more largely and fully described. He had spoken more than once of dying for grief and going to the grave bereaved of his children, but he dies in honor, and is followed to the grave by all his children. His orders concerning his burial were given and observed in faith,

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would be seen to have their growth in dusty graves !” — *Dickens.*

“Death comes equally to us all, and makes us all equal when it comes. The ashes of an oak in a chimney are no epitaph of that, to tell me how high or how large that was. The dust of great persons' graves is speechless too ; it says nothing, it distinguishes nothing.” — *Donne.*

Jacob embalmed

a 2 Ch. xvi. 14.

b Nu. xx. 29 ; De. xxxiv. 8.

“What is grief ? It is an obscure labyrinth into which God leads man, that he may be experienced in life ; that he may remember his faults and abjure them.” — *L. Schef-fer.*

“Great grief makes sacred those upon whom its hand is laid. Joy may elevate, ambition glorify, but sorrow alone can consecrate.” — *H. Gresby.*

Joseph buries his father

c 1 Sa. xxxi. 13 ; Job ii. 13 ; Ac. viii. 2.

“The Stoics, who thought the souls of wise men had their habitations about the moon, might make slight account of subterranean depositions, whereas the Pythagoreans held great care of their interment.” — *Sir T. Browne.*

“An angel's arm can't snatch me

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from the grave, —
legions of angels
can't confine me
there." — *Young*.

and returns
to Egypt

"We adorn graves
with flowers and
redolent plants,
just emblems of
the life of man,
which has been
compared in the
Holy Scriptures to
those fading beauties
whose roots,
being buried in
dishonor, rise
again in glory." —
Evelyn.

"Without Christian
piety the
contemplation of
the grave is terrible." — *Sir Wm.
Knighton*.

his brothers
crave his
forgiveness

a Jas. v. 16; Pr.
xxviii. 13.

"Nothing in this
low and ruined
world bears the
meek impress of
the son of God so
surely as forgive-
ness." — *A. Cary*.

"Of him that
hopes to be for-
given, it is indis-
pensably required
that he forgive.
To him that re-
fuses to practice
this duty, the
throne of mercy
is inaccessible, and
the Saviour of the
world has been
born in vain." —
Johnson.

Joseph
comforts his
brethren

† De xxxii. 35;
Job xxxiv. 29;
Ro xli. 19.

c Ro viii. 28; Ps.
lxxvi. 10.

d Ma. v. 44, 45; Ro.
xii. 20, 21.

The voice of an
evil conscience is
not one evil in
particular, but a

and in expectation both of the earthly and of the heavenly Canaan. — *M. Henry*.
Embalming. — Art invented by Egyptians 2,000 yrs. B. C.; prob. derived
origin. fr. idea that preservation of body was needful for return of soul to
human form after completing its cycle of existence of 3,000 or 10,000 yrs.
Physical and sanitary reasons may also have led to it. — *Topics*.

11—14. (11) *Abel-mizraim*, the mourning of the Egyptians. (12, 13) and
his sons, *etc.*, see xlix. 29—32. (14) *returned . . Egypt*, and there they
waited and multiplied to the time of the exodus.

Burial of the dead. — The general tendency of mankind to bury dead out of
sight. To accomplish this, three great methods: 1. Closing up body in earth
or stone; 2. Burning of body and entombing of cinders; 3. Embalming.
Incineration (burning) practiced in Greece and Rome. Cinerary urns have been
found in many parts. "Some of the grandest buildings in the world have
been tombs; such are the pyramids, the castle of St. Angelo, the tomb of
Cæcilia Metella, and many temples scattered over Hindustan and other E.
countries. Upon (*Epi*) the mound (*taphos*) beneath wh. the ashes of a Greek
were placed, it was customary for the public orator to pronounce a panegyric,
the pith of wh. was afterwards inscribed on the spot, hence the origin of
epitaph. First Christian burial-place in A. D. 596; in cities, 742; in consecrated
places, 750; in churchyards, 758. Early Christians in catacombs at Rome.
— *Topics*.

15—18. (15) *saw . . dead*, and all paternal restraint removed. *Joseph . .*
us, they could not think he would love them for their own sake. *will . .*
him, they judged him by their own standard of revenge. (16) *messenger*,
from Goshen to Memphis; some think Benjamin. *thy . . command*, of
which command we have no record, though they may not have invented it.
(17) *forgive . . sin*,^a in this they show the depth of their humility, the
sincerity of their repentance, and the genuineness of their religion. *and . .*
him, wept for joy at their repentance and obedience to their father. (18)
fell . . face, see xxxvii. 7—10.

Joseph's last forgiveness of his brethren. — I. Their need of forgiveness.
II. The plea on which they urge it. The dying request of their father. III.
The completeness of their forgiveness; 1. He speaks words of peace; 2. He
will not presume to put himself judicially in the place of God; 3. He assures
them that their suspicions are unfounded, 4. He is ready to prove his forgive-
ness by his actions; 5. The silent testimony of his tears. — *T. H. Leale*.

Influence of forgiveness. — A worthy old colored woman was walking quietly
along a street in New York, carrying a basket of apples, when a mischievous
sailor, seeing her, stumbled against her, and upset her basket, and then stood
to hear her fret at his trick, and enjoy a laugh at her expense. But what was
his astonishment when she meekly picked up the apples without any resent-
ment in her manner, and giving him a dignified look of mingled sorrow,
kindness, and pity, said, "God forgive you, my son, as I do!" That touched a
tender chord in the heart of the rude jack tar. He felt ashamed, self-con-
demned, and repentant. The tear started in his eye; he felt that he *must*
make some reparation. So, heartily confessing his error, and thrusting his
hands into his pockets, and pulling out a lot of loose "change," he forced it
upon the wondering old black woman, exclaiming, "God bless you, kind
mother! I'll never do so again."

19—21. (19) *for . . God?*^b it is His to avenge, not mine. (20) *ye . . me*,
that was certainly your purpose. *but . . good*, He has brought good out of
evil. *bring . . alive*,^c Joseph was compensated for the wrongs done him by
the good he had been the means of doing. (21) *now . . not*, that I will
avenge the past. *nourish . . ones*,^d repeats and confirms the promise which
he had originally made when he invited them to Egypt. *spake . . them*,
lit. he spake to their hearts.

God's providential care. — In Palestine the winter of 1873—4 was unusually
severe. The snow lay at one time from two to five feet deep in the streets
and on the flat roofs of the houses. Many roofs were crushed. In Gaza the
following remarkable incident occurred in connection with the great snow-
storm of February 7th and 8th: A robber during the night broke into the
house. After having collected several articles on the lower floor, he entered
the chamber where the master of the house was peacefully sleeping. His lit-
tle child was also asleep in his cradle. The robber reflected that he might be

betrayed by the child, so he took the cradle and set it outside of the house near the door. The child began to cry. The mother hastens to the cradle, but finds it gone. The child kept on crying. The father awoke and exclaimed, "The child is crying out of doors. How can that be?" They both hasten to the cradle, wondering who could have taken it out. While they are wondering and speculating on the strange circumstance, the roof, pressed under the burden, falls, and in a moment their house is in ruins. But they are all three unharmed. In the morning, when the stones and lumber were taken away, a man was found dead among the ruins. The things he had stolen were found partly sticking out of his pockets, partly tied up in a bundle on his back. Thus God and death had overtaken him. He carried out the child lest he should wake his father and mother by crying, and so, without meaning it, by the wonderful providence of God, he rescued the lives of all the family, while he himself died in his sin. How truly were the words of Joseph to his brothers fulfilled in him — "Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good." — *Bib. Illustrator*.

22—26. (22) he . . house, all the posterity of Jacob. Joseph . . years, measured by events one of the longest lives on record, of which 93 yrs. were passed in Egypt. (23) *Machir^a (sold)*. were . . knees,^b i. e. placed upon his knee when new-born to receive his blessing. (24) Joseph . . said,^c etc., dying he comforts others, and manifests his own faith in God. (25) ye . . hence,^d he participated in the desire and in the faith of Jacob, cited in Heb. xi. 22, as a signal instance of faith. (26) embalmed, to preserve him from corruption to the time of their departure. coffin, *lit.* ark or chest. In Egypt his body remained for 300 years until the exodus, when it was deposited in a sepulchre in Shechem (Josh. xxiv. 32).

Dying Joseph. — I. Satisfied with the goodness of the Lord. II. Full of faith. 1. Sure of God's covenant. 2. Superior to the world. 3. The possessor of immortality. — *T. H. Leale*.

"Joseph died!" — Then the world can get on without its greatest and best men. This is very humiliating to some persons. Here is, for example, a man who has never been absent from his business for twenty years. You ask him to take a day's holiday, go to a church opening or to a religious festival. He says, "My dear sir! Why, the very idea! The place would go to rack and ruin if I was away four and twenty hours." It comes to pass that God sends a most grievous disease upon the man — imprisons him in the darkened chamber for six months. When he gets up, at the end of six months, he finds the business has gone on pretty much as well as if he had been wearing out his body and soul for it all the time. Very humiliating to go and find things getting on without us! Who are we? The preacher may die, but the truth will be preached still. The minister perishes — the ministry is immortal. This ought to teach us, therefore, that we are not so important, after all; that our business is to work all the little hour that we have, and to remember that God can do quite as well without us as with us, and that He puts an honor upon us in asking us to touch the very lowest work in any province of the infinite empire of His truth and light. — *J. Parker*.

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multitude of evils. It is a barking hell-hound, a monster vomiting fire, raging fury, a tormenting devil. It is a nature and quality of a guilty conscience to flee and be terrified, even when all is well, and when prosperity abounds, and to change such prosperity into danger and death. — *Luther*.

the death of Joseph

a Nu. xxv. 29; De. iii. 15; Josh. xlii. 31; xvii. 1, 3; Jud. v. 14.
b Ps. cxxviii. 4, 6.
c Ge. xvii. 8; xlviii. 21; He. xi. 13.
d Ex. xlii. 19; Josh. xxiv. 32.

His coffin laid up by them ready to be carried away according to his dying request whenever God should restore them to the promised land, would have taught them to keep apart from Egypt and its idolatries, looking for a better country, which God had promised to their fathers." — *Spk. Com.*

"That is the best thought of death, to remember the promise of God and His gracious redemption." — *Lange*.

THE BOOK OF EXODUS.

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Introduction.

EXODUS.

I. Title. By the Jews, and in the Heb. Scriptures, this bk. is called *Ve-Aleh Shemoth* ("these are the names") fr. the opening words (i. 1) : or in brief, *Shemoth* (*the names*). The title in the **A. V.** is derived fr. the **LXX.** and relates to the principal event wh. it records. **Ἔξοδος** (*Exodus*) = departure: (fr. **ἐξ**, ex — out; and **οδος**, odos — a way), i. e. the departure of the children of Israel fr. Egypt. **II. Authorship.** Jewish tradition makes Moses the author of Exodus, as of all the books of the Pentateuch. It is evident from the book itself that certain portions of it were written by Moses. (Ex. xvii. 14; xxiv. 4-7; xxxiv. 27.) Its close connection with Genesis makes it probable that they had the same author. It is referred to by our Lord in language which is most easily understood as asserting the Mosaic authorship. (Mk. xii. 26; Lu. xx. 37.) The internal evidence points to Moses as the writer of the Pentateuch. (1) The author of the Pent. and the giver of the Levitical law had an intimate acquaintance with Egypt, its literature, its laws, and its religion. (2) The hist. and the law of the Israelites both bear marks and tokens of their long passage through the wilderness, and long residence in it. (3) The language and the legislation of the Pent. has Canaan only in prospect. (4) "The language of the Pent. is such as to suit the age and character of Moses." In Exodus, as in Genesis, there is evidence that materials from different sources have been brought together.

III. Contents and design. It embraces a hist. of the events that occurred during 145 yrs. fr. the death of Joseph to the building of the tabernacle. Fr. d. of Joseph to b. of Moses 63 yrs.; fr. b. of Moses to the Exodus 81 yrs.; fr. Exodus to erection of tabernacle 1 yr.; total 145 yrs. "The scope of the bk. is to exhibit the accomp. of the promises to Abraham; that fr. him a nation should spring, wh. aft. a sojourn of sev. cents. in a state of degradation in a foreign land, should triumphantly be brought forth, and established in the country destined for its permanent occupation (Ge. xv. 5, 13). The whole hist. too, presents a vivid adumbration of the church militant, in her redemption fr. spiritual bondage, and her passage through the wilderness of this world" (*Litton*). "As to the gen. scope of this bk., it is plainly to preserve the memorial of the great facts of the national hist. of Israel in its earlier periods, to wit, their deliv. from Egypt, the kindness and faithfulness of God in their subsequent preservation in the wilderness, the delivery of the law, and the establishment of a new and peculiar system of worship" (*Bush*).

[The chronology of Exodus and the following books, as given in this work, is that of Usher, although it is well understood that his dates are, in some cases, only an approximation to the truth. But with regard to many events the time chronology is still unsettled. *G. M. A.*]

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CHAPTER THE FIRST.

1-6. (1-4) Now . . names, literally, "And these are the names." There is here indicated the close connection with the preceding. For the five books, known as the Pentateuch, were originally one book, called the Torah, or the law. The initial "and" is to join together the different sections of the single treatise. which . . Egypt, the next two words, "with Jacob," belong to this clause. Translate, "Now these are the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt with Jacob; They came every man with his household." See Ge. xxix. 32 to xxx. 13; Ge. xli. 8-24. (5) seventy,^a i. e. 11 sons + 4 sons of Reuben, 6 of Simeon, 3 of Levi, 3 and 2 grandsons of Judah, 4 of Issachar, 3 of Zebulun, Dinah, 7 sons of Gad, 4 and one daughter of Asher and 2 grandsons, 10 sons of Benjamin, 1 of Dan, 4 of Naphtali, = 66 in all + Joseph and 2 sons, and Jacob himself. (6) Joseph,^b . . generation, Joseph died 54 yrs, after the death of Jacob.

Death. — I. Death removes the most useful men — "Joseph." 1. He had instructed his brethren. 2. He had enriched his father. 3. He had saved his nation. 4. He had taught the world an eternal lesson. II. Death removes the largest families — "All his brethren." III. Death removes the proudest nations. 1. Pitiable. 2. Irremediable. 3. Admonitory. — J. S. Exell.

Israel in Egypt. — With Israel in Egypt begins a new era in the world's progress. Biography becomes history. Instead of individuals or a tribe, God has now a nation with which to work. He has undertaken a vast purpose. This people — united by common parentage, common faith, and common hope — He is to weld still more compactly by fellowship in disaster and deliverance into a nation which shall be the miracle of history, as intensely and persistently individual as its founder. With this nation He enters into covenant and, through its faith and experience, reveals to the world the one holy God, and brings in its Redeemer. Such a mission costs; its apostles must suffer. Yet this relief intervenes: personal blessing is not lost in national pains. The strong word covering this process is discipline; the development of character and efficiency under rigorous conditions. — C. M. Southgate.

7-11. (7) children, etc., the idea is amazing and unparalleled increase. The time is to be considered 430 years. See Ex. xii. 40, and it is important to bear in mind, also, that the "seventy souls" enumerated in Gen. xli. 8-27 comprises only two females, and that Jacob's sons' wives" are expressly mentioned as not included among them (ib. ver. 26). Further, each Israelite family which went down into Egypt was accompanied by its "household" (Ex. i. 1), consisting of some score of dependants. If each son of Jacob had 50 such retainers, and if Jacob himself had a household like that of Abraham (Gen. xiv. 14), the number which "went down into Egypt" would amount to at least 2,000, so that two millions at the exodus is not an impossibility. (8) arose, 40 yrs. before the birth of Moses. up . . king, prob. Rameses I. which knew not Joseph,^c who was wholly ignorant of his history. At the distance of from two to three centuries the benefits conferred by Joseph upon Egypt, more especially as they were conferred under a foreign and hated dynasty, were forgotten. (9) said . . people, i. e. his counsellors. more . . we, i. e. more in proportion to space occupied. (10) wisely, i. e. craftily,^d and . . land, their presence a source of revenue and power, and Pharaoh fears already that the Israelites will quit Egypt. (11) taskmasters,^e superintendents of the public works. treasure-cities, store-cities, magazines, depots of ammunition, etc. See 2 Chron. xvi. 4. Pithom, (abode of Atum), perh. Patumos. Raamses,^f (son of the sun), perh. Abu Keshed, N. E. of Heliopolis.

The increase of the Church. — I. Notwithstanding the removal of its chief officer (vs. 6); Joseph dead; his influence gone; his counsel inaccessible. To-day the Church loses her chief officers, but it still grows. II. Notwithstanding the decade of the generation (vs. 6). So to-day men die, but the Church, by making new converts, multiplies her progeny to an almost incredible extent. III. Notwithstanding the persecution to which it was subjected (vs. 11). The Church can never be put down by force. The infinite Power is on her side. This is more than all that can be against her. IV. Notwith-

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See note on the chronology in the introduction.

first colony of Israelites in Egypt

a De. x. 22.

b Ge. i. 26.

"The very titles of the first two books in the Bible remind us that the history of man is little more than a narrative of his entrance into the world and his exit from it." — Scott.

"We die every day; every moment deprives us of a portion of our life, and advances us a step toward the grave; our whole life is only a long and painful sickness." — Massillon.

Pharaoh oppresses the Israelites

c This continued 23 yrs more, in all 34 yrs. fr. Jacob's first coming into Egypt. — Lightfoot.

d Ec. ix. 15; He. vi. 10.

e "He speaks as if he had looked through a multiplying glass." — Trapp.

f Ps. ii. 1, 4; x. 2; lxxxiii. 3, 4; Job v. 13; Pr. xxi. 30.

The Church must not measure the love of God towards her by the affliction she endures, but by His purpose therein. — Hom. Com.

g Ge. xv. 13; De. xxvi. 6; Ps. lxxxii. 6.

h Ge. xlvii. 11.

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"During this long residence in Egypt God had not held any visible intercourse with the Israelites."—*Pretyman*.

"Man is, beyond dispute, the most excellent of created beings, and the vilest animal is a dog; but the sages agree that a grateful dog is better than an ungrateful man."—*Saadi*.

they increase
and are still
more oppressed

a Ps. cv. 24.

b Ex. ii. 23, vi. 9;
Ac. vii. 19, 34.

"There is a frightful interval between the seed and the timber."—*Johnson*.

the midwives
ordered to
kill the male
children

c Ne. v. 15; Pr. xvi. 6; Dan. iii. 13, vi. 13; 1 Pe. ii. 17; Ac. v. 29.

Though the performance of God's promises is sometimes slow, yet it is always sure. It was when the Israelites lost the benefit of the protection of Joseph that God made their numbers their defense, and they became better able than they had been to shift for themselves. — *A. Nevin*.

the people
ordered to
cast them into
the river

d Pr. xi. 18; Ec. viii. 12; Is. iii. 10; He. vi. 10
e 1. Sa. ii. 35; 2 Sa. vii. 11.

standing the artifices by which it was sought to be betrayed (*vss.* 15-22) So the Church has been in danger through the treachery of the outside world, and through the daring cruelty of meddling men. Still it grows. May it soon fill the world, as the Israelites did Egypt! All Church increase is from God; not from men, not from means. God has promised to multiply the Church. — *J. S. Exell*.

Egyptian cruelty.—While staying at Alexandria, we passed a public building in course of erection. A great number of women and children of both sexes were carrying away the earth excavated for the foundation. Some laborers had loosened the soil, and the poor creatures then scraped it with their hands into circular baskets which they bore away on their backs; they were barefooted and very slenderly covered with rags. Several taskmasters, who have not ceased out of Egypt since the time of the Pharaohs, stood at intervals holding a scourge of cords, which was not spared if any of the people, as they passed by crouching under their burdens, seemed to slacken in their work. They all had been pressed into the service by the Pasha's officers, and were paid at the miserable sum of half a piastre a day. — *Boat and Caravan*.

12-14. (12) *grieved*,^a *i. e.* filled with loathing and fear. (13) *rigour*,^b *lit.* fierceness. (14) *mortar*, *clay*, *brick*, common in Egypt at all times, esp. under 18th dynasty. If the Pharaoh of the present passage was Seti I., the bricks made may have been destined for that great wall which he commenced but did not live to complete, between Pelusium and Heliopolis, which was to secure his eastern frontier (*Birch*, "*Egypt in the Earliest Times*," p. 125). *service* . . *field*, if the "service in the field" included, as Josephus supposed, the cutting of canals, their lives indeed would have been "made bitter." There is no such exhausting toil as that of working under the hot Egyptian sun, with the feet in water, in an open cutting, where there can be no shade, and scarcely a breath of air, from sunrise to sunset, as forced laborers are generally required to do. Mehemet Ali lost 20,000 laborers out of 150,000 in the construction of the Alexandrian Canal towards the middle of the present century.

Moral growth proportionate to affliction.—1. This is true of individual moral character. 2. This is especially true in the development of the Church. — *J. S. Exell*.

15-17. (15) *spake* . . *midwives*, of whom two are named, either bec. of their disobedience to the king, or bec. they were the directors of the others. *Shiphrah* (*beauty*). *Puah*, (*mouth*). (16) *stools*, Mr. Lane ("Modern Egyptians," vol. iii, p. 142) says, "two or three days before the expected time of delivery the midwife conveys to the house the *kursee elwilâdeh*, a chair of peculiar form, upon which the patient is to be seated during the birth." A chair of the form intended is represented on the Egyptian monuments. *son* . . *live*, that only the daughters might grow up and become wives of the Egyptians. (17) *but* . . *God*,^c in contrast to the Egyptians who thought only of themselves. The midwives, if they did not scruple at a falsehood, had a sense of religion, feared God sufficiently to decline imbruing their hands in the innocent blood of a number of defenseless infants, and, rather than do so wicked a thing, risked being punished by the monarch.

Instead of murdering them wholesale.—It did seem a wise though a cruel thing to make them slaves; to divide them up and down the country; to appoint them to the most menial work in the land, that they might be crushed down and their spirits become so base that they would not dare to rebel. Thus we may suppose it was hoped that their physical strength would be so relaxed, and their circumstances so reduced, that the clan would soon be insignificant if not utterly extinct. But God met and overruled this policy in various ways. "The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied." — *Spurgeon*.

18-22. (18) *why* . . *alive*, he must have had the midwives watched. (19) *delivered* . . *them*, in the East at the present day a large proportion of the women deliver themselves; and the services of professional accoucheurs are very rarely called in. The excuse of the midwives had thus a basis of fact to rest upon, and was only untrue because it was not the whole truth. (20) *God* . . *midwives*,^d specially favored them. (21) *that* . . *houses*,^e a prov. express. = "they married Hebrews and became mothers in Israel." (22) *and*

. . people, whose natural hatred of the Hebrews would make them willing executioners. river,^a the Nile.

The fear of God. — Learn a life-lesson from the monument to Lord Lawrence in Westminster Abbey. Of all the memorials there, you will not find one that gives a nobler thought. Simply his name, and the date of his death, and these words; "He feared man so little, because he feared God so much." Here is one secret of victory. Walk ever in the fear of God. Set God ever before you. Let your prayer be that of the Rugby boy, John Laing Bickersteth, found locked up in his desk after his death: "O God, give me courage that I may fear none but thee." — *Great Thoughts.*

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-4. (1) man, Amram.^b The Hebrew language is deficient in tenses, and cannot mark *pluperfect* time. The meaning is that "a man of the house of Levi had gone, some time before, and taken to wife a daughter of Levi." Miriam must have been fourteen or fifteen at the time of the exposure of Moses. daughter, Jochebed,^c one of Levi's descendants — "a wife of the daughters of Levi," as the LXX. translates. (2) son, having already a son and daughter. goodly,^d *lit.* fair to God, *i. e.* exceeding beautiful. she . . months,^e from all eyes save those of her family. (3) bulrushes,^f prob. the paper-reed (*papyrus nilotica*), triangular stalk, about 10 ft. high, of wh. the cellular tissue was pieced together and made into a long roll for writing purposes. slime . . pitch, *lit.* asphalted it with asphalt, *i. e.* to make it watertight. flags, tall flowering rushes (*alga nilotica*). (4) sister,^g Miriam. There can be no reasonable doubt that this is the "Miriam" of the later narrative (ch. xv. 20, 21; Num. xx. 1), who seems to have been Moses' only sister (Num. xxvi. 59). stood, *etc.*, doubtless directed by her mother.

Childhood of Moses. — Notice three things: 1. Helpless infancy. Moses in the ark. A beautiful sight. Unconscious of any danger. Mother far away. No one to help the child. Yes, One. Unseen dangers have lurked around our infancy. We may never know how near we have been to peril. II. Sisterly affection. Miriam afar off. Yet she watched the ark. A very pretty sight to see one child caring for another. The elder sister nursing, and tending, and watching the infant. III. Filial obedience. While love aided her in doing this, probably her mother incited her. She obeyed. Afar off, but not too far. Parents may be helped by dutiful daughters.

The ark of bulrushes. — Our translation of this passage is deficient in clearness. The bulrush — gomeh — is the Egyptian papyrus. Taboth — ark — is the Arabic word for coffin. Slime and pitch are bitumen and tar. The whole was made like a coffin, to deceive the watchful officers of government with the appearance of a funeral. This, too, would appeal more tenderly to the daughter of Pharaoh, and there is a sort of typical signification in it. The Saviour of Israel was laid in a coffin, and taken from a watery grave; the Saviour of the world rose from a rock sepulchre in Jerusalem. — *Thomson.*

5-8. (5) daughter, said to be Thermuthis. wash . . river, prob. a religious ablution: the Nile was adored as an emanation of Osiris. her maidens, Egyptian ladies of high rank are represented on the monuments as attended to the bath by a number of hand-maidens. As many as four are seen in one representation (Wilkinson, l. s. c.). "Her maid" is her special personal attendant, the others being merely women attached to her household. (6) The princess herself opened the "ark," which was a sort of covered basket. wept, its tears touched her woman's heart, and she pitied it. "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin." this . . children, no Egyptian child would be found in such a place. (7) then . . sister, who now, as if moved by curiosity, joined them. She had watched to some purpose. She had seen everything — she had drawn near as she beheld the "maid" go down to the water's edge, and take the ark out. She had heard the words of the princess; and thereupon she promptly spoke. nurse . . women, no Egyptian woman would have undertaken the task. that . . thee? *i. e.* under thy protection. She did not speak too soon nor too late. She did not say a word too much nor too little. (8) maid, the Heb. implies a grown girl, called . . mother, and the princess, feeling all the force of the reasoning, answers in one short pregnant word — "Go." Thus the mother's purpose was fulfilled; her stratagem succeeded.

B. C. cir. 1573.

^a Ac. vii. 19.
"The people's safety is the law of God." — *Jas.*

^b *Otis*
"But man shall ultimately be stronger than the power of evil, and shall overcome it and go forth victorious; though bruised and hurt, needing recovery and rest." — *Phillips Brooks.*

birth of Moses

^c Ex. vi. 13-20.

^d Nu. xxvi. 59.

^e Ac. vii. 20.

^f He. xi. 23.

^g Heb. *gomeh*, wh. indicates its absorbing power; Gk. *biblos*, whence the word Bible.

^h Ex. xv. 20; Nu. xxvi. 59.

He who sends the storm steers the vessel.

God takes care that men needed for His work in evil times shall be born in them — Wickliffe, Luther. — *J. C. May.*

he is found by Pharaoh's daughter

Trust God, always trust God; then do all within your power to help on the purpose you prayerfully hope He is about to undertake for you. Make the best ark you can: place it in the river at the safest spot you can find; leave it there; then trust God. — *C. S. Robinson.*

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"The fact of the princess disobeying her father's command in adopting the babe, so far from being a difficulty, as some have made it, is the very impress of truth itself. If there is a thing too strong for man's laws, it is woman's heart. Witness Antigone burying her brother."—*Alford*. Fundamentally, there is no such thing as private action. All actions are public—in themselves or their consequences.—*Bovee*.

he receives
his name

a Ps. xviii. 16.

"We speak of educating our children. Do we know that our children educate us?"—*Sigourney*.

"Education commences at the mother's knee, and every word spoken within the hearing of little children tends towards the formation of character. Let parents bear this ever in mind."—*H. Ballou*.

"Education briefly, is the leading human souls to what is best, and making what is best out of them; and these two objects are always attainable together, and by the same means; the training which makes men happiest in themselves also makes them most serviceable to others."—*Ruskin*.

he kills an
Egyptian
and flies
from Egypt

b Ac vii. 22-25;
He. xi. 24, 26
c Ge. ix. 6.

The weeping babe (vs. 6).—This babe had : I. A very cruel king. II. A very tender mother. III. A very loving sister. IV. A very kind benefactor. Learn :—Nothing is too hard for the Lord.—*Bolton*.

Adoption by royalty.—Suppose that you were to see the child of a beggar in the streets, or the child of a criminal in prison, and it so happened that the emperor of Russia or the queen of England were to see this little unfortunate creature and exclaim, "I will adopt it as my own," and were to have it taken to a palace, clad in rich dresses, fed at the royal table, brought up under the royal care, and even prepared for a throne. "Oh," you would think, "what a change of life! what happiness for this child!" And if it were an angel, or an archangel, or a seraph that adopted it, in order to make it, if it were possible, an angel that should never die; that would be a thousand times more glorious still. Think, now, what it is to become a child of God; and this is, nevertheless, what all of us may become by faith in Jesus Christ. What wonderful glory! what marvellous happiness! Thus St. John exclaims, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—*Prof. Gaussen*.

9-10. (9) take . . away, "take him to your own home as long as he needs nursing." nurse . . me, with the princess's protection no need for further secrecy. I . . wages, a mother paid for nursing her own child! "Jochebed was more than content." (10) she . . daughter, at what age not known; "probably at the end of the second year." he . . son, adopted. The princess took the child into her family and brought him up, giving him the privileges of a son, with such an education as a princess's son received. The best idea of what such an education is in the words of St. Stephen (Acts vii. 21)—"Now Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Moses, fr. Heb. vb. *mashah*,^a to draw out. The Egyptian form of the name was probably Mesu, from a root meaning "to draw forth." Mesu is found in the monuments as an Egyptian name under the nineteenth dynasty.

Nourish the child.—1. The child is to be nourished with the habitual practice of intercessory prayer. Whatever you may fail of in your knowledge, or your earthly providing, or your power of religious influence otherwise, have hope in your intercessions. 2. And, therefore, take this child away and nourish him for Christ with the expectation of a blessing. That expectation is to be not only a comfort to you on the way, but one of the spiritual forces with which you are to prevail. This Lord, who has lent you the little one, not only loves the importunities of His people; He delights in their largest confidences.—*Bp. F. D. Huntington*.

Permanence of early impressions.—A farmer decided to remove an old beech-tree which grew on his farm. The wood-cutter noticed on the bark of the tree some curious marks looking like the letters J. L., roughly cut, and below them some ornamental design. After the tree had been cut down and was being separated into lengths he was startled to find on the hard dry wood at the core of the tree, directly opposite the place on the bark where he had noticed the marks, the clearly cut letters J. L., on a dark background, and below them an anchor. On inquiries being made, it was found that the letters were the initials of a sailor named John Leland, who, in an idle hour, had cut them on the beech-tree when it was young. There were thirty-seven rings between the letters and the bark of the tree, and the woodsman said that each ring represented one year's growth of the tree. He inferred that the letters must have been cut in the year 1853, and his belief was confirmed when he learned that it was in that year that the sailor had spent some time in that neighborhood. Thus the inscription had not only remained in the place where it was cut at the first, but as each year added to the growth of the tree, the letters still appeared on the surface, scarcely legible there, it is true, but perfectly clear at the core. It is so with human character. Many an old man, in spite of the rough usage of the world and the scar of time and trouble, bears upon his walk and conversation the marks of the handwriting which in his youth God put in his heart.—*Bib. Ill.*

11-15. (11) grown. M. was now about 40 yrs. of age.^b burdens, labors, servitude. Egyptian, prob. one of the taskmasters. "Such persons are on the Egyptian monuments represented as armed with long rods." (12) slew . . sand,^c oppression maketh a wise man mad. A wrongful act; to be placed among the deeds which are hasty and regrettable. There is abundant "sand"

in all the more eastern portion of the land of Goshen. (See "Qy. Statement of Palestine Explora. Fund," July, 1880, p. 140.) (13) **two . . together,** their burdens increased by internal strife. **him . . wrong,** *lit.* the wicked person, *i. e.* the aggressor. **fellow,** neighbor, in interposing Moses did what was right. (14) **who . . us?** his friendly interference rejected: a hint that he should mind his own business; this was his business. **intendest . . Egyptian?** a hint that if M. interfered he would be informed against. It was not his interference, but his wrongful act of the day before that exposed Moses to this rebuke. (15) **Pharaoh,** if the Pharaoh of the original oppression was Seti I., the present Pharaoh, from whom Moses flies, must have been his son, **Rameses II. Midian,** so called from fourth son of Abraham by Keturah;^d S. of Dead Sea and the land of Moab.

Some people will never look on the burdens of their brethren. — 1. They pretend not to see them. 2. They have no sympathy with them. 3. They fear lest their purse or energy should be taxed. 4. They miss the luxury of relieving them. — *J. S. Exell.*

Brotherly sympathy. — Prior to the return of Mr Henson, the original of "Uncle Tom," to America in 1851, he was invited to a dinner party in the lordly mansion of one of our city merchants; and when seated at a table covered with the most tempting viands, and surrounded with every comfort and luxury which affluence could provide, he was so overpowered with the remembrance of his former misery and degradation that he rose from the table, feeling that he could not partake of a single morsel of the sumptuous banquet. His generous host went after him, and asked whether he was taken unwell, or whether he would like some other kind of dishes. "Oh, no," was the touching and pathetic response of this good, old man, "I am well enough; but, oh! how could I sit down to such a luxurious feast as this when I think of my poor brother at this moment a wretched, miserable, outcast slave, with perhaps scarcely a crust of bread or a glass of water to appease the cravings of nature?" — *John Lobb.*

16-22. (16) **priest,** prob. one who combined in himself the offices of prince and priest, like Melchisedec. **water . . flock,** so Rachel "kept the sheep" of her father Laban, and watered them (Gen. xxix. 9). Such a practice agrees well with the simplicity of primitive times and even of the present day in Arabia. (17) **shepherds . . away,** with rustic coarseness. **Moses . . flock,** as Jacob assisted Rachel. (18) **Reuel (friend of God),** or Raguel, poss. the same with Jethro.^k **how . . day?** whence it seems they were often interfered with by the shepherds. (19) **Egyptian,** so they deemed M. fr. his costume and speech. (20) **why . . bread,** Eastern hospitality; gratitude to benefactors. (21) **content,** willing. Moses had fled from Egypt simply to save his life. Received into Reuel's house, he consented to stay in his service, as Jacob in Laban's (Gen. xxix. 15-20). **Zipporah, (a little bird),** (22) **Gershom^k (expulsion, or a stranger there).**

A new training school. — The flight of Moses from Egypt introduced him into a new training school. At Pharaoh's court he had learned much that was required to fit him for his vocation, as the deliverer and leader of Israel, as the mediator of the ancient covenant and founder of the theocracy, and also as a prophet and lawgiver. But his education there had been of a very partial character. He had learned to rule, but not to serve, and the latter was as necessary, if not more so, than the former. He possessed the fiery zeal of youth, but not the circumspection, the patience, or the firmness of age. — *J. H. Kurtz.*

23-25. (23) **in time,** nearly 40 yrs. Literally, "in those many days." The reign of **Rameses II.** was exceptionally long. He had already reigned twenty-seven years when Moses fled from him (ch. ii. 15). He had now reigned sixty-seven, and Moses was eighty! and . . **bondage,** their burdens not reduced on the death of the king. **cry . . God,** showing that they retained the religion of their forefathers. (24) **remembered . . Jacob,** *i. e.* "was moved by their prayers to give effect to the covenant." (25) **respect,** knew, *i. e.* recognized them as the seed of Abraham, to whom the covenant belonged. God kept the whole in his thoughts — knew all, remembered all — counted every word and sigh — gathered the tears into his bottle — noted all things in his book.

The bitter cry of Israel heard. — I. Salvation begins with a sigh. Until a

B. C. cir. 1573.

a Mal. ii. 10; Ac. vii. 26-29, 35.

b Ma. v. 9; Mk. ix. 33.

c He. xi. 27.

d Ge. xxv. 1, 2.

"Experience teaches slowly, and at the cost of mistakes." — *Froude.*

"God allows him, in the impulse of youth, to strike a blow, and then gives him forty years in the desert to meditate upon its folly." — *S. S. Mitchell.*

he settles in Midian and marries

e In Arabic version *Imam.*

f Ge. xxix. 10; 1 Sa. ix. 11.

g Nu. x. 29.

h Josephus conjectures that Reuel was his proper name, and Jethro (*excellency*) was his official designation.

i Nu. xii. 1.

k Ac. vii. 29.

Pharaoh dies

l Ac. vii. 30; Ex. vii. 7.

m Jas. v. 4; Ps. xii. 5.

n Nu. xx. 16; De. xxvi. 7.

o Ge. xv. 13-18; xxvi. 4; xxvi. 8.

p Ex. vi. 5; Ps. cv. 8, 42; cvi. 44, 45;

Ne. ix. 7, 9; Ex. iv. 31.

B. C. cir. 1573.

The smallest act of charity shall stand us in good stead. — *Atterbury*.

"I never could believe that Providence had sent a few men into the world, ready booted and spurred to ride, and millions ready saddled and bridled to be ridden." — *R. Rum-bold*.

"Tears are akin to prayer."

B. C. 1491.

the burning bush

a The E. is the region which is looked upon as bef. a man, the W. behind him, the S. and N. as the right and left hand acc. to the Heb. system of orientation.

b "The symbol of the Scotch Church is likewise a burning bush with the words beneath it: 'Nec tamen consumebatur.'" — *Kalisch*.

c Ac. vii. 30; Mk. xii. 26; Is. lxiii. 9; Je. xxxiii. 15; Is. x. 47; xliii. 2; Ps. cxxix. 2.

d Jas. iv. 8; Ps. cxi. 2; Dan. iii. 28, 27.

"There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy." — *Shakespeare*.

There is in every common bush the light of God, and only those who see it draw off their shoes. It is the old story again. God is near, God is in this place, and we knew it not. — *Boyd Carpenter*.

God speaks to Moses

e Ge. xli. 2.

f Ex. xix. 12. g Josh. v. 15; Ec. v. 1; Jo. xlii. 10; Eph. ii. 18; iii. 12; He. x. 22.

sinner is weary of sin, it is of no use to bring the tidings of redemption to him. II. God hears the groanings of poor sinners. *Psa. xviii. 6; xxxiv. 6; lxxvii. 1; Joel ii. 32; John vi. 37.* III. He sees our afflictions and knows our sorrows. IV. He remembers His covenant. — *G. F. Pentecost*.

The events of life under a Divine providence. — When Druyse, the gunsmith, invented the needle gun, 'which decided the battle of Sadowa, was it a mere accident? When a farmer's boy showed Blucher a short cut by which he could bring his army up soon enough to decide Waterloo for England, was it a mere accident? When the Protestants were besieged at Bezors, and a drunken drummer came in at midnight and rang the alarm bell, not knowing what he was doing, but waking up the host in time to fight their enemies that moment arriving, was it an accident? When, in the Irish rebellion, a starving mother, flying with her starving child, sank down and fainted on a rock in the night, and her hand fell on a warm bottle of milk, did that just happen so? God is either in the affairs of men or our religion is worth nothing at all, and you had better take it away from us, and instead of this Bible, which teaches the doctrine, give us a secular book, and let us, as the famous Mr. Fox, the Member of Parliament, in his last hour, cry out: "Read me the eighth book of Virgil." Oh, my friends! let us rouse up to an appreciation of the fact that all the affairs of our life are under a King's command, and under a Father's watch. — *T. De Witt Talmage*.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-3. (1) **Moses . . flock**, either sheep or goats, or the two intermixed. The Sinaïtic pastures support these and not horned cattle. **Jethro** (*excellence*). his . . law, or brother-in-law: any kindred by marriage. "He may have been either Reuel's son or his nephew." **backside**, i. e. westward.^a **Horeb**, (dryness), name of district of wh. Mt. Sinai was the southern extremity. (2) **angel**, *lit.* "an angel of Jehovah." **bush**, Heb. *seneh* = bramble-bush, prob. the thorny acacia (*mimosa nilotica*). and . . consumed,^b the more wonderful from the nature of the plant.^c (3) **I . . aside**,^d for a season from my occupation as shepherd, to investigate. The action bespeaks him a man of sense not easily imposed upon. **great, wonderful, mysterious, burnt**, eaten up; Moses a scientific inquirer.

The burning bush (vss. 1-6). — Consider — I. The employment in which Moses was engaged. II. The sight which he witnessed. This was a representation of the Church — 1. In its lowly condition; 2. In the persecutions to which it has been exposed; 3. Its wonderful preservation. III. The resolution he made. IV. The prohibition he received. We see here — 1. The reverence required; 2. The reason assigned: it was holy ground. V. The announcement he heard. These words were — 1. Highly instructive; 2. Peculiarly encouraging. — *Anon*.

Many a man has been led through the pale of curiosity into the sanctuary of reverence. Moses purposed but to see a wonderful sight in nature, little dreaming that he was standing, as it were, face to face with God. Blessed are they who have an eye for the startling, the sublime, and the beautiful in nature, for they shall see many sights which shall fill them with glad amazement. Every sight of God is a "great sight;" the sights become little to us because we view them without feeling, or holy expectation. — *City Temple*. St. Austin, who came to Ambrose to have his ears tickled, had his heart touched. It is good to hear, howsoever. Come, said Latimer, to the public meeting, though thou comest to sleep; it may be, God will take thee napping. Absence is without hope. What a deal lost Thomas by being but once absent. — *Trapp*. Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God; but only he who sees, takes off his shoes. The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries. — *E. B. Browning*.

4-6. (4) **saw . . see**, reward of sanctified curiosity. **God . . bush**,^e the fire is explained by the voice. An objective reality is described, not a vision. **Moses, Moses**, the double call implies urgency. Compare the call of Samuel (1 Sam. iii. 10). (5) **draw . . hither**,^f i. e. nearer than thou art. **shoes, sandals**. **for . . ground**,^g *lit.* ground of holiness: "the reverence due to holy places thus rests on God's own command." "The practice of putting them off before entering a temple, or even the private apartments of a house, is universal in the East — the rationale of it being that the sandals

have dust or dirt attaching to them." (6) I . . father,^a meaning forefathers generally. hid, with his hands or robe. "An instinctive action. So Elijah, on the same site (1 K. xix. 13) and the holy angels before God's throne in heaven (Is. vi. 2)." afraid,^b conscious weakness and sinfulness.

Reverence. — When a boy in Princeton College, it was my inestimable privilege to be the pupil-assistant of Prof. Joseph Henry, the illustrious Christian scientist, in his original experiments. When for the first time electric signals were sent from point to point, the earth itself being used for the return current, Professor Henry put me at one end of the circuit, while he stood directing the experiments at the other. I can well remember the wonderful care with which he arranged all his principal experiments; when he approached the solution the experiment was repeated and repeated over and over again, and all its variable conditions altered and recombined in every form. Then often, when the testing moment came, that eminent scientist would raise his hand in adoring reverence, and call upon me to uncover my head and worship in silence, "Because," he said, "God is here. I am about to ask God a question." — A. Hodge. *Lowering the standard of reverence.* — It is very easy to lower our standard of reverence for anything. We have only to speak of it habitually in a light way. There is nothing like it to take the life out of the most precious texts of Scripture. We may repent of such a sin with bitter weeping, but those words can never be to us again what they were before. We may have cut down a bridge we shall some day vainly long to cross. A gentleman of keen wit used often to point his remarks with some apt quotation from the Bible. A friend who greatly admired him was present in his last hours, and asked with deep sympathy what was the future outlook. "Very gloomy, indeed," was his response. Surprised and deeply pained, he hastened to quote some precious promises suited to the solemn hour. "I have spoiled them all for myself," was his answer. "There is not one but is associated with some jest." His light went out in darkness, though his name was on the church roll. What a lesson is here for all who are willing to be taught by it! — *Christian Age*.

7-10. (7) taskmasters, oppressors. know,^c feel for, commiserate. sorrows,^d grief, trials. (8) I . . down,^e anthropological. hand, power. unto . . honey,^f i. e. a land of pasturage and flowers. "The phrase, first used here, and so common in the later books (Num. xiii. 27; Deut. xxvi. 9, 15; xxxi. 20; Jer. xi. 5; xxxii. 22; Ezek. xx. 6, etc.) was a proverbial expression for 'a land of plenty,' and not intended literally. See what the spies say, Num. xiii. 27." — *Pulp. Com.* Canaanites, etc., see Ge. x. 15 ff. and xv. 20. (9) behold, etc., repetition to fix the reason of the deliverance in the mind of Moses. (10) I . . Pharaoh,^g M. an ambassador fr. the King of kings to the king of Egypt. my . . people, notwithstanding their condition, they are yet the people of God.

I know their sorrows (vs. 7). — Shall not we be comforted as we discern that our dear Friend knows all about us? He is: I. The Physician; and if He knows all there is no need that the patient should know. II. The Master: His knowledge is to serve us instead of our own; we are to obey, not to judge. III. The Head. All understanding centres there; and all understanding and knowledge centers thus in our Lord. — *Spurgeon*.

God's choice of instruments. — God chooses the humblest instruments. He passes by the tempest, and waters the fields and gardens with His imperceptible dew. He passes by the great elephant, and bestows the hues of sapphire and amethyst upon the tiny humming-bird. He passes by the lofty pines and huge elm tree; and lavishes blossom and perfume on the violet. All history teaches the same truth. Moses was the son of a poor Levite; Gideon was a thresher; David was a shepherd boy; Amos was a herdsman; the apostles were obscure and unlearned; Zwingle was a shepherd; Melancthon, the great theologian of the Reformation, was an armorer; Luther was the child of a poor miner; Fuller was a farm servant; Carey, the originator of the plan of translating the Bible into the language of the millions of Hindustan, was a shoemaker; Morrison, who translated the Bible into the Chinese language, was a last-maker; Dr. Milne was a herd-boy; Adam Clarke was the son of Irish cotters; John Foster was a weaver; Jay, of Bath, was a herdsman. — *Christian Age*. I heard a minister who was asked to go and see a man who was anxious about his soul. He replied, "He knows where I live. If he wants my help or counsel, let him come to me. If he is in earnest, he will."

B. c. 1491.

a He. xi. 16; Ma. xxii. 32; Mk. xii. 26; Lu. xx. 37. b Is. vi. 1-5.

The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — He is thus the God of generations, the God of individuals, and the God of the whole human family. There is something inexpressibly beautiful in the idea that God is the God of the father, and of the son, and of all their descendants; thus the one God makes humanity into one family. — J. Parker.

Step aside a little oftener to walk with God and thine own heart. — *Flavel*.

Moses commanded to visit Pharaoh

c Ne. ix. 9; Is. lxiii. 9; Act. vii. 34; Job xxiii. 10; Ps. cxliii. 3.

d Ex. ii. 23-25.

e Ge. i. 24; Phil. i. 6.

f Nu. xiii. 27; De. xxvi. 9; viii. 7-9; i. 25.

g Ps. cv. 26, 27; Mic. vi. 4.

O Lord who art as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land who be holdest Thy weak creatures, weary of labor, weary of pleasure, weary of hope deferred, weary of self, in Thine abundant compassion and unutterable tenderness, bring us, we pray Thee, unto Thy rest. Amen.

B. C. 1491.

As God knew His people's sorrows then, so He knows ours now, however infinitely various they may be—however great, however small—whether of body, mind, or soul.

I should have said to him, "If you are in earnest about your Master's work, and know the meaning of the commission under which you hold your office, you will go to him." Do not forget that our commission is to "go." — *G. F. Pentecost. Divine sympathy.* — "I know their sorrows" (Ex. iii. 7). Man cannot say so. There are many sensitive fibres of the soul the best and tenderest human sympathy cannot touch. But the Prince of sufferers, He who led the way in the path of sorrow, "knoweth our frame." When crushing bereavement lies like ice on the heart, when the dearest earthly friend cannot enter into the peculiarities of our grief, Jesus can — Jesus does. He who once bore my sins, also carried my sorrows. That eye now on the throne was once dim with weeping. I can think in all my afflictions, "He was afflicted;" in all my tears, "Jesus wept." — *Macduff.*

Moses asks for credentials

a Je i. 4-7; Pr. xix. 25; Eph. vi. 10.

b Josh. i. 5; Ro. viii. 31; 2 Cor. xii. 9.

"The modest man has everything to gain, and the arrogant man everything to lose; for modesty has always to deal with generosity, and arrogance with envy." — *Rivarol.* "Let us be careful to distinguish modesty, which is ever amiable from reserve, which is only prudent. A man is hated sometimes for pride; when it was an excess of humility gave the occasion." — *Skene.*

And when beneath some heavy cross you faint,

And say, "I cannot bear this load alone,"

You say the truth; Christ made it purposely

So heavy, that you must return to Him.

the name of God

c Ex. vi. 3; Jo. viii. 58; He. xiii. 8; 2 Cor. i. 20; Re. i. 4; xvi. 5.

"How calmly may we commit ourselves to the hands of Him who bears up the world,—of Him who has created, and who provides for the joys even of insects, as carefully as if He were their Father!" — *Richter.*

11-13. (11) **who am I,** etc. not fear, but humility. A great change had come over Moses. Forty years earlier he had been forward to offer himself as a "deliverer." Now when he had become fit to be a deliverer, he ceased to think himself fit. (12) **certainly,** God replies: "Thou wilt not be unfit, since I will be with thee—I will supply thy deficiencies—I will impart the qualities thou needest. **token,** sign, *i. e.* not the bush wh. he had seen, but the promise now spoken. This sign appealed to faith only, like that given to Hezekiah by Isaiah (1 K. xix. 29), **ye . . mountain,** Israel was long encamped at the base of Sinai. (13) **what . . them?** it may be more difficult to convince Israel than to persuade Pharaoh.

The Divine companionship realized by the good in the service of the Christian life. — I. It was considerate. Promise made when most needed — at time of weakness. II. It was emphatic. Leaving no room for doubt. III. It was sympathetic. "With thee." Not I will follow thee — not I will go before thee — not I will be near thee — but with thee — as a companion to cheer thy soul; as a friend — to give thee council; as a God — to make thee victorious. How can a mission fall when God is with the worker? — *J. S. Exell.*

The prayerfulness of Washington. — In 1777, while the American army lay at Valley Forge, a good old Quaker, of the name of Potts, had occasion to pass through a thick wood, near headquarters. As he traversed the forest, he heard at a distance before him, a voice, which, as he advanced, became more and more fervent and interesting. Approaching with slowness and circumspection, he beheld under a thick-set bower, apparently formed for the purpose, the commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States, on his knees, in the act of devotion before the ruler of the universe. At that moment when Potts, who was concealed by the trees, came up, Washington was interceding for his beloved country, with tones of gratitude, that labored for adequate expression; he adored the exuberant goodness which, from the depth of obscurity, had exalted him to the head of a great nation, now placed in great difficulty. He utterly disclaimed his own ability for the arduous conflict. He wept at the thought of the ruin which his mistakes might bring on his country, and implored the aid of the Divine arm. As soon as the general had finished, Potts retired. He returned to his house, and threw himself into a chair, by the side of his wife, under the influence of feelings which, for a time, refused him utterance.

14. **I . . Am,** no better translation can be given of the Hebrew words, "they express absolute, and, therefore unchanging and eternal being." — *Spk. Com.*

I am that I Am. — We have here — I. The chief inquiry of man as a responsible agent (*vs.* 13). Who sends me? What is His name? II. The highest revelation to man as a speculative thinker — God's name, "*I Am.*" 1. Not Atheism; God Himself speaks; 2. Not Pantheism: God's personality is declared.; 3. Not mere Deism; God descends to take an interest in men's affairs. III. The highest authority of man as a moral worker — "*I Am* hath sent me." — *Anon.*

God does not say what He is. — He leaves that to us. We must fill in the blank. "I am whatever you make Me. If you disbelieve Me, if you think little of Me, I am a just God, a holy God, a jealous God, an avenging God, a strict God, a punishing God; I shall by no means spare the guilty, I am a consuming fire. If you are a penitent sinner, if you have left Me and are coming back to Me, if you are sorry for what you have done, if you have grieved Me, and now wish to please Me, I am a forgiving God, full of mercy and compassion, of great pity, passing by transgression and sin more than any one

asketh. I am love. If you are really my child, poor, weak, unworthy, sinful though you are, yet still My child, striving to please Me, earnest to serve Me, desiring more and more to see Me and be with Me, telling Me everything in your little heart, trusting Me, loving Me, I am your own dear, loving, faithful Father; I am yours and you are Mine to the very end. I have loved you and chosen you from all eternity, and I never change. Though I do sometimes hide Myself, yet behind the cloud I am, I AM, I AM. I am thine, and thou art Mine, for ever and ever!" — *J. Vaughan.*

15-18. (15) **name**,^a that by wh. God makes Himself known. **memorial**,^b that by wh. God is worshipped by His people. "The name whereby I am to be spoken of." (16) **elders**,^c persons of influence, teachers, rulers (*sheikhs*); these would instruct the rest. (17) **said**, and therefore resolved. **land**, etc., see vs. 8. (18) **they**, the elders. **hearken**, believe and obey. **thou . . . Egypt**, Moses should enter the presence of Pharaoh, surrounded by the elders of Israel, or authorized by them, in their name. **and . . . him**, etc., so much of the whole truth was he to tell Pharaoh, and no more. The object of reticence was not to deceive Pharaoh, but to test him.

The encouragement God gives to Christian workers. — 1. Divine aid in the work. 2. Bright hope in their future. 3. Glad success in their toil. *A happy residence.* — 1. A land of plenty. 2. A land of beauty. 3. A land of promise. 4. A land of freedom. 5. A land of rest. 6. A land typical of heaven. — *Exell.*

A moderate request. — This request seems at first to be put in a politic form, as if to secure a favorable answer. This, however, was quite unnecessary, since the Almighty was about to bring His people out of Egypt by a strong hand. It is merely expressed in a style of reserve and moderation. It was not requisite to reveal to Pharaoh, who was in a hostile mood, all the intentions of God concerning His people. Hence Pharaoh is merely informed that the God of the Hebrews has met with them; and their request is limited to the first step to be taken in obedience to His will. A three days' journey is mentioned, simply because this would take them clear out of Egypt, one day being employed in setting out, one in marching, and the third in coming to a resting-place. And a sacrifice is added, because this is the first act of obedience. The former involves their departure out of Egypt, the latter commences the perfect service of God. This is exactly the mode in which God trains His people. The immediate duty and the immediate blessing are set before them, and these are pregnant with all farther and higher duties and blessings. So He deals with Pharaoh. — *J. G. Murphy.*

19-22. (19) **that . . . go**,^d they are prepared against disappointment. **no . . . hand**, *i. e.* unless by a mighty hand: the influence of God's judgments. (20) **I . . . hand**,^e of wisdom and power. To encourage Moses and the people, this important promise is made. **smite**, Egypt to be punished as well as Israel delivered. **after . . . go**, when he can resist no more. He would strike terror into their enemies—until at last even Pharaoh would consent to let them go. (21) **favour**,^f respect. **ye . . . empty**,^g as poor slaves without worldly substance. (22) **borrow**,^h ask, demand. No fraud, no deceit, was to be practiced—the Egyptians perfectly well understood that, if the Israelites once went, they would never voluntarily return—they were asked to give and they gave. — *Pulp. Com.* Such the usual sense of the word. **jewels**, articles, vessels, valuable effects. **put . . . daughters**, for the young people to carry. **ye . . . Egyptians**,ⁱ who have these many years spoiled you. The Israelites were to obtain at the last something like a compensation for their ill-usage.

Israel borrowing of the Egyptians. — This narrative has given rise to several objections; the conduct of the Israelites has been characterized as ungenerous, dishonest; and as it was induced by the command of God, unbelievers have not been sparing in their remarks upon that also. It may be confidently affirmed, however, that the texts, properly understood, are open to no objection, and that the command and the compliance therewith may be shown to be perfectly just. In the first place, the Hebrew word which our translators have rendered borrow, simply signifies to *ask*, to *require*, to *demand*. — *Car-*

pentester.
God has many ways of balancing accounts between the injured and the injurious—of righting the oppressed, and compelling those that have done wrong, to make restitution; for He sits upon the throne, judging right. — *Matthew Henry.*

B. c. 1491.

"Just to take Thy orders straight,
From the Master's own command;
Blessed day! when thus we wait,
Always at our Sovereign's hand."
— *Miss Havergal.*

Moses receives instructions

^a Ps. cxxxv. 13; cxi. 5; Hos. xii. 5.

^b "The name declares the objective manifestation of the Divine nature; the memorial, the subjective recognition by man." — *Wordsworth.*

^c Nu. xi. 16.

Let us forward.
God leads us
Though blind,
shall we be afraid
to follow? I do
not see my way; I
do not care to; but
I know that He
sees His way, and
that I see Him. —
Chas. Kingsley.

the obstinacy of Pharaoh and departure of Israel predicted

^d Ex. vii. 3, 4; v. 2.

^e Ex. vii. 5; De. vi. 22; Ne. ix. 10; Ps. cxxxv. 9; cxxxvi. 11, 12.

^f Ex. xi. 3; Pr. xvi. 7; Dan. i. 9.

^g Ge. xv. 14.

^h Ps. ii. 8; Pr. xxii. 7; De. xxviii. 12.

ⁱ Ex. xii. 35, 36; Job xxviii. 17; Pr. xiii. 22; Ez. xxxix. 10.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

B. C. 1491.

God gives
Moses two
proofs of his
authoritya Ge. xxxviii. 18 ;
Mic. vii. 14.b This was the
symbol of royal
and Divine power
on the diadem of
every Pharaoh.—
Spk. Com., see
Tristram, Nat.
Hist., p. 271.

c Jo. iii. 2.

"The incredulous
are the most
credulous. They
believe the mir-
acles of Vespasian,
in order not to
believe those of
Moses."—Pascal."Miracle is the pet
child of faith."—
Goethe."Modesty and self-
distrust generally
go with true great-
ness and exalted
virtue." "We may
be known by our
wishes, our hopes,
our fears; and we
may be known also
by our tempta-
tions."d Nu. xii. 10; 2 Ki.
v. 27.e De. xxxii. 39; Ma.
viii. 3."The sign im-
ported, perhaps,
that the time was
now at hand when
God would judge
the Egyptians for
the death of the
Hebrew infants,
whose blood they
had shed in the
waters."—Bush.Moses
complains
that he is
not eloquent

f Jer. i. 6.

g Lu. xii. 11, 12;
Is. i. 4; Ac. vii. 22.

h Jon i. 3.

1-5. (1) **they . . voice**, *i. e.* the elders. "The Gr. has the most correct rendering *av, if*, making it *hypothetical*. The original term is so rendered, Jer. iii. 1."—*Bush*. **not : . thee**, "the Israelites might have so spoken, since there had been no appearance of Jehovah to anyone for above four hundred years. And having not seen Moses for forty years they would not know whether he was a veracious person or not."—*Pulp. Com.* (2) **rod**,^a staff of authority, "or the natural support of advancing years." (3) **serpent**,^b prob. the cobra **Moses . . it**, he started back. (4) **and . . hand**, his obedience showed his strong faith. (5) **that . . believe**,^c when the elders see this sign repeated, "they may accept the mission of Moses (see vers. 30. 31). It was afterwards to be exhibited before Pharaoh (ver. 21), to try him and prove him."

The wonder-working rod (vs. 2).—Consider—I. What this rod was while Moses used it in a natural way. Simply a useful walking-stick, a shepherd's crook. Property, like this rod, has an earthly value. II. What it was when cast on the ground. It became a serpent. Human passions when degraded become as a serpent. Intellect, wrongly employed, becomes a serpent, as in Byron's case. Property misused becomes a serpent.

What is that in thy hand?—Before we can be really useful, before we can accomplish any great work, before we can live up to the measure of our power, we must first of all meet with God. We must stand before the burning bush; we must listen to the Divine voice; we must receive the heavenly commission; we must accept the Divine command. Until this is done our life is nothing but a rod—a rod without any special use or intrinsic value, and which will one day break in our hands, and be cast into the fire and be destroyed. Look, how this is illustrated: What is that in thy hand? "A sling," said David. "It is enough; go up against the giant:" and the great Goliath fell before the shepherd-boy. What is that in thy hand? "A sword," answered Jonathan. "It is enough," and the brave youth, followed by his armor-bearer, goes up against an army, and the Philistines are defeated by these twain. What is that in thy hand? "A piece of parchment," answered Luther. It is enough, and he proceeds to nail his famous protest upon the doors of the Roman Church and the era of the Reformation broke upon darkened Europe. What is that in thy hand? "A pen," said Bunyan, as he spoke from under the arches of Bedford jail. It is enough, and he wrote the story of the "Pilgrim's Progress," which will live while the world endures.—*J. W. Johnston*.

6-9. (6) **bosom**, fold of the dress. **hand . . snow**,^d the worst kind of leprosy, absolutely incurable. (7) **and he said, etc.**, "the instantaneous production and cure of this dread disease was a sign to the Israelites of their danger if they resisted the command and of their deliverance if they obeyed it."—*Spk. Com.* (8) **they . . latter**, *i. e.* probably; if not, a third is given. (9) **water . . blood**, a pledge that Moses' power should prevail over the Nile, which was the boast of Egypt; "a significant indication that the God of Moses was greater than any Egyptian God."

The paralysis of doubt.—A man needs not to be a thorough unbeliever, overtly renouncing all allegiance to revealed truth in order to become useless in the pulpit and religiously powerless in society. He needs only to put a note of interrogation after some of the articles of his creed. That is enough, without absolutely erasing them. The hesitant is as impotent for spiritual good as the heretic.—*J. Halsey*.

10-13. (10) **eloquent**, *lit.* a man of words. **but . . tongue**,^e he prob. had an impediment in his speech. According to a Jewish tradition, Moses had difficulty in pronouncing the labials *b, v, m, ph, p*. (11) **and . . said, etc.**, implying that he who created the organs of speech could remove imperfections if needful. (12) **teach . . say**,^f as well as give power to say it. (13) **send . . send**,^g "These words are curt and ungracious; much curter in the original than in our version. They contain a grudging acquiescence."

God's help in infirmity.—1. The Divine help is adapted to our natural infirmity. It is far better to have God joined to our infirmity, than to have the eloquent tongue without Him. Thus there are times when an infirmity may be an inestimable advantage to a Christian worker. 2. The Divine help

is adapted to our full requirement. God did not merely promise to aid the speech of Moses, but also to teach him what he should say. So in the Christian service of to-day, good men are not merely aided in the line of their natural infirmity, but also along the entire line of their requirement.—*Exell.*

God's biddings are enablings.—The missionary, John Williams, once said that there were two little words which were able to make the most lofty mountains melt: "Try" and "Trust." Moses had yet to learn the use of these words. God taught him. The sailor has to be taught that he must not look on the dark and troubled waters, but at the clear blue heavens where shines the pole-star. Moses was gazing at the surging sea of Egyptian wrath, and God taught him to direct his gaze heavenward, then to try and trust, for greater is He that is with you than all that be against you. As an early Christian writer enjoins, let us not forget—as Moses did at first—that all God's biddings are enablings, and that it is for us not to ask the reason but to obey.—*Bib. Ill.*

14-17. (14) anger . . Moses, bec. of his reluctance, though he now complied. **know . . well**, should be rendered, "Do I not know that Aaron the Levite, thy brother, speaks well?" implying that M. was to be a man of deeds. **behold . . thee**, *i. e.* is on the eve of setting out. **when . . heart**, after so long a separation and now learning thy mission. **(15) thy mouth**,^a thou shalt speak to him what I teach. **his mouth**, he shall repeat what you utter. "Moses was to tell Aaron what to say—and Aaron was to clothe it in fitting words." **teach . . do**, both the works and the words shall be from God. **(16) spokesman . . people**,^b *i. e. lit.* "He shall speak for thee," being familiar with Hebrew. **(17) rod . . signs**, the rod of Moses mightier than the sceptre of Pharaoh. "The end of his mission was to be accomplished rather by *acting* than by *speaking*."—*Bush.*

Homiletic hints.—Moses' sin and loss. He doubted God in his diffidence, in spite of the signs and promises. The priesthood was transferred to Aaron. Our excuses always involve loss. A duty involves the needed strength. We must trust; God did not remove Moses' infirmity of speech; but He went with him. God is with the mouth of His servants. He is with them for defence. Obey Him, and He will be with your mouth.—*Fowler.*

Christian workers more ready to rely on man than on God.—We have noted the timidity and hesitation of Moses, notwithstanding the varied promises and assurances with which Divine grace had furnished him. And now, although there was nothing gained in the way of real power, although there was no more virtue or efficacy in one mouth than in another, although it was Moses, after all, who was to speak unto Aaron, yet Moses was quite ready to go when assured of the presence and co-operation of a poor feeble mortal like himself, whereas he could not go when assured again and again that Jehovah would be with him. How his case, like a mirror, reflects our own hearts! We are more ready to trust anything than the living God. How deeply should it humble us before the Lord that, though we move along with bold decision when we possess the countenance and support of a poor frail mortal like ourselves, yet we falter, hesitate, and demur when we have the light of the Master's countenance and the strength of His omnipotent arm to support us.—*A. Nevin.*

18-20. (18) brethren, "probably means here 'my relations' (compare Gen. xiii. 8; xxix. 12)." **return . . Egypt**, Moses' mission was a secret between him and God. **(19) which . . life**, for killing the Egyptian. **(20) sons**,^d Greshon and Eliezer. **rod . . hand**, the staff of the shepherd becomes the sceptre of the shepherd's king.

Never go on a journey of moral service without God. Especially if you are a minister of the gospel, take the rod on your journey to Egypt. 1. It will keep you humble. It will remind you of your humble occupation in the desert, when you are tempted to pride, in the great service to which God has called you. Every Christian worker needs to have something within his soul to inspire humility. 2. It will make you happy. When you are desponding and sad, when the work does not open up to your efforts as you would wish, the rod will remind you of the vision at the bush, and of the miracles wrought at the commencement of the mission. The reason why there are so many unhappy workers in the Church, is because they have left the rod at home. 3. It will make you powerful. With this rod Moses was to work miracles.

B. C. 1491.

Never think of the smallness, the poorness of the instrument, when it is the Master's hand that uses it.

Inspiration is more than education.—*Mackay.*

"Eloquence is in the assembly, not in the speaker."—*Wm. Pitt.*

Aaron appointed as spokesman

^a Nu. xxii. 38; De. xviii. 18; Jo. xvii. 8.

^b Ex. vii. 1, 2.

All service should be done for Thee in meek humility; and awe most sweet, that Thou should'st take, e'er for Thy Son, Christ Jesus' sake, service from servants so unmeet.—*A. E. H.*

"There is a sanctity in suffering when meekly borne. Our duty, though set about by thorns, may still be made a staff, supporting even while it tortures. Cast it away, and like the prophet's wand, it changes to a snake."—*D. Jerrold.*

Moses returns to Egypt

^c Ex. ii. 15, 23; Ma. ii. 20.

^d Ex. ii. 21, 22; xviii. 4.

"He has oratory who ravishes his hearers while he forgets himself."—*Lavater.*

B. C. 1491.

"Let men laugh when you sacrifice desires to duty if they will. You have time and eternity to rejoice in." — *Theo. Parker.*

God tells him what to do in Egypt

a Ex. viii. 15; De. ii. 30; Josh. xi. 20; 2 Ch. xxxvi. 13; Job ix. 4; Pr. xxix. 1; Dan v. 20; Is. lxiii. 17; Jas. i. 13, 14; Zech. vii. 11, 12; Jer. v. 3; De. xv. 7; Ro. ii. 5; He. iii. 8, 13; Ro. i. 28; 2 Th. ii. 10, 11; Jo. xii. 37-40; Ac. xxviii. 28, 27; Ro. ix. 13-23; Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

b De. xiv. 1, 2; Hos. xi. 1; Ma. ii. 15; Ro. ix. 4; Jer. xxxi. 9; 2 Co. vi. 8; Jas. i. 18.

c Ex. xli. 29.

So if Christian workers had the rod of God in their hand, they would be able to show to the world much more effectively than they do, the holy tokens of their mission. — *J. S. Exell.*

That was a wise old minister who, on being consulted by a youth who desired to become a preacher of the gospel, said to him, "Young man, don't become a minister if you can help it." It is the man who cannot help being a preacher who will be most effective always in the pulpit.

21—23. (21) see . . Pharaoh, not only the three signs of ch. iv. 3-9, but the whole series of miracles afterwards wrought in Egypt, and glanced at in ch. iii. 20, that P. may be without excuse. **harden,**^a suffer to grow hard as a punishment for his resistance. God does not actively interfere to harden the heart of anyone. But among the natural punishments which God has attached to sin, is the hardening of the entire nature of the man who sins. (22) **firstborn,**^b as comp. with other nations more beloved, as a firstborn among sons. Israel's sonship is here mentioned for the first time. (23) **refuse** . . **firstborn,**^c dear to thee as Israel to Me.

Love in the threatenings. — A shepherd, foreseeing a snow-storm that will drift deep in the hollows of the hill, where the silly sheep seeking refuge would find a grave, prepares shelter in a safe spot, and opens its doors. Then he sends his dog after the wandering flock to frighten them into the fold. The bark of the dog behind them is a terror to the timid sheep, but it is at once the sure means of their safety and the mark of the shepherd's care. Without it the prepared fold and the open entrance might have proved of no avail. The terror which the shepherd sent into the flock gave the finishing touch to his tender care and effect to all that have gone before. Such, precisely, in design and effect are the terrible things of God's Word; not one of them indicates that He is unwilling to receive sinners. They are the overflowings of Divine compassion. They are sent by the Good Shepherd to surround triflers on the brink of perdition, and compel them to come into the provided refuge ere its doors be shut. The terrors of the Lord are not the salvation of men, but they have driven many to the Saviour. No part of the Bible could be wanted. A man shall live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. — *Arnot.*

Zipporah

d Ge. xvii. 14; Josh. v. 2, 3

"Opposition always inflames the enthusiast, never converts him." — *Schiller.*

"The happiness and misery of men depend no less on temper than fortune." — *Roche-foucauld.*

"There seems to have been some hesitation on the part of Zipporah; but the alternative was death or obedience." — *Bryant.*

Meeting of Moses and Aaron, they gather the elders of Israel

24—26. (24) inn, resting-place. **sought . . him,** perh. he had a dangerous illness wh. he perceived to be from God, "but the words seem more appropriate to a miraculous appearance, like that of the angel to Balaam (Num. xxii. 31)." (25) **took . . stone,** stone regarded by Egyptians more pure and precious than metal; the Jews seemed to have used stone for circumcision for many ages. **cast . . feet,** sign of her abhorrence of the rite. **surely . . me,** "The words are clearly a reproach; that Moses was a husband who cost her dear, causing the blood of her sons to be shed in order to keep up a national usage which she regards as barbarous." Perh. she felt that thus she had saved her husband's life. (26) **a . . art,**^d *lit.* a husband of blood: ref. to the rite.

If we give ourselves to the Lord in consecration, we may be sure that before we get fairly to our work we must repair any of the waste places in our lives that are apparent. — And if we have overlooked any, we may expect that the Lord will meet us with a drawn sword, and hold us prisoners to Himself, until we make the crooked thing straight. Every person who has sought to walk in the consecrated way has found out the truth that "judgment must begin at the house of God." In other words, if we are to bring other people out of Egyptian bondage, we must show in ourselves that we ourselves are delivered. How can a man bring another up out of the bondage of strong drink, if he is indulging in that drink himself? How can a man or woman lead another out of the Egyptian world of pleasure and self-indulgence, if they are living in pleasure themselves? One has said, "If you want to lift a soul out of the pit you must first get a good solid footing out of the pit yourself." — *G. F. Pentecost.*

27—31. (27) **said,** perh. in a vision. **met . . God,** Horeb "seems to have been the name for the entire mountain region, of which Sinai was a part." Aaron now about 83 yrs. of age. **kissed,** Orient. form of salutation. "Aaron's kiss showed the gladness that was in his heart (*supra*, ver. 14)." (28) **words . . him,** i. e. wh. God had charged him to do. "Perfect confi-

dence between the two brothers was absolutely necessary." (29) gathered . . Israel, hence there must have been some organization in Israel at this time; probably the hereditary heads of families. Moses and Aaron issued an invitation, and it was accepted. The "elders" came to the meeting. (30) did . . people, *i. e.* of the elders. (31) people, perh. the elders called meetings of the people. heard,^a fr. Aaron and the elders. visited, in mercy. looked, compassionately. they . . worshipped, faith, gratitude; hope.

The people believed. — Thus Moses and Aaron awakened — 1. Faith. 2. Hope. 3. Devotion — of Israel. Moses had previously said that Israel would not believe him. We mistake our missions. We cannot form an estimate of success. If we act and speak according to the instruction of God we must succeed. — *J. S. Exell.*

The sense of duty. — There is no evil that we cannot either face or fly from, but the consciousness of duty disregarded. A sense of duty pursues us ever. It is omnipresent like the Deity. If we take to ourselves the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, duty performed or duty violated is still with us, for our happiness or our misery. If we say, the darkness shall cover us — in the darkness, as in the light, our obligations are yet with us. We cannot escape their power nor fly from their presence. They are with us in this life, will be with us at its close; and in that scene of inconceivable solemnity which yet lies further onward, we shall still find ourselves surrounded by the consciousness of duty, to pain us wherever it has been violated, and to console us so far as God may have given us grace to perform it. — *Webster.*

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1-4. (1) Moses . . Pharaoh, prob. accompanied by the elders. "Aaron was the spokesman. Pharaoh would understand Jehovah to be a name, parallel to his own Phthah, or Ra." let . . wilderness,^b the Israelites could not offer their sacrificial animals in the presence of the Egyptians without provoking animosity, since among the animals would be some which the Egyptians regarded sacred, and under no circumstances to be killed. (See Plutarch, "De Isid. et Osir," § 44). To avoid disturbance the "feast" must be held beyond the bounds of Egypt. — *Pulp. Com.* (2) know . . Lord,^c your God is not Egypt's god. "The Pharaohs assumed to be themselves gods." (3) let . . God, see Ex. iii. 18. (4) let, hinder. get . . burdens, they are contemptuously ordered to proceed with their work.

God entitled to our obedience (*vs.* 2). — We ought to obey God, because He is — I. The benevolent Creator of the Universe. II. The constant Preserver of His creatures. III. The perfect Governor of all. IV. The merciful Redeemer of sinners. — *Coffin.*

Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh. — We never heard of an insurrection against a tyrannical government, deliberately planned, for which there was not aggregated some sort of preparation in armies and munitions of war. So we inquire in this instance, What was the number of Israel's troops now on their belligerent way to besiege the capital of Egypt? Only one organized battalion, consisting of these two old men! What were the arms they carried? These were altogether seven weapons in detail. Any one can count them at his pleasure: one shepherd's crook, called a "rod;" one tremendous name in the Hebrew language, four promises, and a miracle. These were expected to revolutionize Egypt. — *C. S. Robinson.*

5-9. (5) many, notwithstanding all efforts to reduce the number. Therefore the greater damage is done to the crown by putting a stop to their labors. make . . burdens, by exciting the hope amongst them of this pilgrimage. "With these words the first interview ends. Moses and Aaron retired discomfited from the royal presence." (6) same day, "Pharaoh lost no time. He issued his order on the very day of the interview with the two leaders." (7) straw, needful to make the clay hold together until it was dried. let . . themselves, hence the burden increased as the straw became scarcer. (8) tale, number, amount. for . . idle, a pretense for increasing their burdens. let . . God, thus he would cure them of their religious desires. (9) let . . words, *lit.* words of lying; he regarded them as lying, canting hypocrites.

B. c. 1401.

a Ex. iii. 18.

"If we set aside supernatural assistance, Moses and Aaron stand unsupported, without one requisite towards the completion of their purpose." — *Bryant*

"It is one of the worst of errors to suppose that there is any other path of safety except that of duty." — *Nevins.*

"There is little pleasure in the world that is true and sincere besides the pleasure of doing our duty and doing good. I am sure no other is comparable to this." — *Tillotson.*

they appeal to Pharaoh

b Ex. iii. 18.

c Job xxi. 15.

"The sun by the action of heat makes wax moist, and mud dry, hardening the one while it softens the other, by the same operation producing exactly opposite results; thus, from the long-suffering of God, some derive benefit and others harm, some are softened, while others are hardened." — *Theodore t.*

Pharaoh's refusal and increased cruelty

"The bricks of the first pyramid at Dashoor are of fine clay from the Nile, mingled with chopped straw. The intermixture gives the bricks an astonishing durability." — *Kittó.*

B. C. 1491.

"Tyranny and anarchy are never far asunder."—*Bentham*.

"Tyranny sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered."—*Shakespeare*.

bricks without straw

a "Their sufferings must have been severe; since at that season the pestilential sand-wind blows over Egypt some fifty days, hence its name Chamsin"—*Spk. Com.*

"It will be known to our readers, that even at present the rule of the stick is generally prevalent in many parts of the East. Neither rank, learning, nor old age can protect against the ruthless tyranny of the stick."—*Katich*.

the Israelites remonstrate

"Tyranny, in a word, is a farce got up for the entertainment of poor human nature; and it might pass very well if it did not so often turn into a tragedy."—*Haslitt*.

"Power, unless managed with gentleness and discretion, does but make a man the more hated.

they censure Moses and Aaron

The burdens increased. — Note that — I. Benefactors may expect misrepresentation. Moses was censured; Christ rejected by His own. The enemy will slander. Our hope is in working only for God. II. Sin asks to be let alone. Pharaoh blamed Moses; Ahab blamed Elijah; the Jews blamed the disciples. III. Sin becomes more terrible with age. Pharaoh grew more exacting, and the people weaker; he answers prayers with falsehoods and insults. Sin toys with youth, but scourges manhood. IV. All appeal must be made to God. Moses turned to God; he did not censure the elders. V. It is darkest just before day. Sin grows worse till it breaks down. It threatens in order to drown conscience. — *Fowler*.

Pharaoh's complaint. — That complaint has been made by a good many interested employers since the days of Pharaoh. "How these evangelists do hinder trade!" "What a clog on business this revival is!" "How much money these missionary causes do divert from the shopkeepers!" "This Sunday-go-to-meeting notion takes the profits off of the menagerie; or of the agricultural fair!" "These thanksgivings and fast-days interfere wretchedly with steady work!" "Why can't things go on regular, week in and week out, without any bother about religion?" This is the way the Pharaoh class looks at attention to God's service. But is it the right way?—*S. S. Times*.

10—14. (10) taskmasters . . spake, etc. "The taskmasters were probably Egyptians, while the officers were native Israelites." (11) get . . straw, abundance of straw could be gathered in the cornfields after harvest. (12) stubble, short straw left after reaping. (13) hasted, the Egyptian overseers, armed with rods, went about among the toiling Israelites dealing out blows freely. fulfil . . tasks, lit. the matter of a day in his day. (14) officers . . Israel, Hebrews by birth. beaten, made responsible for the amount of work done.

Sin more tyrannical when men would escape from it. — When Moses demanded from Pharaoh the liberation of the Hebrews, the tyrant increased their burdens; and in like manner, when the soul rises to expel evil from its domain, it then for the first time discovers the full bitterness of its bondage. Its earliest impulse thereon is to blame the truth which awakened it to a sense of its degradation, for causing the misery which it only revealed. The preacher is accounted cruel when he has been only faithful; and his hearer accuses him of personal malice when he has been only holding up a mirror wherein the angry one caught a glimpse of himself. But all these are hopeful signs. They are, indeed, when rightly regarded and fostered, the prophecies of a coming conversion. The docile slave, who is contented with his condition, is petted and made much of by his master; but if he tries to run away, he is immediately put into fetters. So, when we are roused to battle with sin, it is then that, most of all, we feel its power. Satan does his worst on the soul just as he is about to be expelled from its possession. — *W. M. Taylor*.

15—19. (15) came . . cried, the shrill "cry" of Orientals when making complaint has often been noticed. unto . . Pharaoh, complainants had free access to the presence of Egyptian kings. wherefore . . servants? demanding impossible results. (16) fault . . people, they perh. did not believe that the command was Pharaoh's. (17, 18) he . . said, etc., a fair example of a despot's conduct. (19) did . . case, when the whip fell on their own shoulders. minish, obsol. wd. =diminish.

The true object of blame. — Gotthold had a little dog, which, when placed before a mirror, became instantly enraged, and barked at its own image. He remarked on the occasion: In general, a mirror serves as an excitement to self-love, whereas it stimulates this dog to anger against itself. The animal cannot conceive that the figure it sees is only its own reflection, but fancies that it is a strange dog, and therefore will not suffer it to approach its master. This may remind us of an infirmity of our depraved hearts. We often complain of others, and take offense at the things they do against us, without reflecting that, for the most part, the blame lies with ourselves. — *Bib. Ill.*

20—23. (20) they . . Pharaoh, i. e. the officers of vs. 15: M. and A. prob. waiting to hear the result of the interview. (21) because . . Pharaoh, "ye have done us a great injury;" a most unjust crimination. put . . us, a prov. express. =give a plausible pretext for destroying us. (22) Moses, etc., the leader

of the people carries their griefs to the Throne of Grace, and pours it out before the Almighty. (23) **for since, etc.**, M. in the impetuosity of his feelings verges upon irreverence. Pharaoh had increased the burdens of the whole nation. He had also brought scourging on the chiefs. The promised deliverance (ch. iii. 8, 20) had not come—the people was suffering a more cruel bondage than ever. — *Pulp. Com.*

The burdens increased. — Note that — I. Benefactors may expect misrepresentation. Moses was censured; Christ rejected by His own. The enemy will slander. Our hope is in working only for God. II. Sin asks to be let alone. Pharaoh blamed Moses; Ahab blamed Elijah; the Jews blamed the disciples. III. Sin becomes more terrible with age. Pharaoh grew more exacting, and the people weaker; he answers prayers with falsehoods and insults. Sin toys with youth, but scourges manhood. IV. All appeal must be made to God. Moses turned to God; he did not censure the elders. V. It is darkest just before day. Sin grows worse till it breaks down. It threatens in order to drown conscience. — *Fowler.*

Ministers blamed. — I remember the case of a man who came to me at one of our meetings in America. He was in the greatest distress of mind, fairly frantic with the conviction of sin, and with the terror of conscience working mightily under the law. At the same time he was bitterly angry with Mr. Moody, who had preceded me in those meetings, and also with me. With a terrible oath he said: "I wish to God you and Moody had never come to this city, and begun these—gospel meetings. Before you came and began to preach I had no trouble. I used to go to church regularly on Sunday morning; but I was not troubled about my sins. What a fool I was ever to come into this rink! I have had no peace day or night since I first heard Moody preach. And you have been making it worse. You talk of peace and joy: but you have turned my soul into a perfect hell. I cannot stay away from the meetings; and to come to them only makes me worse. You promise salvation; and I only find torment. I wish to God you would clear out and leave the city; and I could get back my old peace. If this is religion, I am sure I do not want any of it." — *G. F. Pentecost.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1-3. (1) **for . . hand,**^a *i. e.* compelled by the power of God. "By means of my strong hand" "laid upon him shall he be induced to let them go," and the final anxiety of Pharaoh will be to be rid of the Israelites. (See ch. xii. 31, 32.) (2) **Lord,**^b Jehovah. (3) **by . . Almighty, El-Shaddai.** but . . them,^c *i. e.* its full meaning was not disclosed. "I was known to them as a Being of might and power, not as mere absolute (and so eternal and immutable) existence."

The Divine name. — Early English history informs us that some blood-thirsty persecutors were marching on a band of Christians. The Christians, seeing them approaching, marched out towards them, and, at the top of their voices, shouted, "Hallelujah, hallelujah!" (Praise Jehovah.) The name of the Lord being presented, the rage of the persecutors abated. Josephus says that the great Alexander, when on his triumphal march, being met near Jerusalem by the Jewish high priest, on whose mitre was engraved the name Jehovah, "approached by himself, and adored that name," and was disarmed of his hostile intent. There was significance and power in the glorious old name as written by the Jews. But the name of Jesus is now far more mighty in the world than was the name of Jehovah in these earlier ages.

4-8. (4) **covenant,**^d *lit.* have erected, have made to stand. Canaan, the whole tract between "the river of Egypt (*Wady-el-Arish*) and the great river, the river Euphrates" (Ge. xv. 18). **give . . strangers,** *i. e.* in person of descendants. (5) **remembered,**^e wh suffering Israel may have thought I had forgotten. (6) **Lord . . Egyptians,** I will do this as surely as I am the unchangeable Lord. **with . . arm,**^f *i. e.* by putting forth special and vigorous action. (7) **people,**^g nation. **I . . God,** to gather, build up, protect. **know,** by incontrovertible signs. (8) **land . . Jacob,**^h see Ge. xxii. 16 ff. **I . . Lord,** "you have the pledge of my Eternity and Immutability that it shall be yours."

The plagues of Egypt. — It is impossible, as we read the description of the plagues, not to feel how much of force is added to it by a knowledge of the

B. c. 1491.

"It is harder to avoid censure than to gain applause; for this may be done by one great or wise action in an age. But to escape censure, a man must pass his whole life without saying or doing one ill or foolish thing." — *Hume.*

"To arrive at perfection, a man should have very sincere friends or inveterate enemies; because he would be made sensible of his good or ill conduct either by the censures of the one or the admonitions of the others." — *Dio-genes.*

For Thine own purpose
Thou hast sent
The strife and the discouragement.
— *Longfellow.*

God encourages
Moses

^a Ex. iii. 20; xii. 31, 33, 39.
^b Ge. xvii. 1; Jo. viii. 58; Rev. i. 4.
^c Ex. xxviii. 16; Ex. iii. 14; Ps. cxviii. 4; lxxxiii. 18.

"They that deny a God destroy man's nobility: for certainly man is like the beasts in his body; and if he is not like God in his spirit, he is an ignoble creature." — *Bacon.*

He repeats
His ancient
covenant

^d Ge. xv. 18; xxvi. 3; xxv. 12.
^e Ps. cv. 8-12; cvi. 44, 45; Lu. i. 68, 72-75.
^f De. xxvi. 8; Ps. cxxxvi. 10-12; Ex. xv. 12; De. vii. 8.
^g De. iv. 20; vii. 6; xxvi. 18; 2 Sa. vii. 24; Jer. xxxi. 31-34; Hos. i. 10.
^h Nu. xxiii. 19; 1 Sa. xv. 29.

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"It is the nature of every artificer to tender and esteem his own work; and if God should not love His creature it would reflect some disparagement upon His workmanship, that He should make anything that He could not own. God's power never produces what His goodness cannot embrace."—*South.*

Dark seasons are never pleasant to us, but they are always good for us. A cloudless sky could never produce a good harvest.—*Jackson.*

the Israelites do not believe Moses

a Ac. vii. 25.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, give strength to the weary, aid to the sufferers, comfort to the sad, help to those in tribulation, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours, makes the night morning, and the noontide night."—*Shakespeare.*

the houses of Moses and Aaron

b "The genealogy mainly concerns Aaron, as the elder brother; and the progenitor of the Jewish priesthood."—*Alford.*

c Nu. iii. 18.

d Nu. iii. 18; 1 Ch. xxiii. 7, 10.

e Nu. iii. 19; xxvi. 58, 59; 1 Ch. vi. 2, 3; xxiii. 12, 13; xxiv. 20.

f Ex. ii. 1-10.

peculiar customs and character of the country in which they occurred. It is not an ordinary river that is turned into blood; it is the sacred, beneficent, solitary Nile, the very life of the state and of the people, in its streams, and canals, and tanks, and vessels of wood, and vessels of stone, then, as now, used for the filtration of the delicious water from the sediment of the river-bed. It is not an ordinary nation that is struck by the mass of putrefying vermin lying in heaps by the houses, the villages, and the fields, or multiplying out of the dust of the desert sands on each side of the Nile valley. It is the cleanliest of all the ancient nations, clothed in white linen—anticipating, in their fastidious delicacy and ceremonial purity, the habits of modern and Northern Europe. It is not the ordinary cattle that died in the field, or ordinary fish that died in the river, or ordinary reptiles that were overcome by the rod of Aaron. It is the sacred goat of Mendes, the ram of Ammon, the calf of Heliopolis, the bull Apis, the crocodile of Ombos, the carp of Latopolis. It is not an ordinary land, of which the flax and the barley, and every green thing in the trees, and every herb of the field, are smitten by the two great calamities of storm and locust. It is the garden of the ancient Eastern world, the long line of green meadow and corn-field, and the groves of palm, and sycamore, and fig tree, from the cataracts to the delta, doubly refreshing from the desert which it intersects, doubly marvellous from the river whence it springs. If these things were calamities anywhere, they were truly "signs and wonders"—speaking signs and oracular wonders—in such a land as "the land of Ham," In whatever way we unite the Hebrew and the Egyptian accounts, there can be no doubt that the exodus was a crisis in Egyptian as well as in Hebrew history—"a nail struck into the coffin of the Egyptian monarchy."—*Stanley.*

9—13. (9) anguish, shortness; their hope could not reach so far. "Compare Job xxi. 4. Their spirit was shortened—they had lost all heart, so cruel had been their disappointment." (10, 11) spake, this the second appeal to Pharaoh. (12) children . . me, "my own countrymen do not believe. how . . me, who am a foreigner, one of a nation of slaves. who . . lips? of slow utterance, of feeble speech. Nothing can be determined from the expression as to the exact cause of the imperfection. (13) spake, etc., ref. to vs. 10, 11.

Crushed in spirit.—The cause of their indifference to liberty was the extreme severity of their bondage. They hearkened not "for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage." Here is a paradox: the slavery is excessively severe, and therefore the slave does not care for freedom. Broken hearts have lost their spring, and cannot bound from the bottom of the pit at the call of a deliverer. Great need does not alone produce great exertion. The hopeless, helpless captive steadily refuses to stir, lest the chain by the movement should saw deeper into his flesh.—*Bib. III. Evils of bondage.*—I have seen men, made in the image of a living God, endowed with the glorious and fearful gift of immortality, capable of becoming co-equal companions with archangels, consenting to be caged and fenced around and fettered down by customs and cares and pleasures and pursuits that only bind them to earth, make them slaves of things they despise, and answer their noblest aspirations with disappointment.—*D. Marsh.*

14—20. (14) heads, governors, chiefs, elders. of . . houses,^b i. e. the houses of Moses and Aaron; by houses are meant "families" (see 1 Ch. iv. 38; v. 13. sons, etc., see Ge. xlv. 9. (15) the . . Simeon, etc., see Ge. xlv. 10. The list corresponds exactly, both in the names and in the order, with that given in Gen. xlv. 10, but differs from 1 Ch. iv. 24, and Num. xxvi. 12. (16) of . . Levi, see Ge. xlv. 11. (17) Libni^c (white). Shimi^d (renowned), or Shimei. (18) Amram^e (red), father of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Ighar (oil). Hebron (alliance). Uzziel (might of God). (19) Mahali (sickly) also Mahli. Mushi (felt out by Jehovah). (20) Jochebed^f (whose glory is Jehovah), his . . wife, marriages with aunts and nieces have been common in many countries. They first became unlawful by the positive command recorded in Lev. xviii. 12.

God seemed to say, "Pharaoh, let My people go!" "I will not," said the despot. Straightway the Lord goes right down into the brick-town where the poor slaves are at work, and He makes out a list of all of them to show that He means to set free. So many there of Simeon. So many here of Reuben.

So many here of Levi. The Lord is counting them. Moreover, He numbers their cattle, for He declares, "There shall not an hoof be left behind." — *Bib. III.*

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a Nu. xvi. 1; xxvi. 9-11; xxvii. 3.

b Ju. x. 11.

c Nu. iii. 30.

d Nu. i. 7; ii. 3; vii. 12, 17; x. 14; Ru. iv. 20; Lu. iii. 32.

e Nu. iii. 3, 4; xxvi. 60, 61; 1 Ch. xxiv. 1, 2.

f Nu. iii. 2; Ex. xxiv. 1, 9, 10.

g Ex. xxviii. 1; Nu. iii. 32, xx. 28; xxvi. 1, xxvii. 18, 23; Josh. xiv. 1; xvii. 4; xxi. 1; xxiv. 33.

h Nu. xxvi. 60; Ex. xxviii. 1; xxxviii. 21.

i Nu. xxv. 6-16; xxxi. 6; Ps. cvi. 30; Josh. xxii. 13, 32; Jud. xx. 28.

k Nu. xxxiii. 1, 2; Ps. lxxvii. 20; Ex. xiii. 18.

"Nationality is the aggregated individuality of the greatest men of the nation."—*Kossuth.*

21—27. (21) **Korah**^a (*ice, hail, or baldness*), also **Core**.^b **Nepheg** (*sprout*). **Zithri**, incorrectly printed for **Zichri** (*remembered, renowned*). (22) **Misrael** (*who is what God is?*) **Elzaphan** (*whom God protects*), also **Elizaphan**.^c **Zithri** (*protection of Jehovah*). (23) **Elisheba** (*God her oath*). **Amminadab** (*kindred of the prince*). **Naashon**^d (*enchanter*). **Nadab**^e (*spontaneous, liberal*). **Abihu**^f (*to whom He, i. e. God, is father*). **Eleazar**^g (*whom God helps*). **Ithamar**^h (*palmcoast*). (24) **Assir** (*captive*). **Elkanah** (*whom God created*). **Abiasaph** (*father of gathering*), or **Ebiasaph**. (25) **Putiel** (*devoted to God*). **Phinehas**ⁱ (*mouth of brass*). (26, 27) **these . . . said, vs. 14. armies**^k *R. V.*, "hosts"; not a confused multitude, but organized host.

God's everlasting "shalls."—It is a great thing to get hold of one of God's everlasting "shalls." For when God says a thing shall be done, who shall hinder? When God says "shall" you may be sure that He is stirring up His strength and making bare His mighty arm to do mighty and terrible things in righteousness. Just read through this chapter and note how Jehovah asserts Himself—"I am the Lord;" "I have remembered my covenant;" "I will bring you out from under the burdens of Egypt;" "I will rid you of their bondage;" "I will redeem you with a stretched-out arm;" "I will take you to Me for a people;" "I will bring you into the land concerning which I did swear to give it to Abraham, and I will give it to you;" "I am the Lord." All this is very refreshing and encouraging to me. It must have been so to Moses, as he stood there and listened to these strong and blessed words. And so I learn from such words this lesson: when I am discouraged or cast down either about my own salvation, or about the work of the Lord—to turn to the blessed Scriptures and search through the pages, and read over and over again the strong, sure words of God. They sound like bugle-blasts to me, calling me to faith and service. So may the strong words of God reassure any fainting heart! Be sure that He will not be untrue to even the least of the promises He has made to you; but will fulfil them all most gloriously. These promises are like the cakes baked for Elijah, in the strength of which he went for forty days. Only we may eat them fresh every day if we are so disposed.—*G. F. Pentecost.*

28—80. and . . . pass, etc., these *vss.* a rep. of *vss.* 10-12, the intervening genealogy being parenthetical. **all . . . thee**,ⁱ no more or no less.

Working for God!—Moses had looked upon the work as hard, but when his eyes were opened to perceive what a privilege it was as work for God, then he not only went to it with resolute mind but with a merry heart. Christian service is hard for flesh and blood, but as work for God it becomes light. There is the story of the witty American who, after his men had been working all day building a house, asked them, when they were extremely exhausted with their labor, to come and play a game of digging the cellar. Readily they went; but if they had looked at it as *hard work* they would very likely have directed their steps homeward. So with labor for Jesus. Look not at it in the light of hard work, but look at it as a delightful thing—as a privilege to be allowed to do it. The work will be diminished of its toil.—*Hom. Com.*

Moses' commission and hesitation

l Jer. xxiii. 28; Ma. xxviii. 20; 1 Sa. iii. 18.

"Whenever I contemplate man in the actual world or the ideal, I am lost amidst the infinite multifariousness of his life, but always end in wonder at the essential unity of his nature."—*H. Giles.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1—7. (1) **made**, appointed. **thee . . . Pharaoh**, he is to Pharaoh as a God with a right to command his obedience, and with strength to enforce his commands. **prophet**,^m interpreter, spokesman. (2) **all . . . thee**, withholding nothing. (3) **harden**, as the result of protracted obstinacy. **wonders**, persuasive signs. (4) **shall**, will, predictive. **that, etc., R. V.**, "and I will lay; great display of Almighty power, such as would attract the attention both of the Egyptians generally and of all the surrounding nations. (5) **know . . . Lord**,ⁿ by indubitable signs. (6) **did . . . they**, the obedience of faith. (7) **and Moses, etc.**, their venerable appearance would inspire confidence in their wisdom.

God hardening Pharaoh's heart (vs. 3).—We shall endeavor to—I. Explain

age of Moses and Aaron

m Ex. iv. 16; Lu. xxi. 15; Jer. i. 10.

n Ps. ix. 16.

o Ac. vii. 28, 30; De. xxix. 5; xxxi. 2; xxxiv. 7.

B c. 1491.

Sins are at first like cobwebs, but at last like cables."
— *H. Stretton*.

Open your life as you open your windows, and let God shine in upon all that you are purposing, and deciding, and thinking."
— *Chas. Cuthbert Hall*.

Among George Washington's moral maxims was this, "Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience."

Aaron's rod becomes a serpent

a Ge. xli. 8; Da. ii. 2; 2 Ti. iii. 8.

"The heart of a man is a short word, — a small substance, scarce enough to give a kite a meal yet, great in capacity, yea, so indefinite in desire that the round globe of the world cannot fill the three corners of it. When it desires more, and cries, 'Give, give,' I will set it over to the infinite good, where the more it hath, it may desire more, and see more to be desired." — *Bp. Hall*.

"If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain."
— *Young*.

the ten plagues
the first plague
the Nile changed into blood

b Ex. v. 2.

c Rev. xvi. 4, 6.

the conduct of God, as it is stated in the text. — 1. He left Pharaoh to the influence of his own corruptions; 2. He suffered such events to occur as should give scope for the exercise of those corruptions; 3. He gave Satan permission to exert his influence over him. II. Vindicate it. It was — 1. Righteous, as it respected the individual himself; 2. Merciful, as it respected the universe at large. It has shown us — (1) The extreme depravity of the human heart. (2) Our need of Divine grace. (3) The danger of fighting against God. — *C. Simeon*.

Let us learn not to be impatient for the discovery of our true life-work. Moses was eighty years old before he entered upon that noble career by which he became the emancipator of his nation. Nor is this a solitary instance. The Lord Jesus Himself lived thirty years, during most of which He was in training for a public ministry, which lasted only two-and-forty months. John Knox never entered a pulpit until he was over forty years of age; and much of the fire and energy of his preaching was owing to the fact that the flame had been so long pent up within his breast. Havelock was a dreary while a mere lieutenant, held back by the iniquitous system of purchase which was so long in vogue in the English army; but, as it happened, that was only a life-long apprenticeship, by which he was enabled all the more efficiently to become, at length, the savior of the Indian Empire. So let no one chafe and fret over the delay which seems evermore to keep him from doing anything to purpose for the world and his Lord. The opportunity will come in its own season. — *W. H. Taylor*.

8-13. (8, 9) when . . you, they are forewarned of Pharaoh's demand, and instructed what to do. "They worked no miracle at their former interview. Now, however, the time was come when their credentials would be demanded." thou . . Aaron, Moses as a God in the presence of Pharaoh was to issue commands. serpent, not *nahash*, but *tannin*, i. e., large serpent or dragon, perh. crocodile. (10) they . . commanded, Pharaoh having demanded a sign. (11) sorcerers, wizards, jugglers; he prob. regarded M. and A. as mere jugglers, and confronted them with the skilful wizards of his court. now . . enchantments, still a common trick in E. (12) for . . rod, Serpents numbed, appearing like rods. and . . serpents, the serpents resumed their usual appearance and motions. but . . rods, his only remaining. (13) and . . heart, *R. V., margin*, "and Pharaoh's heart was strong, and he;" he was doubtless confounded, though not convinced.

The two kingdoms (vss. 10-13). — 1. The monarchs: God and Satan. II. Their agents: angels and devils. III. Their characters: righteousness and sinfulness. IV. Their fruit: happiness and misery. V. Their work: blessing and cursing. Choose ye between them.

Christianity beneficent. — Ancient tradition records a contest said to have taken place at Rome — in the presence of the Emperor Constantine and his mother, the Empress Helena — between the Jews and Roman philosophers on the one hand, and Sylvester, the Christian patriarch, on the other. The leader of the philosophers showed the superiority of their system over Christianity by miraculously killing a fierce bull with uttering in his ear a single word. Sylvester, with a word, not only restored the wild animal to life, but raised it tame and gentle as if it had been in the yoke from birth. Christianity is happy in its effects upon untameable human nature — raising it to life — and making it to sit clothed and in its right mind at the feet of the founder. — *Adamson*.

14-18. (14) hardened, Heb. *kābed*, is heavy. *R. V.*, "stubborn." (15) he . . water, prob. to pay religious adoration to the Nile. (16) Lord . . thee, proved as well as said. thou . . hear, *lit.* "thou has not heard," i. e. up to this time thou hast not obeyed. (17) in . . Lord, dispensing with entreaties, M. now uses threats. smite, God here speaks of the acts of Moses and Aaron as his own acts. they . . blood, not "shall be of the color of blood," but shall become blood: the water had the look, taste, smell, texture of blood. (18) fish . . die, destruction of an important article of diet. and . . stink, putrescent.

Superstitions respecting the Nile. — There is extant a hymn to the Nile, written about the time of the Exodus, beginning thus — "Hail, O Nile, thou comest forth over this land, thou comest in peace, giving life to Egypt. O hidden God!" Plutarch, following the jargon of the priests, calls the Nile

"the Father and Savior of Egypt," and affirms, "There is nothing so much honored among the Egyptians as the river Nile." By the miraculous change of the waters into blood, a practical rebuke was given to these superstitions. This sacred and beautiful river, the benefactor and preserver of their country, this birthplace of their chief gods, this abode of their lesser deities, this source of all their prosperity, this centre of all their devotion, is turned to blood: the waters stink; the canals and pools, the vessels of wood and the vessels of stone, which were replenished from the river, are all alike polluted. — *T. S. Millington*.

19—21. (19) stretch . . waters, etc., wave it towards the waters of Egypt, streams, tributaries of Nile. rivers, canals. ponds, cisterns, tanks. pools. reservoirs. "The four terms 'show an accurate knowledge of Egypt' (Cook), and of its water system. The 'streams' are the Nile branches; the 'rivers' correspond to the canals; the 'ponds' are the natural accumulations of waters in lakes or marshes; while the 'pools' are the reservoirs." — *Pulp. Com.* vessels . . stone, filtering apparatus, etc.; "usual adjuncts of all the better class of houses." (20) and . . blood,^a waters previously stained with the blood of Hebrew innocents. (21) fish . . died, see vs. 18. It is most natural to understand "all the fish."

The river changed for three reasons. — 1. It was changed on account of idolatry. The Egyptians revered the Nile; boasted that it made them independent of the rain; believed that all their gods, particularly Vulcan, were born on its banks. In honor of it observed rites, ceremonies and celebrated festivals. 2. It was changed that the priests of Egypt might be deeply impressed. Nothing which the priests more abhorred than blood. If the slightest stain of blood had been on their persons, even on their sandals or garments, they would have thought themselves deeply polluted. How terrified they must have been when they saw that "there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt." God meant this, that they might begin to think of Him, and turn from their dumb idols to Him. Events, as well as words, are teachers. May we listen at all times to truth. 3. It was changed to show that God is all-powerful. — *A. McAuslane*.

The Nile turned into blood. — This miracle bore a certain resemblance to natural phenomena, and therefore was one which Pharaoh might see with amazement and dismay, yet without complete conviction. It is well known that before the rise the water of the Nile is green, and unfit to drink. About the end of June it becomes yellow, and gradually reddish, like ochre. This effect has been generally attributed to the red earth, brought down from Sennaar, but Ehrenberg proves that it is owing to the presence of microscopic cryptogams and *infusoria*. Late travelers say that at such seasons the broad, turbid tide has a striking resemblance to a river of blood. The supernatural character of the visitation was attested by the connection of the change with the words and acts of Moses, and by its effects. It killed the fishes, and made the water unfit for use. — *Spk. Com.*

22—25. (22) magicians . . enchantments, no doubt they produced some apparent change, which was accepted by Pharaoh. (23) neither . . also, *R. V.*, "neither did he lay even this to heart." (25) seven . . river, marks the duration of the first plague. The intervals between one plague and another are nowhere estimated.

On yielding to the devil. — 1. We may be sure of this, that the devil never means good, but always evil. 2. The more we yield to the influence of Satan, the further he will press his authority, and the more complete will be his dominion over us. 3. No one is obliged to yield to him. We can conquer if we will. — *Homiletic Hints*.

Providence penal. — In accordance with a vow a Hindu once bandaged up his eyes so tightly that not a single ray of light could enter them. So he continued for years. At last, when his vow was completed, he threw off his bandage, but only to find that through disuse he had completely lost his sight. In one sense, he had deprived himself of sight; in another, God had deprived him of it. So it was with Pharaoh's spiritual sight. Then comes the warning of consequences. It is very pleasant to go floating down the river toward the rapids. The current is so gentle that one can easily regain the bank. But remain in that current, in spite of all warnings, just one moment too long, and you and your boat will go over the falls. — *S. S. Times*.

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Wonderful fertility of this idolatrous land is illus. by the fact that though Egypt contains 115,200 sq. geog. miles, only 9,582 watered by Nile; and of these only 5,626 under cultivation.

a Ps. lxxviii. 44; cv. 29.

"The water of the Nile was sent, as a present fit for royalty to receive, to distant kings and queens. In the present day, the Arabs will even excite thirst by eating salt, in order to gratify themselves with it. They are accustomed to say that if Mahomet had once tasted the stream, he would have asked an immortality on earth, that he might enjoy it forever." — *Topics*.

"On some hearts God's warnings make no more lasting impression than the paddle-wheels on the water—creating a violent agitation for a few minutes, leaving a whitened track for a brief space longer, which melting away from view, becomes as it had been before."

"Obstinacy is ever most positive when it is most in the wrong." — *Mad. Necker*.

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the second
plaguefrogs are
sent

a "This corresp. to the Heb. wd. used in this and no other passage, except in the Psalms taken for it; they are small, do not leap much, are much like toads, and fill the whole country with their croaking." — *Spk. Com.*

"Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently." — *The Imitation of Christ.*

b Ex. ix. 28; x. 17; 1 Ki. xiii. 6; Ac. viii. 24.
c Is. xli. 9; Ps. lxxvi. 8; Jer. x. 6, 7; De. xxxiii. 29; xxxii. 31; 2 Sa. vii. 23; 1 Ch. xvii. 20.

d Ma. v. 44; 1 Sa. xli. 23.
e Jas. v. 6.
f Is. xxvi. 10; Ec. viii. 11.

"Our grand business undoubtedly is, not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand." — *Carlyle.*

"Though modest souls resolve quietly to creep to heaven, unknown to others, yet God will have His work in them brought to light, for His own glory." — *D. Dickson.*

"There are few, very few, that will own themselves in a mistake." — *Swift.*

the third
plague

lice are sent

g Sir S. Baker, who descr. the lice as a sort of tick, not larger than a grain of sand, which, when filled with blood, expands to the size of a hazel nut.

h 2 Ti. iii. 8, 9.
i 1 Sa. vi. 3, 9; Ma. xii. 28; Lu. xi. 20.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

1-7. (1) **go, etc.**, God speaks bef. He strikes. (2) **smite . . borders**, — the entire land. "The second plague is first threatened (*vs.* 2), and then accomplished (*vs.* 6) an interval being allowed, that Pharaoh might change his mind." — *Pulp. Com.* **frogs**, two species in Egypt, the *rana nilotica* and the *rana mosaica*; this latter now called *dofda*. (3) **river . . abundantly, lit.** shall swarm with frogs. **bedchamber**, recesses on the ground floor. The frogs under ordinary circumstances do not enter houses. **ovens**, earthen pots sunk in the ground. (4) **frogs . . servants**, the extreme cleanliness of the Egyptians (*Herod. ii.* 37) rendered this visitation peculiarly disagreeable. (5, 6) **frogs**, a harmless animal multiplied becomes an intolerable nuisance. (7) **magicians, etc.**, they seem to have had power to increase the plague, but not to remove it.

The plague of frogs. — God plagues Egypt with these contemptible instruments. — I. To magnify His own power. He has the whole creation under command; He is the Lord of small things as well as of great. II. To humble Pharaoh's pride, and chastise his insolence. What a mortification it must have been to this haughty monarch to see himself brought to his knees and forced to submit to such despicable means. — *M. Henry.*

8-15. (8) **entreat, etc.**,^b an acknowledgment of Jehovah's power is now forced from the reluctant king. **he . . me**, why could not his enchanters remove them? (9) **glory . . me**,^c a phrase of courtesy, meaning — "I submit to thy will" — appoint me the time when I shall entreat for thee. (10) **to-morrow**, by fixing the time he would be able to connect M. with the event and recognize the *unapproachable* power and glory of Jehovah. (11) **they . . only**, as great a miracle to restrain their movements as to multiply their number. (12) **because . . frogs**,^d *lit.* upon the word of the frogs, *i. e.* on the subject of the frogs. (13) **villages**,^e courts, *i. e.* courtyards of houses and walled enclosures. (14) **heaps**, sugg. of immense number. (15) **respite**, breathing space. **he . . them**,^f as Isaiah says: — "Let favor be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness." (*Isa. xxvi.* 10.)

Seven characteristics of Pharaoh. — I. Ignorant (*chap.* v. 2). II. Disobedient (*chap.* v. 2). III. Unbelieving (*chap.* v. 9). IV. Foolish (*chap.* viii. 10). V. Hardened (*chap.* viii. 15). VI. Privileged (*chap.* ix. 1). VII. Lost (*chap.* xiv. 26-28). — *C. Inglis.*

It is God alone who can judge the heart. — We ought, therefore, always to be ready to console, and help, with our prayers, even persons who have been most hostile, opposed, and contemptuous to us. There was a worthy pastor of the Canton de Vaud in Switzerland, who during a time of persecution, had to suffer much because he preached the gospel faithfully. He was even obliged to leave his parish, and to go and settle in another. Some time afterwards, one of the men who had behaved most wickedly to him was converted to the Lord. He immediately determined to go to his former pastor to tell him this good news. "How surprised he will be," thought he as he walked along. He arrived at the village, he rung the bell at the minister's house; the pastor himself opened the door. "I am come to tell you that I am converted; I, who have done you so much harm." "I am not astonished at it," answered the pastor, "for I have prayed for you all these seven years." — *Prof. Gaussen.*

16-19. (16) **dust**, dry country, much dust, **lice**, gnats or mosquitoes prob. (17) **lice . . Egypt**, "it is as though the very dust were turned into lice."^g (18) **magicians . . not**, here they are effectually restrained. (19) **this . . God**,^h it is divine. All that they meant was — "This is beyond the power of man — some god must be helping the Israelites." **hardened**, notwithstanding what his own magicians said. "Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him."

The plague of lice. — 1. This punishment was sent without any previous warning. 2. This plague was inflicted by a very small insect. 3. This plague could not be imitated by the magicians. This rendered Pharaoh's refusal to humble himself all the more unpardonable. — *Homilist.*

This is the finger of God. — "Like Phidias, who in his image carved his own name, there is God engraven upon every creature." Not in

characters of human writing is it written, but in the character of the work. Phidias needed not to have written the word Phidias in so many letters, for the master's hand had a cunning of its own which none could counterfeit. An instructed person had only to look at a statue and say at once, "Phidias did this, for no other hand could have chiselled such a countenance;" and believers have only to look either at creation, providence, or the Divine Word, and they will cry instinctively, "This is the finger of God." Yet, alas, man has great powers of wilful blindness, and these are aided by the powers of darkness, so that, being both blind and in the dark, man is unable to see His God, though His presence is as clear as that of the sun in the heavens—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

20—24. (20) **early** . . **Pharaoh**, the anxious king had risen early to invoke the help of his god. (21) **else, etc.** another gracious warning before the judgment. (22) **sever** . . **there**,^b a new feature in the plague with which the land was visited, *i. e.* a distinction between Israel and Egypt. **end . . earth**, having a special care for my own people. (23) **division, lit.** I will put redemption, "*i. e.* a sign that they are redeemed from bondage, and are 'My people,' not thine any longer." (24) **grievous, heavy. flies**,^c of various kinds; perh. esp. the dog-fly, of wh. the bite is exceedingly painful.

Flies in the East.—These insects sometimes cause no slight suffering in Palestine, as I can vouch for from my own experience. However large or however small they be, they attack alike, restless and rabid foes, and make themselves insufferable in a thousand ways in every season and place, in the house and in the field, by day and by night. I have never, indeed, seen them in such quantities as Moses predicted (Ex. xxiii. 28; De. vii. 20), and as there must have been when two kings of the Amorites were driven from their country by them (Jos. xxiv. 12). According to the Talmud, they stung their enemies in the eyes, inflicting a mortal wound. Still, frequently, in 1857 and 1860, while I was encamped near the tents of the Bedawin, in the neighborhood of the Jordan and to the south of Hebron, flies were brought in such numbers by the east wind, that all, beasts and men, were in danger of being choked by them, as they crept into our ears, noses and mouths, and all over our bodies. My servant and I were the first to fly from this pest, as we were spotted all over like lepers with the eruption caused by their bites; the Bedawin themselves were not slow to follow our example.—*Pierotti*.

25—29. (26) **go . . land**, a compromise: they might sacrifice but in "the land of Egypt. (26) **it . . do**, it is not so appointed; he would accept no half measures. "A bloody conflict, or even a civil war, might be the consequence." **abomination . . God**,^d bold language, *i. e.* things deemed sacred by the Egyptians an abomination in the sight of God. **lo . . us**, our sacrifice of what they deemed sacred would be abominable to them. (27) **as . . us**, we will obey God; we reject Pharaoh's concession. (28) **only . . away**, he will not yield unconditionally, but would keep Israel still within reach. "Here for the first time Pharaoh shows his real objection to letting the Israelites go—he is afraid that they will escape him." (29) **but . . more**, the king had deceived once (*vs.* 15); this a hint that there might be worse to come.

The veneration with which the Egyptians regarded such animals as were the objects of their religious worship might be illustrated by a variety of historical facts. On one occasion a Persian commander saved his army by placing, craftily, in the foremost lines of his troops some dogs, cats, and other sacred animals, at which the foiled Egyptians did not dare to aim an offensive weapon. A Roman in Egypt once killed a cat inadvertently, upon which the people met together, beset his house and killed the man, in spite of the king and princes, who endeavored to prevent it.

30—32. (30) **Moses . . Lord**, see *vs.* 8—12. (31) **there . . one**, this as great a wonder as the plague itself. (32) **neither . . go**, so much for a king's word. Compare ch. vii. 13, 22; ch. viii. 15.

A right heart.—"When Sir Walter Raleigh had laid his head upon the block," says an eloquent divine, "he was asked by the executioner whether it lay aright. Whereupon, with the calmness of a hero and the faith of a Christian, he returned an answer, the power of which we all shall feel when our head is tossing and turning on death's uneasy pillow: 'It matters little, my friend, how the head lies providing the heart be right.'"—*R. Steele*.

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"Obstinacy is the strength of the weak. Firmness, founded upon principle, upon the truth and right, order and law, duty and generosity, is the obstinacy of sages."—*Lavater*.

the fourth
plague
flies are sent

a Is. vii. 18.

b Ex. ix. 4, 6, 26;
x. 23; xi. 6, 7; xii.
13.

c "The same, according to Bochart, as was styled by the Romans, *nusca canina*, and by the Greeks, 'the dog-fly.' Acc. to Bruce it is a dipterous insect, exceedingly destructive to cattle in Abyssinia, as the tsetse fly of Dr. Livingstone, with which it is prob. identical.

d De. vii. 25, 26;
xii. 31.

In postponing the day of salvation, we are postponing our own happiness. Think of the madness of Pharaoh, enduring another night of the frogs when he could obtain instant release from them. And yet he was no more mad than the sinner is who postpones his salvation from day to day. His sins are more numerous and nauseous than the frogs of Egypt. They swarm everywhere; they leave their slime upon everything; they spawn in the dark corners of his heart; he is plagued with them, and can get no peace.—*G. A. Sowler*.

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CHAPTER THE NINTH.

the fifth plague
the cattle
destroyed

a Gen. xiv. 13.

b Est. iii. 6; Gen. xxix. 35; xlix. 8.

c Gen. xii. 16.

d Le. xxvi. 21; Ps. lxxviii. 21; Re. xvi. 9.

e Ex. viii. 22; Mal. iii. 18.

f "This peculiar usage of the word 'all,' as denoting some of all kinds, instead of the absolute totality of the number spoken of, is of great importance to a right understanding of the sacred Scriptures throughout." — *Bush*.

g Ma. x. 29; 1 Co. ix. 9, 10.

Esau, after he sold his birthright, never repented nor wished to repent. He wished his father to repent, though he himself did not repent. Pharaoh could say, "I have sinned," and never felt it, — because his heart was "hard." — *Vaughan*.

the sixth
plague
boils are
sent

h De. xxviii. 27; Re. xvi. 2.

"Kalisch mentions a barbarous custom of burning human victims in certain cities of Egypt consecrated to the evil genius Typhon, and scattering their ashes in the air, 'in hope that with the dust the blessings of

1-4. (1) Hebrews,^a called also Jews^b fr. the patriarch Judah. (2) wilt . . still, forcibly detain them. (3) horses, "had been unknown prior to the Hyksos invasion." asses, "employed in great numbers at all times in Egypt." camels, only once bef. named in connection with Egypt.^c murrain,^d pestilence. (4) there . . Israel,^e the grt. distinction betw. Israel and Egypt still preserved. Compare ch. viii. 22.

Antiquity of the ass and horse. — The horse is not depicted on the ancient Egyptian monuments, but the ass is represented on the very oldest monuments of Egypt. Its form occurs frequently in the tombs of the old empire, at Gizeh, Sakkarah, and Abouzir. There is a highly curious bas-relief on the tomb of Ti (fifth dynasty), on which we see a drove of asses, a plaster cast of this having been sent over by M. Mariette to the Universal Exhibition of 1867. From the beginning of the fourth dynasty the ass was an animal as frequent in Egypt as it is now. In the inscription of the tomb of Shafra Ankh at Gizeh, published by M. Lepsius, a herd of 760 asses is mentioned as having been reared on the estates of the deceased, who was a high functionary at the court of the founder of the second pyramid of Gizeh (fourth dynasty). In other still unpublished tombs, discovered by M. Mariette, M. Lenormand has remarked inscriptions in which landed proprietors boast of possessing thousands of asses. — *J. Timbs*.

5-7. (5) time . . tomorrow, the king had time for reflection. (6) all . . died, *i. e.* some of all sorts,^f see vs. 19-25, or all that were "in the field" (vs. 3). (7) behold . . dead,^g the diff. is now manifest to Pharaoh. and . . hardened, notwithstanding his knowledge increases. "This plague affected him less than others had done."

Destruction of the cattle. — Hyperbolic probably for many, as is indicated in vs. 20. In Samoa this is a very common form of speech. If two or three houses fall in a gale, the tale goes that "all are down, not one standing." Or if a number of the people are suffering from an epidemic, the report spreads that the whole land is covered with beds." — *Turner*.

Another blow at Egyptian idolatry. — By the former plagues their religious ceremonies had been interrupted and their sacred abominations defiled; but now their chief deities are attacked. In Goshen, where the cattle are but cattle, they remain untouched: "Of the cattle of the children of Israel there died not one" (vs. 6); but in all other parts of the country, where they are revered as gods, the plague is upon them, and they die. Osiris, the saviour, cannot save even the brute in which his own soul is supposed to dwell; Apis and Mnevis, the ram of Ammon, the sheep of Sais, and the goat of Mendes, perish together. Hence Moses reminds the Israelites afterwards, "Upon their gods also the Lord executed judgments" (Numb. xxxiii. 4); and Jethro, when he had heard from Moses the history of all that God had done in Egypt, confessed, "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods; for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, He was above them" (chap. xviii. 11). — *T. S. Millington*.

8-12. (8) take, *etc.*, this time a judgment without a warning. ashes . . furnace, prob. of some smelting-furnace or lime-kiln. toward . . heaven. "The act indicated that the plague would come from God." let . . Pharaoh, he prob. met him in the morning by the river, and does this without addressing him. (9) boil,^h ulcer. breaking . . blains, *lit.* "an inflammation, begetting pustules," running and itching sores. (10) and, *etc.*, note the boldness and promptitude of obedience. (11) magicians . . boils, first defeated, now routed, "by the sudden falling of the pestilence upon themselves with such severity that they were forced to hasten to their homes to be nursed." (12) and . . Pharaoh, here for the first time we read that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, *i. e.* He judicially gave him up to obduracy of mind, "as he had threatened that he would (ch. iv. 21)."

The use of afflictions. — Two painters were employed to fresco the walls of a magnificent cathedral. Both stood on a rude scaffolding constructed for the purpose, some distance from the floor. One, so intent upon his work, forgetting where he was, stepped back slowly, surveying critically the work of his pencil, until he had neared the edge of the plank on which he stood. At

this moment his companion, just perceiving his danger, seized a wet brush, flung it against the wall, spattering the picture with unsightly blotches of coloring. The painter flew forward, and turned upon his friend with fierce upbraidings, till made aware of the danger he had escaped; then with tears of gratitude, he blessed the hand that saved him. Just so, sometimes we get so absorbed with the pictures of the world, unconscious of our peril, when God in mercy dashes out the beautiful images, and draws us, at the time we are complaining of His dealings, into His outstretched arms of love.

13-16. (13) *rise, etc.*, see vii. 15 and viii. 20. (14) *will . . send,* etc., i. e.* I will send greater plagues than before. *thou . . know*, "Pharaoh was himself to be convinced that the Lord God of Israel was the greatest of all gods." (15) *pestilence*, deadly plague. Scripture shows that pestilence is in God's power, and may at any time be let loose to scourge his foes, and sweep them to destruction. (See Lev. xxvi. 25; Num. xi. 33; 2 Sam. xxiv. 13-15, etc.) *Pulp. Com.* (16) *and . . deed, etc.,* the meaning is, God permitted him to live and hold out till His own purpose was accomplished. *name . . earth, i. e.*, that attention may be called among the nations to the truth that there is but one God.

The road to ruin.—I. Unbelief. II. Superstition. III. Alarm. IV. Confession. V. Promises—violation. VI. Disposition to compromise. VII. Indifference. VIII. Hardness of heart. IX. Resistance to appeal of others. X. Ruin.—*Pulp. Com.*

The significance of the plagues.—These plagues are all significant, proving the power of God, and rebuking idolatry. 1. The Nile—blood; an object of worship turned into an object of abhorrence. 2. The sacred frog itself their plague. 3. Lice, which the Egyptians deemed so polluting that to enter a temple with them was a profanation, cover the country like dust. 4. The gad-fly (*Zebub*), an object of Egyptian reverence, becomes their torture. 5. The cattle, which were objects of Egyptian worship, fall dead before their worshippers. 6. The ashes, which the priests scattered as signs of blessing, become boils. 7. Isis and Osiris, the deities of water and fire, are unable to protect Egypt, even at a season when storms and rains were unknown, from the fire and hail of God. 8. Isis and Serapis were supposed to protect the country from locusts. West winds might bring these enemies; but an east wind the Egyptian never feared, for the Red Sea defended him. But now Isis fails; and the very east wind he revered becomes his destruction. 9. The heavenly hosts, the objects of worship, are themselves shown to be under Divine control. 10. The last plague explains the whole. God's first-born Egypt had oppressed; and now the firstborn of Egypt are all destroyed. The first two plagues, it will be noticed, were foretold by Moses, and imitated by the Egyptians. The rest they failed to copy, and confessed that they were wrought by the finger of God."—*Angus*.

17-21. (17) *exaltest*, proudly self-confident, haughty defiance of the Lord. (18) *rain . . hail*, in Egypt rare and usually innoxious. *since . . now, i. e.* since Egypt became a nation, see vs. 24. (19) *Send . . field, etc.*, God mercifully gives Pharaoh the opportunity of saving some of his people and their cattle. (20) *feared, etc.*, by this time there had sprung up in the minds of some a belief in the word, and a dread of the power of God. (21) *left . . field,** where they perished through lack of faith. "To the mass of Egyptians, a hail-storm that could endanger life, seemed impossible."

A warning disregarded.—A gentleman was traveling in Italy in the summer months. As he left Rome he was warned of the danger of sleeping at Baccano. He was told to travel all night rather than stop at that place, as a malignant fever prevailed there. He arrived there about bed-time. The air was balmy and the accommodation inviting. He concluded to stop for the night. Those whose interests would be promoted by his doing so told him there was no danger. He rose in the morning and proceeded on his journey. Some days after he had reached Florence the fever developed itself, and he was soon in his grave. Sinners are warned of the consequences of sinful acts.—*T. S. Millington*.

22-26. (22) *all . . Egypt*, the tempest not only fierce but universal (23) *thunder, lit. voices. fire,* lightning. ran . . ground, lit. walked earth-*

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heaven would spread over the country." If this were so, it would, at least, give significance to the act here enjoined."—*Alford*.

a Mic. vi. 13.

b Pr. xvi. 4; Ro. ix. 22, 23; Ps. lxxvi. 10; Neh. ix. 10.

"What a lesson is all history and all life to the folly and fruitlessness of pride! The Egyptian kings had their embalmed bodies preserved in massive pyramids, to obtain an earthly immortality. In the seventeenth century they were sold as quack medicines, and now they are burnt for fuel! The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time have spared, avarice, now consumeth."—*Whipple*.

"An obstinate man does not hold opinions, but they hold him."—*Pope*.

the seventh plague

hail is sent

c Pr. xxii. 3; Jonah iii. 6.

The heathen imagined that divers Gods were over divers things; some ruling the air, some the fire, some the water. But God here proves His complete authority over the whole of nature.—*Exell*.

d Ps. cv. 32; cxlviii. 8; Josh. x. 11; Is. xxx. 30; Ezek. xxxviii. 22; Rev. viii. 7.

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a Ps. lxxviii. 47, 48.

b Ex. viii. 22; x. 4; x. 23; xl. 7; xii. 13; Is. xxvii. 18, 19.

"Divine Providence tempers His blessings to secure their better effect. He keeps our joys and our fears on an even balance, that we may neither presume nor despair." — *Wogan*.

"I consider it a mark of great prudence in a man to abstain from threats or any contemptuous expressions, for neither of these weakens the enemy, but threats make him more cautious, and the other excites his hatred, and a desire to revenge himself." — *Mach-tavelli*.

"He who sends the storm steers the vessel." — *T. Adams*.

c Job xxxiv. 31, 32; Pr. xxviii. 13; 2 Ch. xii. 6, 7; Dan. ix. 14.

d Ps. xxiv. 1; 1 Co. x. 28.

e Is. xxvi. 10.

"Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses, a box where sweets compacted lie." — *G. Herbert*.

f Now called doura by the natives.

g 2 Ch. xxxiii. 23; Ec. viii. 11.

h "Different words are used in this and the following verse: here the word means 'heavy,' i. e. obtuse, incapable of forming a right judgment; the other, which is more frequently used in this narrative, is stronger and implies a stubborn resolution." — *Spk. Com.*

wards. *R. V.*, "ran down unto the earth." (24) fire . . hail,^a i. e., continuous sheets of lightning. (25) smote, "According to the warning given (vs. 19) the herdsman and cattle left in the open air were killed." all . . beasts, i. e., some of all sorts. see vs. 6. (26) only,^b etc., the distinction still preserved. Compare ch. viii. 22; ix. 4; x. 23.

God's regard for His own. — Miss Gordon Cummings tells the following thrilling story of a Chinese convert at Oiong, whose piety had obtained for him the sobriquet of "Praise the Lord." Miss Cummings says: "A fire broke out in one of the streets of the town, and at first it was not expected to reach as far as where 'Praise the Lord' lived. As it spread, however, it neared the street where his house stood, and it was evident to the onlookers that all the buildings were doomed. His heathen neighbors hastily collected all their idols, and placed them as a barricade against the approaching flames. The zealous old Christian, seizing his mattock, and swinging it around him, soon reduced the gods of wood and clay to a mass of fragments. Then, having denounced the folly which could trust in senseless images, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and in the hearing of the already wildly excited mob he called upon the great Creator, the true God, his heavenly Father, to save the homes of himself and his neighbors from the threatening fire. It was not the first time that he had proved the promise, 'While they are yet speaking I will hear,' and now he looked for an immediate answer, which would show to the heathen that the God who could stay the fire was the true God. Nor was he disappointed; almost before they could note any physical reason for the change the flames seemed blown back upon themselves — the wind had suddenly veered around, and though many of the houses close by had been scorched, those of the old man and his neighbors escaped unharmed, and the marvelling crowd saw the conflagration recede as swiftly as it had approached." — *T. S. Millington*.

27-30. (27) said . . time,^c i. e. I at this time acknowledge my sin. "The confession is made for the first time." Lord, he recognizes the God of the Hebrews. (28) mighty thunderings, *lit.* voices of God. (29) that . . Lord's,^d God the Lord of the whole earth contrasted with Egyptian notion of local deities. (30) I . . God,^e i. e. true fear of God is shown by obedience. Pharaoh and his servants had the fear which devils have — "they believed and trembled." So the event showed (See vs. 34, 35). — *Pulp. Com.*

Confession of sin (vs. 27). — Seven texts to this sermon. Consider — I. The hardened sinner. Under terror, Pharaoh says, "I have sinned." II. The double-minded man: Balaam (Num. xxii. 34). He says "I have sinned," and feels that he has, and feels it deeply too, but he is so worldly-minded that he "loves the wages of unrighteousness." III. The insincere man: Saul (1 Sam. xv. 24). He is molded everlastingly by the circumstance passing over his head. IV. The doubtful penitent: Achan (Josh. vii. 20). V. The despairing repentant: Judas (Ma. xxvii. 4). VI. The repentant saint: Job (Job vii. 20). VII. The blessed confession: the prodigal son (Lu. xv. 18). — *Spurgeon*.

31, 32. (31) flax, Egypt the linen-market of the anc. world. *bolled*, i. e. in blossom, or had its *ball-like* seed-vessels on it. (32) *rie*, or spelt' (*tritium spelta*): rye not grown so far south; bread of spelt the usual food of anc. Egyptians.

Egyptian flax and barley. — That is, one of the two named was maturing and the other about to mature. The flax was *bolled*, i. e. in blossom. Comparing this with the next verse, we ascertain on reference to the climatology of Egypt that this infliction took place in January or February. The cultivation of flax was of great importance; linen was preferred to any material, and exclusively used by the priests. Pliny specifies four kinds which were used in Egypt. The texture was remarkably fine, in general quality (as we find from relics yet extant) equal to the best now made, and in the evenness of its threads actually superior to that of modern manufacture. — *Bib. Treas.*

33-35. (33) rain . . earth, pouring rain a most unusual thing. (34) he . . more,^g prob. ref. to his confession, vs. 27. *hardened*^h . . servants, i. e. the officers of his court, still upheld the king in his mad course. (35) as . . Moses, see vs. 30.

Repentance under judgments. — One day, visiting a prison chaplain, the

Rev. W. Harness asked him whether his ministry had been attended with success. "With very little, I grieve to say," was the reply. "A short time since I thought I had brought to a better state of mind a man who had attempted to murder a woman and had been condemned to death. He showed great signs of contrition after the sentence was passed upon him, and I thought I could observe the dawns of grace upon the soul. I gave him a Bible, and he was most assiduous in the study of it, frequently quoting passages from it which he said convinced him of the heinousness of his offense. The man gave altogether such a promise of reformation, and of a change of heart and life, that I exerted myself to the utmost, and obtained for him such a commutation of his sentence as would enable him soon to begin the world again, and as I hoped, with a happier result. I called to inform him of my success. His gratitude knew no bounds; he said I was his preserver—his deliverer. 'And here,' he added, as he grasped my hand in parting, 'here is your Bible; I may as well return it to you, for I hope I shall never want it again.'"—*Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1—6. (1) **hardened**, "I" is emphatic. It is not merely that Pharaoh has hardened himself (ch. ix. 34); but I have "dulled" or "hardened" his heart. —*Pulp. Com.* that . . him, as lessons for all time. (2) **tell**,^a etc., statement of far-reaching purpose of God. "The Psalms show how after generations dwell on the memory of the great deeds done in Egypt." (See Ps. lxxviii. cv. and cvi.) (3) **how . . refuge**, "even now Pharaoh's will is free." **humble**,^b acknowledge the greatness and power of the God of the Hebrews and let the Israelites go. (4) **locusts**,^c locusts belong to the *saltatorial orthoptera* (leaping flyers with straight wings), the largest of wh. are fr. two to two and a half in. long, expanse of wings fr. four to six inches, (5) **face . . earth, lit.** the eye of the earth, *i. e.* all the eye looks upon. (6) **which . . day, i. e.** such locusts never seen before for *numbers* and *size*. "Inroads of locusts are not common in Egypt. Only one reference has been found to them in the native records."

Resisting warnings. — 1. Man has the ability to resist the saving ministries of heaven. 2. When man resists the saving ministries of heaven he becomes hard in heart. 3. Hardness of heart is itself a natural judgment from God. 4. Hardness of heart will finally work its own ruin. — *Exell.*

The plague of locusts. — The herbage which the storm had spared was now given up to a terrible destroyer. After a fresh warning —

"The potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round her coasts, called up a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile."

No plague could have been more impressive in the East, where the ravages of locusts are so dreadful that they are chosen as the fit symbol of a destroying conqueror. The very threat had urged Pharaoh's courtiers to remonstrance, and he had offered to let the men only depart, but he had refused to yield more, and had driven Moses and Aaron from his presence. Now he recalled them in haste, and asked them to forgive his sin "only this once," and to entreat God to take away "this death only." A strong west wind removed the locusts as an east wind had brought them; but their removal left his heart harder than ever. — *Smith's O. T. Hist.*

7—11. (7) **snare**, a source of danger, cause of our being led into fresh calamities, the real snare was their sin. (8) **but . . go?** *lit.* who and who (are) going. (9) **young daughters, i. e.** all of us. **flocks . . herds, i. e.** all we have. The whole nation with its flocks and herds, was to take its departure. (10) **Lord . . go, i. e.** "may the Lord favor you as much as I do with my consent and no more." An emphatic mode of denying the permission they sought. **evil . . you**, the meaning is either, "you purpose evil," or "I will practice evil." (11) **now . . men**, he would retain the others as hostages for the men's return. **driven . . presence**, contemptuously.

B. C. 1191.

Once to every man
and nation come
a moment to
decide
In the strife of
truth and false-
hood,
For the good or
evil side.

— Lowell.

"All our actions
take their hues
from the com-
plexion of the
heart, as land-
scapes their varie-
ty from light." —
Bacon.

the eighth
plague —
the locusts

^a De. iv. 9; Ps.
xlii. 1; Joel i. 3.

^b Pr. xviii. 12; 1
Ki. xxi. 29; Jas.
iv. 10; Job xlii. 6;
1 Pe. v. 6; 2 Ch
vii. 14.

^c Ma. iii. 4; Mk. i.
6; see also Le. xi.
22; Ps. lxxviii. 46;
cix. 23; Joel i. 4;
ii. 25; De. xxviii.
38, 42; Ps. cv. 34;
Pr. xxx. 27; Is.
xxxiii. 4; Na. iii.
15; Re. ix. 3, 7.

"The earth, with
its bright colors,
and lovely flowers,
and vegetation,
shines like a beau-
tiful eye, and
looks up to man.
The locusts are to
it what blindness
is to the eye." —
Wordsworth.

Moses
and Aaron
driven from
Pharaoh's
presence

"Power safely de-
fied touches its
downfall." — *Ma-
caulay.*

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"The greater a man is in power above others, the more he ought to excel them in virtue. None ought to govern who is not better than the governed." — *P. Syrus.*

the locusts
are sent

a Wordsworth, who adds, "the wind was worshipped in Egypt under the name of *Kneph*."

b "They covered all the land so that the sun beams could not pierce to it, and the land was obscured." — *Chaldee.*

Jesus bids us shine
Then for all
around,
for many kinds of
darkness
In the world are
found;
There's sin, there's
want and sorrow;
So we must shine.
You in your small
corner,
And I in mine.
Yet from those
flames no light, but
rather darkness
visible." — *Milton.*

the plague
removed

c 2 Ki. iv. 40.

It is a humbling
and teaching fact
that in three only
— of the seven in-
stances in which
persons are re-
corded in the
Scriptures to have
said, "I have
sinned," was the
confession true,
and the repentance
valid. — *Vaughan.*

the ninth
plague

darkness

d Ju. 13.

e Ps. cv. 28.

f Ex. viii. 22; ix. 25; Eph. v. 8.
Light in the heart
brings light in the
home. — *Exell.*

Leave your little ones. — If your house were on fire, what would you think of a person who should say to your father, "Go out as quickly as you can, but leave your children in bed?" Or if you were at school, or an apprentice to a trade, what would you think of a man who should say to your father, "Your son has a holiday, but do not let him come home to be with you, for he is at an age to amuse himself. Do not teach him to love you, and to obey you, for that would weary him." Ah! dear children, you have as much need as we have to escape the wrath to come, and to love God. Ask from Him grace to love Him. The prayer of a child who seeks a new heart for the sake of Jesus Christ always ascends to heaven. — *Prof. Gausen.*

12-15. (12) all . . left, see ix. 6-25. (13) east wind, "another element is now also enlisted against Pharaoh. 'Locusts come with a wind; and, cannot fly far without one. An east wind would have brought them from northern Arabia, where they are bred in large numbers.'" *a* land . . night, without intermission, otherwise the locusts had not been wafted across the Red Sea. (14) and . . Egypt, columns of locusts of the length of 500 miles have been noticed by travelers (Moor in Kirby on *Entomology*, letter vi.), and 20 miles is not an unusual width for them. — *Pulp. Com.* (15) darkened,^b the insects come in such clouds that while on the wing they obscure the light of the sun. And with their dull brownish bodies and wings they darken the ground after they have settled.

Locusts. — "Shortly before our arrival at Helbé, our passage was literally stopped by the most extraordinary flight of locusts I ever witnessed. An immense quantity of these insects flew in so compact a mass across our path that they appeared like a wall about twelve feet high, and of such density that not a ray of light was emitted through it. On the top of this dense column individual specimens might be distinguished as they sportively elevated themselves; and the noise they made whilst rushing through the air was not unlike the roaring of the sea. The column appeared endless, and was attacked by the camel-men and Takroori pilgrims with all sorts of missiles, without, however, effecting a breach, or producing the slightest deviation in their flight. As soon as they had passed, the damage became apparent by the great number of the killed and wounded, which, roasted on the spot, were greedily devoured. Curiosity tempting me, I partook of several of them; and were it not for the crispness imparted by the fire, the taste was not unlike that of vegetable marrow." — *Petherick.*

16-20. (16) sinned . . you, "against the Lord," in disobeying his commands; "against you," in making you promises and then refusing to keep them (ch. viii. 15, 32; ch. ix. 34, 35). — *Pulp. Com.* (17) death,^c *i. e.* deadly plague. (18) entreated, Moses once more an intercessor. (19) strong . . wind, blowing from the west. and . . sea, Arabia spared. (20) so . . go, his hardness returned when the plague departed.

Locusts. — It is hard to conceive how wide the mischief extends, when a cloud of these insects comes upon a country. They devour to the very root and bark, so that it is a long time before vegetation can be renewed. How dreadful their inroads at all times were, may be known from a variety of authors, both ancient and modern. They describe them as being brought by one wind, and carried off by another. They swarm greatly in Asia and Africa. In respect to Europe, Thevenot tells us, that the region upon the Boristhenes, and particularly that inhabited by the Cossacks, is greatly infested with locusts, especially in a dry season. They come in vast clouds, which extend fifteen and sometimes eighteen miles, and are nine to twelve in breadth. — *Burder.*

21-23. (21) Moses, does not go in to Pharaoh. darkness, chief object of worship among the Egyptians was the sun-god — *Ra*. darkness^d . . felt, *lit.* that may be grasped. (22) thick darkness,^e *i. e.* of preternatural density. (23) neither . . place, no one went out of doors to attend to his affairs. light . . dwellings,^f as preternatural as the darkness without. The Israelites were supplied with light, by miracle.

Light in darkness. — God couldn't arrange it more beautiful, said a poor old blind man, as he sat in the chimney-corner of his cottage. "Arrange what?" said the visitor. "Why, I'm as blind as a mole, but I can hear well; and my old woman there," pointing to his wife in the other corner, "is as deaf as a

post, but she can see well. Could God Almighty a' done it better?" This blind, bright saint could certainly see beauty in God's arrangements where it never would have been suspected by onlookers. It need hardly be said that sightless J. revels in the light where mere sight-seers would grumble at the darkness. His natural blindness seems to have given a quick, keen perception of his spiritual sight. "No walls around me now," he says; "I'm never hemmed in. It's all brightness. Bless'e, I'd ten times sooner be as I be, than have my sight, and not see my Saviour!" He is—speaking after the manner of men—at poverty's door, yet he has luxurious faith; and, in truth, his bare home is hard by the jeweled walls of the pearly-gated city. Listen to his thankful, contented talk: "They allows the old woman and me two shillings and ninepence, and two loaves, and we can manage on that; and what more do we want?"—*Sword and Trowel*.

24-29. (24) only . . stayed, he is anxious to have a pledge for their return. (25) give . . offerings, *i. e.*, allow us to take our own for that purpose. (26) there . . behind, not only we but all belonging to us shall go. (27) hardened, that he might introduce the last plague, a typical miracle. "Again the strong expression, *yek hazak*, as in ver. 20." (28) get, *etc.* Pharaoh exasperated, is frantic with disappointment and rage; and rudely bids Moses begone, threatens him and bids him never more to seek his presence, under the penalty of instant death. (29) thou . . well, "it shall be as thou hast said. I . . more, I appeal finally from Pharaoh to God. The reply of Moses is dignified. He says—"Thou hast made a right decision. This shall be our last interview."

Religion and business.—I think when Satan sees a Christian go out of Egypt with all his flocks and herds, he has no hope of getting him back again. So he makes a last stand here: "Keep your business and your religion separate. Give yourself to God; but do not consecrate your property." Now, will you just take a look at the state of the Christian world to-day. Look at the wealth of Christians in London, and in New York, and over the whole world. How they have piled it up—thousands upon thousands, heaps upon heaps! And where is it? Surely in Egypt. It is not held in sacred stewardship for the Lord.—*Pentecost*.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

1-6. (1) one . . Egypt, and more terrible than all the preceding. he altogether, as glad to be rid of you as hitherto he has been anxious to retain. (2) borrow, *R. V.*, "ask." Josephus says of the Egyptians, "They also honored the Hebrews with gifts, some in order to get them to depart quickly, and others on account of their neighborhood and the friendship they had with them." (3) man . . great, in power, estimation; very influential. (4) mid-night, the time an additional element of terror in this last plague. (5) first-born . . die, pride, hope, joy of every fam. from . . maidservant, no respect of persons. that . . mill, a hand-mill turned, sometimes by one, sometimes by two women. and . . beast, worship of beasts universal in Egypt. (6) great . . more, a loud, deep, universal wailing. "The violence of Oriental emotions, and the freedom with which they are vented are well known."

The destruction of the Egyptian firstborn.—In considering the last plague, we must notice—I. The prediction of the judgment to be executed. It differs from every previous denunciation in that it was purely maledictory, and was not accompanied by any expostulation. II. The spoiling of the Egyptians by Israel (*vss.* 35, 36). The spoil belonged to Israel. 1. By God's command; 2. By right of conquest: no warfare, except of words; but still a conquest; 3. By right of compensation. III. The difference put between Israel and Egypt. IV. The infliction of this terrible calamity. It was marked by many awful circumstances. 1. It was adapted to produce terror; 2. It left no opening for repentance; 3. It was the last and greatest. — *G. Wellford*.

One effort more.—The old astronomer with his trusty glass is searching the heavens for a star, "a lost star," he says. "It ought to be there!" he murmurs, looking along the jewelled lines of some constellation. Not finding his diamond, he shakes his head, and is about to give up the search. "Just one trial more!" he murmurs. He directs his glass towards the sky, and lo, there it is! Out of the dark depths of space flashes the pure, bright face of the lost

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"It is probable, too, that they were prevented by the heavy and humid state of the atmosphere from availing themselves of any kind of artificial light."—*Bush*.
"And through the palpable obscure find out his uncouth way."—*Milton*.

the day
of grace
receded

a He. xi. 27.

"Has a servant, an agent, or an officer, deeply offended his superior, he will say to him, 'Take care never to see my face again; for on the day you do that, evil shall come upon you.' 'Begone and in future never look in this face,' pointing to his own."—*Roberts*.

"What is really much more terrible than death in this sentence, 'Thou shall see My face no more.'"
—*Gaussen*.

the tenth
plague

destruction
of the
firstborn

b Le. xxvi. 21.

c Ex. iii. 22; xli. 35.

d Am. iv. 10.

e Ex. xii. 20.

"The mill used by the Israelites, and prob. by the Egyptians, consisted of two circular stones, one fixed in the ground, the other turned by a handle. The work of grinding was extremely laborious, and performed by women of the lowest rank."—*Spk. Com.*

"I will believe in the right of one man to govern a nation despotically

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when I find a man born into the world with boots and spurs, and a nation born with saddles on their backs." — *A. Sidney*.

a difference put between Israel and Egypt

a Ex. viii. 22.

b *Gk.*, "who om thou leadest;" *Chal.*, "who are with thee;" *Pulg.*, "who are subject to thee;" *Aben Ezra*, "who are in thy power;" *Jarchi*, "who follow thy counsel and thy steps."

c "To be angry at nothing but sin is the way not to sin in anger." — *Henry d Ro.* ix. 17. e *Ro.* ii. 5.

Many recent chronologists place the Exodus at about B. C. 1320.

institution of the Passover

f Ex. xiii. 4; De. xvi. 1.

g *Esth.* iii. 7. h "The whole host of Israel was divided into twelve tribes; these tribes into families; and the families into houses; the last being composed of particular individuals. In one family, therefore, there might be several houses." — *Bush*.

the selected lamb and sprinkled blood

i *Le.* i. 3, 10; *xiii.* 19, 21; *De.* xviii. 1; *1 Pe.* i. 19; *Heb.* ix. 14.

k *Le.* xxiii. 5; 2 *Ch.* xxx. 15; *Ma.* xxvii. 46, 50; *Is.* liii. 6. l *De.* xvi. 6.

m *He.* xii. 24; *Eph.* i. 7; *He.* ix. 22; *1 Pe.* i. 2; *Re.* xiii. 8. n *De.* xvi. 3, 4; *1 Co.* v. 8.

star. "Found!" he cries. "It was one effort more that did it." Yes, it is true in nature and in the world of grace that it is the one effort more that often restores to its orbit the lost star. It was the one more reaching out of the world of Christian sympathy that by a friendly tap and a kindly word arrested a drunkard and gave to temperance a star orator, Gough. A Sunday-school teacher touches on the shoulder and kindly asks a young man about his soul, and this one effort more of the Church of God brought Dwight L. Moody to the Saviour. — *G. Grigg*.

7-10. (7) dog . . tongue, prov. expr. = profound tranquility; or, nothing shall harm. difference,^a *lit.* wonderfully distinguisheth. (8) thy . . me, the tyrants shall become suppliants. all . . thee,^b *lit.* who are at thy feet. in . . anger,^c a meek man moved to indignation by falsehood, cruelty, insolence. (9) the . . Moses, *etc.*,^d that thus instructed he might not be disappointed. wonders . . multiplied, "Compare ch. iii. 20; vii. 3. If Pharaoh had yielded at the first, God's greatness and power would not have been shown. Neither the Egyptians nor the neighboring nations would have been impressed." — *Pulp. Com.* (10) Moses . . Pharaoh, *etc.*,^e ref. to the whole preceding narrative. "Aaron's agency seems to have been less marked in the later than in the earlier miracles, Moses gaining self-reliance."

A contrast. — 1. The wicked crying — the good quiet. 2. The wicked dead — the good living. 3. The wicked frightened — the good peaceful. 4. The wicked helpless — the good protected. — *Exell*.

Sharing religion with others. — There are some things which can be shared with our neighbors, and some which cannot, in the religious life. In securing the "means of grace" we can go halves with our next-door neighbors; but not so in the great fact of personal salvation. We can join with a neighbor in taking a pew in church, or in getting a wagon to carry us to church, or in subscribing for a religious paper — and paying for it too; but we can share no neighbor's seat in heaven; his team will never carry us there; the truths which benefit him from the weekly paper do not, because of their gain to him, do us any good. And if our next-door neighbor's family is a household of faith, that doesn't make ours so. The members of his family may be saved and ours lost. Neighborliness is commanded and commended of God; but God doesn't want you to leave your salvation in the hands of your next-door neighbor. The blood above your neighbor's door-post will not save your household from death. — *H. C. Trumbull*.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

1-4. (1) spake, according to the Biblical record, the whole system, religious, political, and ecclesiastical, was received by Divine revelation. in . . Egypt, the introduction of these words seems to show a separate document on the Passover, written some time after the Exodus, and placed here. — *Pulp. Com.* (2) month . . Abib,^f afterwards called Nisan.^g beginning, the head. first . . you, first in order, highest in estimation, "the chief and most excellent month in the year." "Our April, nearly — became now the first month of the ecclesiastical year." (3) lamb, *Heb.* seh, = lamb or kid. house . . fathers,^h *i. e.* for a family. (4) if . . lamb, *i. e.* not enough to consume it.

National value of Jewish feasts. — Apart from the religious aspect of these various festivals, and the occasions they provided for solemn worship, they were of national value as binding the tribes together, bringing them into fellowship, knitting the several communities into one body, having each a share in and a tie to that place which the Lord had chosen to put His name there. Jerusalem with its temple was not merely the political capital, but the religious home of the nation. And so Jeroboam felt when he devised his festivals to keep his subjects from resorting to the city of David (1 Kings xii. 26-33). — *Treas. of Bib. Knowl.*

5-10. (5) lamb . . blemish,ⁱ entire, whole, healthy. (6) ye . . up,^k as select, dedicated. whole . . kill, *i. e.* each house shall kill its lamb. evening,^l *lit.* between the two evenings. (7) take . . blood, *i. e.* "the life." upper . . post,^m *i. e.* lintel. (8) and . . it,ⁿ their last taste of bitterness in Egypt a vivid memorial of all their previous suffering. (9) eat . . raw, they were not to be in a hurry; but prepare it with calmness. sodden,

past part. of *seethe*, to boil. **purtenance**, intestines; to be cooked whole, not a bone to be broken. (10) **nothing . . morning**,^a "The whole of the flesh was to be consumed by the guests, and at one sitting." **that . . fire**, *i. e.* the bones, and any small fragments of the flesh adhering to them.

The Passover.—I. The paschal lamb itself. A beautiful type of the Lord Jesus—the perfect, spotless Saviour. II. Its connection with, and application to Israel. 1. A substitute (see Matt. xx. 28). Christ suffered that we might live with Him and in Him. 2. Blood to be applied, as well as shed. Exercise of faith. 3. Flesh to be eaten. Christ the daily food of the believer's soul. III. The manner in which Israel was to eat of it. 1. With bitter herbs: repentance. When we feed on the Lamb of God, we must not forget what we have been, and what we are. We must remember our sins—worldliness, contentedness without God, impatience, and murmurings. 2. With unleavened bread (1 Cor. v. 7, 8). (3) With loins girded. Travelers—pilgrims and strangers on earth. Look on scenes and occupations of world as on those which belong to wilderness, not home. At end of journey stands a continuing city, the heavenly Jerusalem. March on.—*G. Wagner*.

11—13. (11) **thus . . it**, *etc.*,^b as fully prepared for a journey. **ye . . haste**, as eagerly impatient to leave Egypt. **passover**,^c "no ordinary meal." Heb. *pesah*—a leap, transition. "The first ordinance of the Jewish religion was a domestic service." (12) **against . . judgment**,^d I . . Lord, the one God of the whole earth. (13) **blood . . token**, "a sacramental pledge of mercy." It shall mark your graves from others.

The paschal lamb.—I. The paschal lamb was a type of Christ. 1. Not a bone broken; 2. Perfect; 3. Nothing passed to corruption. II. Its sacrifice typified the sacrifice of Christ. 1. It was a sacrifice; 2. Offered in the holy place; 3. Blood sprinkled on the altar. III. The entireness of the offering shadowed a perfect Saviour.—*Fowler*.

Idolatry in ancient Britain.—British Christians ought to recollect that their ancestors were once blind idolaters, serving them that by nature are no gods. Dr. Plaifere, in a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge, in 1573, remarks, that, before the preaching of the gospel of Christ, no church here existed, but the temple of an idol; no priesthood but that of paganism; no God but the sun, the moon, or some hideous image. To the cruel rites of the Druidical worship succeeded the abominations of the Roman idolatry. In Scotland stood the temple of Mars; in Cornwall, the temple of Mercury; in Bangor, the temple of Minerva; at Malden the temple of Victoria; in Bath, the temple of Apollo; at Leicester, the temple of Janus; at York, where St. Peter's now stands, the temple of Bellona; in London, on the site of St. Paul's Cathedral, the temple of Diana; and at Westminster, where the Abbey rears its venerable pile, a temple of Apollo.—*Smith*.

14—20. (14) **memorial**, a commemorative ordinance. **by . . ever**,^e *lit.* a statute of eternity. (15) **seven days**, *i. e.* fr. even of the 14th of Nisan to the end of 21st. "There is no indication that the week of seven days was known to the ancient Egyptians." **leaven**,^f that wh. produces fermentation or putrefaction: corruption. For family worship to be acceptable, the entire household must be pure. (16) **convocation**, solemn religious assembly. (17) **in . . day**, *lit.* in the strength or bone of this day. **armies**, not a confused rabble, but an organized host. **therefore . . ever**,^g the perpetual memorial of a great deliverance. So the Jews observe it everywhere to this day, though they no longer sacrifice the Paschal lamb.—*Pulp. Com.* (18-20) Repetitions to emphasize the command and prevent mistakes.

Commemorations.—During the reign of the Stuarts over the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, the youthful scion of a powerful Scotch house, whose family had once coerced their youthful monarch, was in revenge and fear confined in a dungeon. After upwards of twenty years' solitary seclusion, where he beguiled his imprisonment with the education of a mouse, he was liberated. On the night previous to his liberation, he and the person through whose mediation his freedom had been secured, partook of a humble feast, which they always afterwards celebrated on the successive anniversaries of his liberty. With some such feelings of joyfulness and commemorative gratitude must Israel have feasted year by year. Year by year, it stirred the ashes of memory in the Jewish heart, and kindled them up into a flame of hope; while it taught them to look for a greater prophet than Moses, to long

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a Le. vii. 15; De. xvi. 4.

"Woe to falsehood! it affords no relief to the breast, like truth; it gives us no comfort, pains him who forges it, and, like an arrow directed by a god, flies back and wounds the archer."—*Goethe*.
"Man supposes that he directs his life and governs his actions, when his existence is irretrievably under a higher control."

how it was to be eaten

b Lu. xii. 35; 1 Pe. ii. 11.

c Is. xix. 1.

d Nu. xxxiii. 4.

"We are bold to say that this whole contest between Moses and Menephtah was really the sublime and awful conflict between Immanuel and Satan for the slavery, on the one side, for the salvation, on the other, of the race of human souls whom the Almighty had originally made in His own image."—*C. S. Robinson*.

the passover an ordinance for ever

e 2 Ki. xxiii. 21; Lu. xxii. 19.

f 1 Co. v. 7.

g Ex. xlii. 3, 8.

Nothing can really harm God's servants. They may have to suffer, but suffering will be turned into triumphant joy. Like the saintly Rutherford, they will find that their enemies have only set them to reside for a while in one of God's palaces. Real evil cannot befall them.—*Bib. Ill.*

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the purpose
of the
sprinkled
blood

a He. xi. 28; Is.
xxvi. 20.
b Ezek. ix. 6; Re.
vii. 3; ix. 4; 2 Sa.
xxiv. 18.
c Josh. v. 10.

The blood of Christ
sprinkled on the
heart is the only
sign, the Destroy-
ing Angel will
recognize and re-
gard as the token
of safety. — *Exell*

the passover
to be
explained to
the children

d Ex. iv. 31.

Our interest in the
Passover, as in
most of the other
institutions of the
Levitical economy,
consists in its rela-
tionship to higher
institutions, and to
a more hallowed
provision; it con-
sists in the pre-
figuration by them
of our Surety and
Saviour, who is at
once the Surety
and Saviour of uni-
versal man. — *Pun-
shon*.

the destruc-
tion of the
firstborn

e 1 Th. v. 3.

f Job xxxiv. 19, 20.

g Pr. xxi. 13; Jas.
ii. 13.

"Liberty must be
a mighty thing; for
by it God punishes
and rewards na-
tions. — *Mde.
Sweetshine*.

Israel bor-
rows of the
Egyptians

for a grander sacrificial lamb than that of the passover, and to hope for a more glorious salvation than freedom from temporal oppression and bondage.

21—25. (21) **Moses**, being commanded, proceeds now to obey. **families**, see vss. 3, 4. **and . . . passover**, i. e., the lamb, whose blood should furnish the sign. (22) **hyssop**, "A plant growing about a foot and a half high, having bushy stalks," regarded as having purifying qualities, prob. the caper plant (*capparis spinosa*), called by Arabs *azuf*. The *aszeef* of frequent occurrence in Sinai. **none . . . morning**,^a safety only under the protection of the sign, the blood of the lamb. (23) **destroyer**,^b a personal agent, destroying angel, or destruction. (24) **observe**, etc., see vss. 14, 17. (25) **when**,^c etc., amid the blessings of the present, ye shall never forget this great deliverance. See ch. iii. 8—17; vi. 4; and compare Gen. xvii. 8; xxviii. 4, etc.

The destroying angel. — Let us consider how the method of the Israelites' deliverance on this occasion illustrates the method of man's spiritual deliverance. — I. It involved a sacrifice of life. A lamb was taken for every house. The young creature, the embodiment of innocence, was sacrificed for their deliverance. So the self-sacrificing love of Christ is our salvation. II. It proved completely efficient. Whoever tried it was saved. III. It required for its application practical trust in God. — *Thomas*.

26—28. (26) **children**, etc., the ordinance so kept as to excite their attention, "each generation will wish to know its meaning and origin." (27) **say**, etc., the fathers to be ready with an explanation. **people . . . worshipped**,^d in token of faith and reverence. (28) **the . . . away**, from tribal and other assemblies in wh. the directions had been given. **did . . . they**, "the miracles wrought by Moses and Aaron had so impressed the people, that they yielded" a minute obedience in preparing for and keeping the passover.

Blessed protection. — On board a British man-of-war there was but one Bible among seven hundred men. This belonged to a pious sailor who had made a good use of it. He had read it to his comrades, and, by God's blessings on his labors, a little band of praying men were formed that numbered thirteen. One day this ship was going into battle. Just before the fight began, these thirteen men met together to spend a few moments in prayer. They committed themselves to God's care, not expecting to meet again in this world. Their ship was in the thickest of the fight. All around them men were stricken down by death. Two of these men were stationed with three others in charge of one of the guns. The other three men were killed by a single cannon-ball, but there in safety stood the two praying men. They had agreed that when the battle was over those who might still be alive should meet if possible. They met soon after, and what was their joy to find the whole thirteen were there. Not one of them had even been wounded. What a blessed shelter it was that protected those men of prayer! — *R. Newton*.

The passover. — Epiphanius tells us that the Egyptians used, at this time of the year, to mark their cattle, trees, and one another with red ochre, which they fancied to be a preservative from death; it probably took its rise from hence. — *Anec. illus. of Old Test.*

29, 30. (29) **midnight**,^e "as prophesied by Moses (ch. xi. 4). The day had not been fixed, and this uncertainty must have added to the horror of the situation." **Lord**, by the hand of the destroyer. **from . . . cattle**,^f see xi. 5. (30) **rose . . . servants**, startled by the midnight cry. **and . . . Egypt**,^g of the dying in their agony, of survivors in their grief. **house**, or family. "The language of Scripture—especially when tragical events are narrated—is poetical, or highly rhetorical."

The death of the firstborn. — Note—I. That when miracles are needed they are never wanting. The smiting was a miracle in—1. The prediction; 2. The simultaneousness of the stroke; 3. Taking only Egyptians; 4. Taking only the firstborn. II. That when God smites us, He smites us where we feel. Pharaoh, humbled, sends for Moses whom he had refused to see again. In affliction men surrender. We should repent in fair weather. III. That God is no respecter of persons. He smites from the prince to the prisoner. — *Fowler*.

31—36. (31) **he**, Pharaoh. **by night**, that same night; lest with the new day there should come new judgments. **said**, the reference is to such passages as ch. viii. 1, 20; ix. 1, 13. The humbled king is anxious to be rid of

them. (32) take . . gone, Pharaoh surrenders at discretion. and . . also, with crushed spirit he "desires a blessing from a conviction that their intercession would avail with God." (33) urgent, strong, *i. e.* in their entreaties for Israel to depart. for . . men, they dreaded more than they had yet suffered. (34) kneading-troughs, prob. small wooden bowls. "Like those of the modern Arabs, which are light and portable." bound . . shoulders, *i. e.* they made a bag of the folds of their dress. (35) borrowed, *R. V.*, "asked," see iii. 22. "The gold and silver articles and the raiment, were free-will gifts." (36) lent, *R. V.*, "let them have what they asked," and . . Egyptians, "they go out from the land of their oppressors greatly increased, mighty, and formidable; laden with spoils the well-earned reward of the labors of many years, and of much sorrow." — *Bush*.

Borrowing from the enemy. — I remember, when visiting Denmark some twenty years ago, I learned a little incident in the history of a great Danish admiral. On one occasion, when commanding a little sloop — it was before he was admiral — he had the audacity to engage an English frigate in battle. They both fired away, but after a little time the captain of the frigate noticed that the firing from the sloop ceased. A flag of truce was hoisted; a boat was lowered, and the Danish captain came alongside. Addressing his opponent, he said, "Sir, our powder is all gone, and we have come to borrow some from you!" The devil has been using money against the cause of God for many years; let us take it from him, and turn his guns against himself. — *Dr. Sinclair Patterson*.

37—39. (37) Rameses,^b one of the treasure cities. The favorite capital of both Rameses II. and Menephtah. (See Brugsch, *Hist. of Egypt*.) Succoth, *lit.* tents or booths: ab. half way betw. Rameses and Etham. Mr. Greville Chester tells us that "huts made of reeds" are common at the present day in the tract southeast of Tanis. six . . foot, *i. e.* the males who could march, or, above the age of twelve or fourteen. children, total number of Israelites prob. ab. two millions. "This number is accepted by the best critics, as Ewald, Kalisch, Kurtz, Canon Cook." (38) mixed . . them,^c other sojourners anxious fr. various causes to leave Egypt at this time. flocks . . cattle, provision for their journey. (39) dough . . leavened, see vs. 34.

The motives by which the nominal adherents of the Christian Church are animated. 1. They are acquainted and impressed with the history of the Church, and hence are induced to follow it. 2. They have an inner conviction that the Church is right, and hence they are sometimes led to follow it. 3. They are associated by family ties with those who are real members of the Christian Church, and hence they are induced to follow it. 4. They are troubled by ideas of the retributive providence of God, and so are induced to seek shelter in the Church.

40—42. (40) four . . years,^d 430 years elapsed between the arrival of Jacob in Egypt, with his sons, and sons' sons, and their families, as related in Gen. xvi. 1—27, and the commencement of the exodus. The time is required by the genealogy of Joshua (1 Chr. vii. 22—27). — *Pulp. Com.* (41) even . . pass,^e the length of sojourn and time of departure definitely stated. (42) night,^f one of the most memorable nights of Scripture.

Redemption celebrated. — I. The events to be celebrated. — 1. Great was the deliverance of Israel from Egypt; 2. Greater is our deliverance from sin. II. The day on which they are to be celebrated. III. The manner of their celebration. We should — 1. Keep a feast unto the Lord; 2. Dedicate ourselves to Him as His peculiar people. — *Simeon*.

The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, and this was part of the discipline through which they had to pass prior to their entrance on the promised land. Their bondage was severe, and it was long-continued. It was somewhat inexplicable that the heirs of promise should be called to endure such pain; but the children of God are not exempt from even the most painful discipline of life. The time of such discipline is Divinely ordered and arranged, and at the longest soon comes to an end, though the hours and days are lengthened when spent in sorrow and woe. But even in this condition the pilgrim soul has rich promises on which it can rely, and which tend to brighten its future with hope. This captivity is productive of moral growth, as it was of the numerical growth of Israel. Hence godly souls in the present life are in a pilgrim condition; they are passing through great sorrows, they are subject to much

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a Ps. cv. 37; Pr. xvi. 7; Ge. xv. 14.

"Liberty is to the collective body, what health is to every individual body. Without health no pleasure can be tasted by man, without liberty no happiness can be enjoyed by society." — *Bolingbroke*.

the Exodus

from —
Rameses
to Succoth

b Ex. i. 11; Ge. xlvii. 11; Nu. xxxiii. 3.

c Nu. xi. 4.

"O give me liberty! for even were paradise my prison, still I should long to leap the crystal walls." — *Dryden*.

time of the
sojourning
in Egypt

d Ge. xv. 13; Gal. iii. 17.

e Hab. ii. 3.

f De. xvi. 6.

"Liberty will not descend to a people; a people must raise themselves to liberty; it is a blessing that must be earned before it can be enjoyed." — *Colton*.

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painful discipline, but the time will come when they shall be free from all such oppression and woe. — *Hom. Com.*

bye-laws of
the passover
feast

43-47. (43) **stranger**, "By a 'stranger' here is meant one of a foreign race who wishes to retain his foreign character and to remain uncircumcised. Compare ver. 48." (44) **when . . him**. "It was a principle of the Jewish law that the slaves should be admitted to complete religious equality with the native Israelites. (Compare Lev. xxii. 11.)" — *Pulp. Com.* (45) **foreigner**, R. V., sojourner, "*i. e.* a foreigner who is merely passing through the land, or staying without intending to become a permanent resident." (46) **house**, or company; *see vs. 4*. **neither . . thereof**,^a note the typical significance; the unity of the nation or church. (47) **all**,^b *etc.*, without exception, through all generations.

a Jo. xix. 33. 36

b Nu. ix. 13; Is. liii. 6.

"The only rational liberty is that which is born of subjection, reared in fear of God and love of man, and made courageous in the defense of a trust, and the prosecution of a duty." — *Simms*.

Cooking in the East. — Thevenot says in his *Travels* that it is also common in Persia to roast sheep and lambs whole. This is done in an oven, which has an opening at the top; after it is well heated, the meat is hung up in it, and a dripping-pan put under to receive the fat, and in this manner it is well done on all sides. He mentions another way to roast a sheep, customary among the Armenians, and in which they likewise avoid fuel that yields smoke. After the animal is killed, and the skin is taken off, it is again wrapped in it, and laid in an oven on burning coals, and likewise covered with them; as it has in this manner fire on all sides, it is well done, and the skin prevents its burning.

c Nu. xi. 14; Is. lvi. 6, 7; Gal. iii. 28; Eph. iv. 4-6.

48-51. (48) **then . . it**, his partaking of the passover conditional on his submitting to this rite, and so entering into covenant. **he . . land**, having equal privileges under the same laws. (49) **one law, etc.**, all the circumcised were to constitute one nation. (50) **thus**, ref. to all that Moses had commanded so far, "*i. e.* the Israelites, at their first passover, acted in accordance with these precepts, especially in admitting to the feast all circumcised persons, whether natives or foreigners, and rejecting all the uncircumcised." — *Pulp. Com.* (51) **the . . day**, "this verse should be the commencement of the next chapter." *See vs. 41*. **armies**, ranks: organized acc. to tribes and fams.

"Many politicians lay it down as self-evident that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim." — *Macaulay*.

"*There shall no stranger eat thereof*." — It would be impossible for a stranger to enter fully into the meaning of the Passover; he would know but little or nothing of Israel's deliverance from the bondage of Egypt by the mighty hand of God. He would not, therefore, be in sympathy with the ordinance. And so those who are strangers to the death of Christ ought not, and cannot, truly come to the sacramental table of the Lord. That sacrament finds its explanation in the Cross, and no one can enter into it who has not realized in his inner nature the deliverance and blessing consequent on the death of Christ. The believer in the atonement alone can fully realize the blessing of the Lord's table. — *Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

sanctification
of all the
firstborn

1-4. (1) **Lord . . saying**, prob. these precepts were given in Succoth. (2) **firstborn**,^d protected from the destroyer, they were esp. His. **mine**, "It shall be mine," I claim it. (3) **out . . bondage**, *lit.* house of servants, *i. e.*, "by His powerful protection has God brought you on your way thus far." (4) **Abib**,^e *lit.* "green ears of corn."

d Ex. xxii. 29, 30; De. xv. 19; Le. xxvii. 25; Nu. iii. 13; Lu. ii. 23; 1 Co. xv. 20; Col. i. 15; He. xii. 23.

The Divine right to the best things of man. — "It is Mine." This is the language of God in reference to each one of us. It is Mine. I. Because I created it. II. Because I preserved it. III. Because I endowed it with everything that makes it valuable. — *J. S. Exell*.

e De. xvi. 1.

The following sentence is attributed to Voltaire: "I despair of destroying Christianity in any country, so long as millions of human beings meet on Sunday to worship God."

A consecrated child. — A young man was about to enter the foreign missionary work. A gentleman said to the young man's father, "It's hard to give up the boy." "Yes," replied the father, "but it's just what we've been expecting." "How so?" inquired the friend. "When he was a little baby," answered the father, "his mother and I went to a missionary meeting. An appeal, most earnest and touching, was made for men to become missionaries. We ourselves could not go. When we returned home the baby lay asleep in his crib. We went to the crib. His mother stood on one side, I on the other. We together laid our hands on his forehead, and prayed that it might be God's will for him to become a foreign missionary. We never spoke to him

of what we did. But all through these twenty-five years we have believed that our prayer about him would be answered, and answered it now is. Yes, it is hard to give up the boy, but it's what we've been expecting."—*Bib. Ill.*

5—10. (5) Lord . . land,^a etc., see on iii. 8. service,^b ordinance, memorial. This injunction had been already given (ch. xii. 25) to the elders only ; now it is laid upon the whole people. (6, 7) seven days,^c etc., see xii. 15, 20. (8) thou . . son,^d see xii. 26, 27. (9) sign . . eyes,^e prob. fig., taken by Heb. writers in a lit. sense, and hence phylacteries. "The *tephillin* were strips of parchment with passages of Scripture written upon them and deposited in small boxes, which were fastened either to the left arm, or across the forehead." —*Pulp. Com.* that . . mouth,^f i. e. be familiar and often spoken of. (10) keep . . season, at the appointed time. from . . year, *lit. fr.* days onward to days.

Phylactery for the head.—The box of which the phylactery for the head is made has on the outside to the right the regular three-pronged letter *shin*, which is designed as an abbreviation of the Divine name *Shadai*, "the Almighty," whilst on the left side it has a four-pronged *shin*, the two constituting the sacred number seven. The leather case consists of four cells, in which are deposited four slips of vellum, whereon are written the four passages of Scripture, already mentioned, in the following order:—

4.	3.	2.	1.
De. xi. 13, 22.	De. vi. 4-9.	Ex. xiii. 11-16.	Ex. xiii. 2-10.

Each slip is rolled up, tied with white and well-washed hairs of a calf or cow's tail, and deposited in the respective compartments as indicated above. A flap connected with one side of the brim is then drawn over the open part, and sewed to the brim in such a manner as to form a loop on one side. Through this loop is passed a very long leather strap, which when tied together according to measure yields a band for the head.—*Ginsburg.*

11—16. (11) Lord . . land, see vs. 5. (12) set apart,^g *lit.* caused to pass over, "for Jehovah, so as not to be mixed up with the other lambs, kids, and calves." (13) thou . . lamb, wh. being given to the Lord, he retained his ownership of the ass. thou . . neck, thou shalt not be advantaged by what has once been devoted, unless thou dost redeem it. (14) and . . son,^h etc., see xii. 28. (15) when . . go, *lit.* Pharaoh hardened against sending us out. but . . redeem, for law of redemption, see Nu. xviii. 16. (16) token, etc., see vs. 9.

The phylactery for the arm.—The phylactery for the arm consists of the same sized box as the one for the head. It has, however, no letter outside, and only one compartment inside. The four passages deposited in it are written on one slip of vellum in four columns, having seven lines each. The slip is rolled and tied, and closed up in the same manner as the others. The large leather strap which is passed through the loop is made into a noose for the arm to pass through. Before commencing his morning prayers the youth of thirteen puts on first the phylactery for the arm. Having put his left naked arm through the sling in such a manner that when it is bent it may touch the flesh and be near to the heart, to fulfil the precept, "Ye shall lay up these My words in your heart" (De. xi. 18); he first twists the long strap three times close to the phylactery in the form of the letter *shin*, which stands for *Shadai*, "the Almighty," and pronounces the following benediction: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who hast sanctified us with Thy commandments, and enjoined us to put on phylacteries." He then twists the strap seven times around his arm, forming two *shins*, one with three prongs, and the other with four. He next puts on the head phylactery, placing it exactly in the center between the eyes, so as to touch the spot where the hair begins to grow, in accordance with De. xi. 18, and pronounces the following benediction before he finally secures it: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God,

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the purpose of the passover to be explained to the children

a Ex.vi. 8.

b Ex. xii. 25.

c 1 Co. v. 7.

d Ps. lxxviii. 2, 7.

e De. xi. 18; Pr. vi. 20, 21.

f Josh. i. 8; De. xxx. 14.

"The only vice that cannot be forgiven is hypocrisy. The repentance of a hypocrite is itself hypocrisy."—*Hazlitt.*

A seen religion is not always real, but a real religion is always seen.—*Prof. Laidlaw.*

the sanctification of firstborn to be observed in Canaan

g Nu. viii. 17; De. xv. 19; Ezek. xlii. 30.

h De. vi. 20, 25.

"The reason of the injunction is evidently that the ass could not be offered in sacrifice, being an unclean animal; possibly the only unclean animal domesticated among the Israelites at the time of the Exodus."—*Spk. Com.*

Just to trust, and yet to ask guidance still; take the training or the task as He will.—*Miss Havergal.*

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King of the universe, who hast sanctified us with Thy commandments, and enjoined upon us the command about phylacteries." — *Ginsburg*.

they journey from Succoth to Etham

α Ex. xiv. 11, 12; Nu. xiv. 3, 4; Jer. x. 23; Fr. xvi. 9; Ps. cvii. 7; 1 Co. x. 13.

β Nu. xxxiii. 1 ff.; De. xxxii. 10.

γ Ge. i. 24, 25; Josh. xxiv. 32; Ac. vii. 15, 16.

δ "The situation of Etham is placed by Mr. Stuart Poole at the present *Seba Biar*, or seven wells, where the cultivated land ceases, about three ms. fr. the W. side of the ancient head of the gulf. It lies at the S. of the bitter lakes, through which the present Suez canal passes." — *Alford*.

ε Ex. xiv. 19; Nu. ix. 15; Ne. ix. 12; Ps. lxxviii. 14; xcix. 7; Ac. vii. 38; Is. iv. 5; 1 Co. x. 1, 2; Ps. cxix. 105.

ζ Ne. ix. 19; Ps. cxvi. 4.

"I say this way; God says that. His way is best, for He knows what Of lions may beset my road. I'll follow Thee! Lead on, my God!" — *Quarles*.

Pi-hahiroth, Migdol, Baal-zephon

η There are places which still bear the name *Ghuweb-el-Boos*, i. e. the bed of reeds.

θ Ps. lxxi. 11.

ι Ex. ix. 16; Ro. ix. 17, 22, 23.

"Very often that which seems to tend to our injury is overruled by a merciful Providence to our good."

17-22. (17) God . . way, God led them, they did not go their own way. Philistines, conspicuously warlike in a warlike age. although . . near, they occupied S. of Palestine, hence the Israelites were led in a S. E. direction. lest . . war,^a for wh. long years of servitude had unfitted them. and . . Egypt, more willing to be slaves than conquerors. (18) Red . . Sea,^b "i. e., made them take a circuitous route to Canaan. Heb. *Yam-Suph*, Arab. *Bahr Souf*, i. e. the Weedy Sea. harnessed, marshalled in military order. (19) took . . him,^c "i. e., his body, which had been embalmed, and deposited in a mummy case (Gen. i. 26)." (20) Etham,^d (boundary of the sea, or sanctuary of Tum). (21) Lord . . them, "clearly regarded as miraculous; and both here and elsewhere (ch. xix. 19, 20, 24; xxxiii. 9; Num. xii. 5; xiv. 11) it is spoken of as a form under which God was pleased to show himself." — *Pulp. Com.* pillar . . way,^e condescendingly adopting the cust. sign of leadership. night . . light, they were thus assured both of His presence and the way. to . . night, circumstances required a forced march. (22) took . . people,^f until all their wanderings were over. "The pillar of the cloud departed not from them," so long as they were in the wilderness (Neh. ix. 19). The last distinct mention of the cloud is in Num. xvi. 42, after the destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram." — *Pulp. Com.*

The fiery cloudy pillars. — The fiery cloudy pillar performed many friendly offices to the Israelites. It was — 1. A guide. To lead was its main mission. It was a striking illustration of the long-suffering kindness of God. Neither murmurings, nor rebellion, nor idolatry, ever drove away the angel of His presence. The guidance vouchsafed, too, was of the most gracious kind — that of a shepherd (Psa. lxxviii. 52), and that of a loving and affectionate parent (Deut. i. 31). 2. A light (see Neh. ix. 19). 3. A shade (see Psa. cv. 39). 4. A shield (see Deut. i. 30; Exod. xiv. 19.) — *W. Brown*.

God's guidance. — When the English soldiers were marching up the heights of Alma, meeting the Russians who were marching down towards the English lines, there came a command for the English company to divide, part turning to the left and marching along the side of the hill. It seemed a foolish order when first received by the soldiers. There were Russians marching right in their teeth, and yet half of them were to turn away when the foe was close upon them! But the order was not long considered foolish. Those that turned to the left soon found that a company of Russians had been secretly coming up the side of the hill to fall upon the English unawares. The commander-in-chief from the hill on which he stood could see all the movements of the foe, while those that were perplexed at his orders could see only a small portion of the field. So He who orders our life and lot sees all the movements of the powers of darkness, and to deliver us from their plots and designs, He often leads us by a way we know not. — *H. Sturmer*.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1-4. (1, 2) turn, towards the S. W. Pi-hahiroth^g (the place where the sedge grows), W. of the bitter lakes; perh. Ajrud. Migdol (tower), prob. *Bir Suweis*, about two miles fr. Suez. Baal-zephon (place of Typhon, or sacred to Typhon, otherwise lord of the north, or place of a watch-tower), near Kolum or Suez. The names given are a strong indication that the author of Exodus knew the country. No late writer could have ventured on such local details. — *Pulp. Com.* (3) the . . in,^h their retreat cut off, and the sea before them. (4) honoured, glorified. that . . Lord,ⁱ His enemies know Him by His judgments, His friends by His mercy.

Hemmed in. — Well might Pharaoh, trained in all the art of military tactics, feel confident that the vast host were at the mercy of his panoplied warriors. It is said that when the gallant six hundred were bidden ride into the jaws of death at Balaklava, they looked at each other significantly and obeyed. Each read his fellow-soldier's glance to mean: "A mad act, ending in our death; but English soldiers always obey." The Russian chronicler has left on record that the Muscovite generals and staff were confident of the total hemming in of the English armies upon the Crimean sea-shore. Pharaoh had a similar

conviction that an easy triumph, ending in the complete extirpation of his hated serfs, was before him. — *Adamson*.

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5-9. (5) fled, this sugg. by their change of route. "The Egyptians might naturally report that instead of sacrificing, they were flying." heart . . people,^a recovering fr. their terror, they were filled with rage. "The reaction of feeling was not confined to Pharaoh. The loss of such a large body of laborers would be generally felt as a severe blow to the prosperity of the nation." — *Pulp. Com.* (7) six . . chariots,^b each drawn by six horses, and carrying two men — a driver and a warrior. captains . . them, *lit.* captains over the whole of them. (8) went . . hand,^c openly, boldly, powerfully. "not as fugitives, but as men in the exercise of their just rights;" though the Egyptians said they fled. (9) overtook, came up with; they traveled swiftly in their chariots, impelled by rage. The Jewish tradition that the Red Sea was crossed on the night of the 21st of Nisan (Abib) is doubtless a true one.

The hour of peril. — I. The inexperienced recruits. II. The women, children, and flocks. III. The whole host hemmed in; mountains on the right, sea on the left and in front, Pharaoh behind. IV. The sight of their old masters armed for slaughter. So Satan sometimes encompasses us. — *Fowler*.

The army of Pharaoh. — To the student of Egyptian antiquities there is something of much interest in these two verses, which describe the forces of the Egyptians. Here the pursuing force is described as composed solely of chariots. This is entirely in conformity with the existing testimony of the monuments, which exhibit no kind of military force but war-chariots and infantry — no cavalry, properly so called, that is, warriors on horseback. But few horsemen are at all represented on the monuments, and these are not Egyptians, but foreigners. In a hot pursuit like this, the infantry could, from the nature of the case, take no part, and there being no mounted cavalry, the matter was left entirely to the chariot-warriors. — *Kitto*.

10-12. (10) afraid, being unarmed and without military training or experience. cried . . Lord,^d their only help. (11) they . . Moses, bitterly taunting him. because Egypt, prob. sugg. by the numerous and vast cemeteries in Egypt. die . . wilderness? where we must lie unburied. wherefore . . Egypt? perh. they thought from Moses' antecedents that he was after all playing into the hands of Pharaoh. (12) better . . wilderness,^e a craven-spirited people who preferred a shameful bondage to heroically dying while attempting to escape. "But the spirit to prefer death to slavery, is not a common one." The Hebrews were a brave people; and this only shows the demoralizing effect of long years of slavery.

Difficulty in duty. — Here is difficulty in duty — I. Deeply felt. Three facts may explain why duty in this life should be so invariably connected with difficulty. 1. Our temporary well-being here greatly depends upon the conduct of our contemporaries toward us; 2. The majority of our contemporaries are governed by corrupt principle; 3. The man, therefore, who carries out in his daily life the principles of duty, must more or less excite the anger of his contemporaries. II. Testing character. Look at the influence of this difficulty upon — 1. The Israelites. Observe — (1) Their cowardice; (2) Their ingratitude; (3) Their apostasy. 2. Moses. III. Divinely overcome. Thus it is ever ultimately with all difficulty in duty — it is overcome. 1. The nature of moral progress shows this; 2. The promises of God's word insure it. — *Thomas*.

An unreasonable complaint. — During one of the campaigns in the American Civil War, when the winter weather was very severe, some of Stonewall Jackson's men, having crawled out in the morning from their snow-laden blankets, half frozen, began to curse him as the cause of their sufferings. He lay close by under a tree, also snowed up, and heard all this; but, without noticing it, presently crawled out too, and, shaking off the snow, made some jocular remark to the nearest men, who had no idea he had ridden up in the night and lain down amongst them! The incident ran through the army in a few hours, and reconciled his followers to all the hardships of the expedition, and fully re-established his popularity. — *Bib. Ill.*

13, 14. (13) stand still,^f *lit.* stand firm, be not dismayed, "a passive attitude of expectation." and . . Lord, great and complete. which . . day,^g

the pursuit of the Israelites

a Ps. cv. 25.

b Ps. xx. 7; Ex. xv. 4.

c De. xxvi. 8.

In the first joy of freedom, the young Christian imagines that all his sinful past is overcome, and that he will be troubled no more by the depraved habit of the soul, but a march of three days in the wilderness will convince him of his error. Habit pursues men with great pertinacity, even to the end of life. — *Hom. Com.*

seeing the Egyptians the Israelites are filled with fear

d Ne. ix. 9; Is. xxvi. 16; Ps. xxxiv. 17; 2 Ch. xviii. 31; Ps. cvii. 6; lili. 5; Is. viii. 12-14; li. 12, 13.

e Ps. cvi. 7, 8.

f Ex. v. 21; vi. 9.

"Nothing is so uncertain as the minds of the multitude." — *Leiz.* "The multitude which is not brought to act as unity is confusion. That unity which has not its origin in the multitude is tyranny." — *Pascal*.

Moses encourages the people

g 2 Ki. vi. 16; 2 Ch. xx. 16; Is. xli. 10; xxx. 7. h Ps. xli. 1-3; xxvii. 1-3; Jer. lii. 23; Lam. iii. 26.

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a 2 Ch. xx. 17.
b Is. xxx. 15; vii.
4; Ps. xlv. 10.

"See here an image of the temper of those who reject the Cross of Christ, and prefer the service of this world" — *Wordsworth*.

Use us for Thy glory, Lord, In the way that seemeth right, Whether but to wait and watch, Or to gird our limbs and fight.

"Faint not; the miles to heaven are but few and short." — *Rutherford*.

Moses commanded to divide the sea

c Is. lxxv. 24; Ro viii. 6.

"Our course is onward, onward into light!" — *Trench*.

the passage of the Red Sea

d Ex. xxiii. 20; Nu. xx. 16; Is. lxiii. 9.

e Jude 13.

f Col. i. 12.

g Ne. ix. 11; Ps. lxxiv. 13, cvi. 9, cxiv. 3; Josh. iii. 16.

h 1 Co. x. 1, 2; Hab. iii. 10.

God in Christ moveth Himself in His hand or work where the Church doth most need help. Before and behind Israel is He. — *G. Hughes*.

immediate and manifest. **whom . . . seen,** *lit.* as ye have seen them. (14) **Lord . . . you,** ^a and be more than all against you. **ye . . . peace,** ^b *i. e.,* "do nothing, remain at rest."

Help from God. — I. When God is in a way of mercy and salvation to His people, He often brings them into great straits. 1. To humble them; 2. Because He delights in the exercise of faith; 3. That he may draw out their prayers; 4. To discover the wicked; 5. That adversaries may vent their malice; 6. That Christ's work may be more manifest. II. In these straits God's people are often mightily troubled. Because — 1. The flesh is powerful; 2. There is guilt within; 3. We are prone to worldly confidence. III. In the time of these straits it is our duty to stand still, and look for God's salvation — 1. For the quieting of our spirits; 2. To expect salvation from God. IV. The sight of salvation coming after straits is glorious to behold. — *Burroughs*.

Never again. — I have seen one person, at least, to-day whom I have seen for the last time in this life. He may live many days or many years — I may live many days or many years; but in a crowded city like this it must needs be that there is one among that throng whom I have passed whom I never again will see. He stands, therefore, as a messenger direct from me to the judgment seat of God. Little did I think, when I spoke to him, with what a message I was freighting him! It is the last look that strikes, the last touch that tells, and if it was an unkind or a false word I then spoke, that unkind or false word has sunk like a die on the molten memory of him from whom I have just parted, as well as of myself. What testimony will he bear against me in the judgment of the future? — *Epis. Recorder*.

15-18. (15) **Wherefore . . . me?** ^c "the Divine reply to his prayer seems to indicate that Moses himself had become unduly anxious." **go forward,** "The Israelites were to form in line of march, and descend to the very shore of the sea."

Go forward — In seeking to enforce this mandate, especially upon young believers, it will be desirable to notice that it comes to those — I. Who have been delivered from bondage. II. Who are beset by foes and confronted with difficulties. III. Who are seeking a better country. Conclusion: — These words are not meant for all. The command for some of you is not "Go forward," but "Stop." For sinners to go forward is death and destruction. — *A. G. Maitland*.

Forward, the true direction. — Livingstone, having broken fresh ground among the Bakhatlas, wrote to the Directors of the London Missionary Society, explaining what he had done, and expressing the hope that it would meet with their approval. At the same time he said he was at their disposal "to go anywhere — *provided it be FORWARD.*" — *Bib. Ill.*

19-22. (19) **angel of God,** ^d "The Divine Presence, manifested in the pillar of the cloud, is called 'the Lord' (ch. xiii. 21; xiv. 24), and 'the angel of God' — as the appearance in the burning bush is termed 'God' and 'the angel of the Lord.'" — *Pulp. Com.* (20) **between . . . Israel,** to check the one and encourage the other. **cloud . . . them,** ^e who, therefore, saw not the way to pursue. **light . . . these,** ^f making the road of safety a shining pathway. **so . . . night,** another memorable night, during which Israel escaped. (21) **divided,** ^g into two parts. "The portion of the sea dried up." (22) **waters . . . left,** ^h "i. e. a protection, a defence." "The expression in ch. xv. 8 — 'The floods stood upright as an heap;' and again that in Ps. lxxviii. 13 — 'He made the waters to stand as an heap;' must be taken as poetical." — *Pulp. Com.*

What Israel found in the sea-path. — 1. Rebuke for the murmuring. 2. Filial fear. 3. Trust in God. 4. Trust in Moses. 5. Nationality; before, they were all slaves, then free men, now a nation. Learn: 1. All people must struggle and dare. 2. Our characters come from soul-struggles where self is abandoned and trust is put in God. 3. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. 4. God will, out of every temptation, make a way of escape. — *Fowler*.

The passage of the Red Sea. — To suppose, as many do, that the Israelites crossed the fords near the head-waters of the sea on the shoals laid bare by a strong north-east wind blowing down the bay at low tide, and that Pharaoh and his hosts were overwhelmed by the returning tide, is to degrade the miracle, to do violence to all the conditions of the narrative, and to annul the effect of this stupendous deliverance upon the nations which should be dis-

mayed by the report of it. In what sense were the children of Israel "entangled in the land," with an open ford before them across the sea? or the waters "a wall unto them on the right hand and on the left, so that the waters stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea?" Whence the consternation and distress of the Israelites, or the dismay of the nations from afar, at the report of their deliverance? "The people shall hear, and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them. And why? Because the Israelites went in safety over the fords at low water, as is customary to this day; but the Egyptians in pursuit were drowned by the returning tide! An English gentleman and author, who had committed himself publicly to the defence of this theory, on examination of the ground at the same time with us, abandoned the theory as utterly untenable and absurd.

23-25. (23) pursued, Pharaoh himself is not said to have gone in. Menephtah was apt to avoid danger. — *Pulp. Com.* (24) in . . watch,^a which began at two and ended about six. troubled, *R. V.*, "discomfited." (25) took . . wheels, "The sept has "clogged the axles of their chariots;" some ancient versions read "bound." so . . said, overwhelmed with a sudden panic, and now in extricable confusion.

The Divine troubling of the wicked.— I. The Divine troubling of the wicked takes place in the midst of their presumption and sin. II. The Divine troubling of the wicked causes the mad schemes in which they are engaged to drag heavily. III. The Divine troubling of the wicked sometimes causes them to wish to retreat from their evil designs when it is too late. IV. The Divine troubling of the wicked will in all probability culminate in their utter ruin and destruction.— *Hom. Com.*

Wheels dragging.— A man was driving furiously down a hill in the direction of the seaport, where he was to embark for California. The carriage wheel struck against a stone, and was shattered to pieces. Bruised and angry, he cursed his adverse fate, which forced him to trudge for miles along the road, only to find on arrival that the vessel sailed. But this "drag upon the wheel" proved a mercy in disguise; for the same night, the stormy wind arose, and swept the departed ship beneath its mountain waves. How often, God makes a man's chariot wheels drag heavily in mercy to his soul, when he will not see it.— *Adamson.*

26-31. (26) the . . Moses,^b while the Egyptians were in this sorry plight, (27) overthrew,^c they were met by the advancing floods, which poured in, overwhelming all those who had entered the dangerous path. (28) there . . them,^d a consideration of the circumstances will show that escape was impossible. (29) walked,^e etc., see vs. 22. (30) saw . . shore, comp. with their last sight of Egyptians: vs. 10. (31) great work, *lit.* great hand.^f

God's care.— What should we think of an Israelite walking through the depths of the sea on dry ground, between walls of water standing up like marble on either hand, and yet not recognizing the intended and merciful display of the Divine power for his protection? What should we think of a ransomed Hebrew standing on the safe shore of the Red Sea on that memorable morning, and yet refusing to join in the song of thanksgiving for the great deliverance of the night? The same that we ought to think of one who lies down to sleep at night in his own house, and goes to his daily occupation in the morning, and never prays, never offers thanksgiving to God, for the mercy which redeems his life from destruction every moment. In God we live, and move, and have our being. Every use of our faculties, every sensation of pleasure, every emotion of happiness, every possession, experience, and hope that makes existence a blessing, is a witness to us of God's special, minute, and ceaseless attention to our welfare.— *D. March.*

B. c. 1491.

His love will hold the sea-walls steady, and the sea-walls will keep back Pharaoh. Some solicitous friends once warned Whitefield to spare himself in such extraordinary efforts; he only answered with words that long ago went into history "I am immortal till my work is done!"— *C. S. Robinson.*

the Egyptians pursuing are troubled

a "At sunrise, a little bef. 6 A. M. April."— *Spt. Com.*

"It is sometimes of God's mercy that men in the eager pursuit of worldly aggrandizement are baffled; for they are very like a train going down an inclined plane, — putting on the brake is not pleasant, but it keeps the car on the track."— *Beecher.*

the sea returns and destroys Pharaoh and his host

b Ps. lxxvii 16-19.

c De. xl. 4; He. xi. 29.

d Ex. i. 22; Ma. vii. 2.

e Ps. cvi. 8-10.

f "The power of the great hand."— *Chaldee.*

"Praise the sea but keep on land."— *G. Herbert.*

B. C. 1491.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

the song of
Mosesa Ps. lxi. 6-8; Is.
xli. 2; xlv. 17; xxv.
1; Ps. lix. 17.b Ps. cxxxii. 4, 5;
1 Ki. viii. 27; Is.
lvii. 15; Jo. xiv
22; Eph. ii. 22.c Ps. xxiv. 8;
lxxxiii. 14; Re.
xix. 11.

"The division of the song into three parts is distinctly marked — 1-6, 6-10, 11-18. Each begins with an ascription of praise to God; each increases in length and varied imagery unto the triumphal close." — *Spk. Com.*

Fasting is the worship of sorrow; singing is the worship of joy. — *Bib. Ill.*

"Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains or slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but, as for me, give me liberty or give me death." — *Patrick Henry.*

d Ps. cxviii. 15, 16.

Second division of the song; the details more fully given.

e Re. xviii. 21.

f Is. xlvii. 14;
Mal. iv. 1; Ma.
iii. 12.g Ex. xiv. 21; Job
iv. 9.

h Hab. iii. 10.

i Is. xvii. 13, 14.
"A soul that loveth God, despiseth all things that are inferior unto God."

1-3. (1) then sang Moses, etc. Moses says nothing of the composition of the "song." No serious doubt of his authorship has ever been entertained. (2) the . . song,^a *lit.* my strength and my song is Jah. I . . habitation,^b R. V., "I will praise him." (3) the . . war,^c mighty in battle, achiever of victories.

The living God. — I. Who was the God of our fathers? 1. A pure being: not the "chance" of the Atheist; 2. A conscious being: not the "mere law" of the Deist; 3. A personal being: not "the all" of the Pantheist; 4. A perfect being, as revealed in the Bible; 5. An emotional being, as manifest in Christ; 6. A communicative being, as imparted by the Holy Spirit. II. What is it to exalt Him? 1. Not by tall spires; 2. Not by a gorgeous ritual; but — 3. To adore Him as the object of our worship; 4. To give Him the chief place in our affections. — *W. W. Wythe.*

Thanksgiving. — Amid such wide-spread forgetfulness of the hand of an overruling Providence, it is a satisfaction to record the case of a thankful British seaman, a fine young man in the naval service on board Her Majesty's ship *Queen*. They were cruising off Cape Finisterre. The hands had been turned up to reef topsails for the night; the work was just finished, when the young captain of the mizzen top overbalanced himself and fell. He came down a distance of a hundred feet or more, and would have fallen on the deck, where no doubt he would have been instantly killed or seriously injured; but as he fell he clutched the footbrail of the mizzen — this threw him against the sail, which broke his fall, and he was saved! And as he touched the deck he knelt down in the sight of the throng of officers and men who composed the crew, and offered up his thanks to Almighty God for his safe deliverance, during which time the silence and discipline was such one might have heard a pin drop on the deck. — *W. M. Taylor.*

4, 5. (4) cast, hurled: term applied to throwing of darts. his . . captains, *lit.* the choice of his captains, *i. e.* the flower of Egyptian chivalry. (5) *san* . . stone, clad in mail; their destruction was inevitable.

Effective deliverance. — God never works for His people a questionable deliverance. Their foes shall never trouble them again if He takes them in hand. This deliverance was *awe-inspiring*. When the Israelites reflected on their march through the sea, and on the scene of panic and death which they had witnessed, we can conceive how reverent would be their feeling; they would fear that God who had wrought all this destruction. They would feel that if He had been merciful to them He had likewise treated His enemies with terrible justice. Surely Israel would learn a lesson here never to be forgotten. And all our deliverances from danger should tend to give us clear views of the character of God, and should lead us to reverence the Divine name. — *Hom. Com.*

6-10. Between verses 5 and 6, Miriam's chorus was probably interposed — "Sing ye unto the Lord," etc. (6) right hand,^d Divine omnipotence: figure for highest degree of power. hath . . enemy,^e "pieces," or "dashed in pieces," utterly scattered and destroyed. (7) wrath, *lit.* burning: the fire of wrath. which . . stubble,^f this metaphor familiar to Egyptians sug. the ease as well as the totality of the destruction. (8) with . . nostrils,^g prob. allusion to the E. wind. floods . . heap,^h most indubitably this was not an ebb of the water or a spring-tide. (9) said,ⁱ etc., their boastful vauntings contemptuously referred to. (10) wind, *see* xiv. 21. lead, helpless, motionless. *See* vs. 5.

Vanity of boasting. — When Bonaparte was about to invade Russia, a person who had endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose, finding he could not prevail, quoted to him the proverb, "Man proposes, but God disposes;" to which he indignantly replied, "I dispose as well as propose." A Christian lady, on hearing the impious boast, remarked, "I set that down as the turning-point of Bonaparte's fortunes. God will not suffer a creature with impunity thus to usurp His prerogative." It happened to Bonaparte just as the lady predicted. His invasion of Russia was the commencement of his fall. — *Enoch Hall.*

11-12. Perhaps Miriam's chorus (vs. 21) interposed between vs. 10 and 11.

(11) among . . gods?^a *lit.* among the mighties: among the potentates, glorious in holiness,^b *lit.* glorified in the holy ones, *i. e.* amongst saints and angels. fearful in praises, *i. e.* "to be viewed with awe even when we praise Him." wonders?^c things wonderful, prodigies. (12) the . . them, fig. meaning they have utterly passed fr. sight.

Holiness the supreme end of life. — God's holiness — I. Inspires us with peace of heart. II. Is a strong support to all our endeavors to attain moral and spiritual perfection. III. Lies at the very root of the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is just because God is so holy that He set His heart upon redeeming us from the power of sin. Reconciliation to Him, therefore, cannot be obtained, without our acceptance, among other things, of this, His great end in relation to us. — *R. W. Dale.*

13-15. (13) thy mercy, not their worthiness. redeemed, bought out of bondage. thy . . habitation,^d the dwelling Thou hast chosen for them. (14) people,^e *R. V.*, "the peoples," *i. e.* "the nations of these parts — Philistines, Amalekites, Edomites, Moabites, etc. — will hear of the wonders done in Egypt — Israel's passage through the Red Sea and Egypt's destruction — and will tremble with fear when the Israelites approach, and offer them no opposition." — *Pulp. Com.* the . . Palestina, *i. e.* the Philistines. (15) dukes, *see* Ge. xxxvi, 15, 16. mighty . . Moab,^f renowned for strength and stature. Canaan . . away,^g they disappeared "little by little." "This prophecy received a remarkable accomplishment. *See* Josh. v. 1."

Afraid. — In a very memorable period in "our island story," when Admiral Howard and Drake had defeated the Spanish Armada after the first great battle, they continued to pursue them for a fortnight without having a single shot or a single charge of powder left in their ships. They had nothing left but air to fill their guns with. Yet thus without any ammunition our fleet went sailing on and sailing on, while the terrified strangers fled before them, until they were driven right into the Northern Sea. Then the Admiral thought they could not do much harm there, and so he left them and came back to get powder and shot for his own ships. Our fleet with empty guns, chased their enemies because that enemy was afraid of them. They had had one terrible defeat, and that was enough. And even so may we deal with the forces of this world. Count upon your enemies being afraid of you. If instead of being afraid of them you will only carry the war into the enemy's camp, and seek to win them for Christ, instead of allowing them to draw you away from Him, you will find that redemption has already stripped them of their courage and paralyzed their power to do you any injury. — *W. Hay Aitkin.*

16-19. (16) fear . . them, compare Deut. ii. 25; xi. 25. The Edomites of Mount Seir and the Moabites gave Israel a free passage through their borders (Deut. ii. 4-8, 18, 29), being afraid to oppose them. — *Pulp. Com.* still . . stone, petrified with fear. till . . over,^h *i. e.* over the wilderness, and reach Canaan. purchased,ⁱ acquired for Thyself from amongst others. (17) plant,^k firmly establish. in . . inheritance, *see* vs. 13. which . . in, Canaan the chosen place of the Lord's, as well as His people's, earthly habitation. sanctuary,^l holy place, ref. to Temple. (18) reign . . ever,^m allusion to His universal and eternal dominion.

The kingdom of God permanently triumphant. — "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever." 1. To the enemies of Christ. You see that the Lord must reign; then what must become of you? 2. To the friends of Christ, yea, to those who wish to love the Saviour. (1) Look back and review your mercies; how numerous, how seasonable, how undeserved! See the Lord's hand in them, and this will add to their sweetness. (2) Look forward. Consider what God has promised to do for you. You have your trials, and you will have them; but you have not one too many. (3) Look upward to that promised rest — that "inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away." — *George Breay.*

Those Israelites were not going to terrify all these nations with any display of their own power or prowess. It was the story of the Exodus, the story of a divided sea, the story of a certain mysterious pillar of fire, the story of the wonderful overthrow of Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea: it was this that was to fill them with despair. — *W. Hay Aitkin.*

B. C. 1491.

a 1 Ki viii. 23; Ps. lxxxix. 6-8; lxxxvi. 8; Jer. x. 6; 2 Sa. vii. 22; Ps. lxxvii. 14.

b Is. lvii. 17; Lev. xix. 2; Ps. ii. 11; Is. vi. 5; Hab. i. 13; Ps. cxlv. 17.

c Ps. cxxx. 4; Re. xv. 3, 4; Is. vi. 3.

d Ps. lxxiii. 24; lxxviii. 54; cxxxv. 21.

e Josh. ii. 9, 10; Ps. xlviii. 6.

f Nu. xxii. 3; Hab. iii. 7.

g Josh. v. 1.

"The man who seeks freedom for anything but freedom's self is made to be a slave." — *De Tocqueville.*

"The cause of freedom is identified with the destinies of humanity, and in whatever part of the world it gains ground by-and-by, it will be a common gain to all those who desire it." — *Kossuth.*

h Is. xlii. 1, 3.

i Ti. ii. 14.

k Ps. lxxx. 8; xlii. 2.

l Ps. lxxvii. 1, 2.

m Ps. cxlvi. 10.

"Of all the lights you carry on your face, joy shines farthest out to sea."

"If you wish to behold God, you may see Him in every object around; search in your breast, and you will find Him there." — *Metastasio.*

Miriam with a timbrel leads the women's

20-22. (20) Miriam, of whom we have heard nothing since we found her dance

B. C. 1491.

a Nu. xii. 2.

b Top. ii. 122.

c Ps. cxlix 3; 2 Sa. vi. 5; Ps. cl. 4.

d Mic. vi. 4; Ez. iii. 11; 1 Sa. xviii. 7.

e Ge. xxv. 18.

The duties of the present moment we shall meet as they rise, and these will open a gate into the next, and we shall thus pass on, trusting and securely, almost never in doubt as to what God calls us to do.
—*Horace Bushnell.*

the waters of Marah and the camp at Elim

f Ex. xvii. 3.

g Ps. l. 15; Ex. xvi. 4.

h Jud. ii. 22; Ps. lxxi. 10; lxxxi. 7.

i De. vii. 12, 15.

k Ps. xli. 3, 4; ciii. 3; cxlvii 3; 2 Ch. xxx. 20; Pr. iv. 22.

But six short miles separated the twelve wells of water and the three-score and ten palm-trees from the bitter, nauseous well that filled the hearts of the thirsting multitudes with disappointment. And so near in human life is the sweetness to the bitterness in every vital.
—*Christian Age.*

The wilderness brings out what is within. It also discovers God's goodness and our unworthiness.—*Homilist.*

watching her infant brother. **prophetess**, she is the first woman whom the Bible honors with this title; so called bec. subject of special Divine teaching.^a **timbrel**,^b Heb. *toph*; a kind of tambourine. **dances**,^c quick moving steps ordered by the measure of the music. (21) **answered**,^d they sang alternate stanzas in companies: prob. the men and the women thus responded to each other. (22) **Shur**,^e see Ge. xvi. 7, prob. the whole district betw. Egypt and Palestine. **they . . water**, fr. *Ayoun Musa* and *Huwara*, the first spot where water is found on the route, is 32 geog. ms.

The song of Miriam.—

Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!

Jehovah has triumphed! His people are free!

Sing—for the pride of the tyrant is broken;

His chariots, his horsemen, all splendid and brave,

How vain was their boasting! the Lord hath but spoken,

And chariots and horsemen are sunk in the wave

Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!

Jehovah has triumphed! His people are free!

Praise to the conqueror, praise to the Lord,

His word was our arrow, His breath was our sword;

Who shall return to tell Egypt the story

Of those she sent forth in the hour of her pride?

For the Lord hath looked out from His pillar of glory,

And all her brave thousands are dashed in the tide.

Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea!

Jehovah has triumphed! His people are free!

—*Thomas Moore.*

23—27. (23) **Marah**,^f (*bitterness*), prob. now, *Ain Howarah*, where there is still a salt and bitter fountain. "And there are several bitter springs in the vicinity—one of them even bitterer than Howarah. (See Winer, *Realwörterbuch*, ad voc. *Marah*.)" (24) **people . . Moses**, they praised God for all that went right, and grumbled at Moses for all that went wrong. **saying**, etc., their song of joy exchanged for a murmuring wail. (25) **tree . . sweet**,^g "probably there was some tree in the vicinity of the bitter fountain in Moses' time which had a natural purifying and sweetening power, but it has become extinct, as no such tree is now found."—*Pulp. Com.* **statute . . them**,^h "the healing of the water was a symbol of deliverance from physical and spiritual evils." (26) **diseases**,ⁱ afflictions, judgments. **for . . thee**,^k *lit.* I am Jehovah thy healer. (27) **Elim**, (*trees*, perh. *palm-trees*), prob. the *Wady Ghurundel*, or else *Wady Useit*—*Stanley, Sin. and Pal.* wells, springs. **and . . trees**, wh. gave them a grateful shade. **they . . waters**, a pleasant rest after a weary march.

Marah.—God sends no needless trials. He does not afflict for His own pleasure, but for our good. 2. For every need God has provided the supply, for every bane the antidote. But you will not discover it yourself. He must point it out. 3. Notice the method of the Divine mercy. God does not take away the burden; He will give you more strength; and then you will have the strength, even after the burden is removed. You will be permanently the better for it.—*G. Davidson.*

The wilderness of Shur.—The Hebrew word *Shur* means a wall, and when the eastern shore of the Red Sea was examined at the spot where or whereabouts the passage of the Israelites must have taken place, a long slip of desert plain was found fringing the sea-shore, and beyond it a steep barrier or wall of limestone, 1,000 feet in height, stretching parallel to the coast, and forming a most prominent feature in the landscape. No doubt the wilderness derived its name from this long escarpment of limestone rock, and although the name *Shur* had disappeared, they found the physical features of the district bearing out the Bible nomenclature.—*Bibl. Treas.* **A waterless desert**.—Now, for just three days' journey southward along the coast the desert plain is practically speaking waterless, there being only a few wretched brackish springs, about one in every hundred square miles, of which the water is unfit for use.—*Capt. Palmer.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1-3. (1) unto . . Sin, the desert-plain *el-Kâa*, wh. begins at *el-Murkhah* and extends to nearly the S. end of Sinaitic Peninsula. **fifteenth month**, — *i. e.* "on the 15th of Zif, exactly one month." (2) **murmured**,^a for want of food, now first felt after one month fr. the Exodus. (3) **flesh-pots**, or meat-dishes. **when . . full**, though slaves, well fed. Compare Num. xi. 5, whatever the sufferings of the Israelites in Egypt — they had abundance of agreeable food. — *Pulp. Com.* God designed something better than the supply of mere bodily need. **kill . . hunger**,^b yet God provided food for both body and soul.

Constant complaints. — Some people are always "out of sorts." The weather is always just what they don't want. I met one of these men a while ago, a farmer, who had raised all manner of crops. It was a wet day, and I said, "Mr. Nayling, this rain will be fine for your grass-crop." — "Yes, perhaps; but it is bad for the corn, and will keep it back. I don't believe we shall have a crop." A few days after this, when the sun was shining hot. I said, "Fine sun for your corn, sir." — "Yes, pretty fair; but it's awful for the rye. Rye wants cold weather." Again: on a cold morning, I met my neighbor, and said, "This must be capital for your rye, Mr. Nayling." "Yes; but it is the very worst weather for the corn and grass. They want heat to bring them forward." — *Todd.*

4-8. (4) **said . . Moses**, apparently without waiting for a direct appeal. **a . . day**, *R. V.*, "a day's portion every day." **that . . them**, whether they will trust Me. He "proved" the obedience of the Israelites by a positive command. (5) **sixth day**, day bef. the sabbath. **prepare**, "by measurement (ver. 18), and by pounding and grinding (Num. xi. 8.)" **twice . . daily**, "the meaning of the words is, that, having gathered the usual quantity, they should find, the supply sufficient for one day was multiplied, so as to suffice for two." — *Pulp. Com.* (6) **even . . know**, by the sign that should then be given. (7) **glory . . Lord**, the peculiar brightness of the cloud a sign of God's special presence and favor. **what . . us?** what have *we* done? what can *we* do? (8) **your . . Lord**,^c whose servants and instruments we are.

Murmuring a mother sin. — As the river Nile bringeth forth many crocodiles, and the scorpion many serpents, at one birth, so murmuring is a sin that breeds and brings forth many sins at once. It is like the monstrous hydra, — cut off one head, and many will rise up in its room. It is the mother of harlots, the mother of all abominations, a sin that breeds many other sins; viz., disobedience, contempt, ingratitude, impatience, distrust, rebellion, cursing, carnality: yea, it charges God with folly; yea, with blasphemy. The language of a murmuring soul is this — "Surely God might have done this sooner, and that wiser, and the other thing better." — *T. Brooks.*

9-12. (9) **come . . Lord**, *i. e.* before the luminous cloud. (10) **glory . . cloud**,^d it kindleth into an unwonted brightness. (11) **and . . Moses**, in the presence of the people, that they might see clearly the source of his authority. (12) **even**, *lit.* between the two evenings. **flesh . . bread**, the quails were supplied only on rare occasions; only here in the wilderness of Sin, and at Kibroth-hattaavah in the wilderness of Paran (Num. xi. 31-34). — *Pulp. Com.* See vs. 13.

Ingratitude of grumbling. — I heard a good man say once, as we passed the home of a millionaire: "It doesn't seem right that such a man as he is should be rolling in wealth, while I have to work hard for my daily bread." I made no reply. But when we reached the home of the grumbler, and a troop of rosy children ran out to meet us, I caught one in my arms, and, holding him up, said: "John, how much will you take for this boy?" And he answered, while the moisture gathered in his eyes: "That boy, my namesake! I wouldn't sell him for his weight in gold." "Why, John, he weighs forty pounds at least, and forty pounds of gold would make you many times a millionaire. And you would probably ask as much for each of the others. So, according to your own admission, you are immensely rich. Yes, a great deal richer than that cold, selfish, childless millionaire whom you were envying as

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from Elim to the wilderness of sin

^a Ps. cvi. 25; 1 Co. x. 10.

^b Lam. iv. 9; Nu. xi. 4, 5.

"O mourner! say not that thou art a target for all the arrows of the Almighty; take not to thyself the pre-eminence of woe; for thy fellows have trodden the valley too." — *Spurgeon.*

the manna and quails promised

^c 1 Sa. viii. 7; Lu. x. 16; Ro. xiii. 2.

"It is calculated that not less than one million of the children of Israel died in the wilderness by God's judgment for their murmurings in forty years." — *Bowes.*

murmuring of the people and mercy of God

^d 1 Ki. viii. 10, 11.

No one ever wanders where a promise does not follow him. An atmosphere of promise surrounds believers, as the air surrounds the globe. — *Spurgeon.*

"How disappointment tracks the steps of hope." — *Miss Landon.*

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we came along. Nothing would tempt you to change places with him. Then you ought to be grateful instead of grumbling. You are the favorite of fortune, or rather, of Providence, and not he." — *Beecher*.

manna

^a Nu. xi. 31; Ps. lxxviii. 27, 28; cv. 40.

^b Ps. lxxviii. 23-25; De. viii. 3.

"Murmuring was the source of all Israelites' troubles. Once a child was reading, apparently absorbed in the act; her parent asked what was the book, and, looking up, she answered, with a sudden overflow of tears, 'Oh, father, the people have begun to murmur again, and now God will have to punish them some more!'" — *C. S. Robinson*.

quantity to be gathered daily per head

^c Ex. xvi. 36.

^d 2 Co. viii. 13-15.

^e Jas. v. 2, 3.

^f "No such tendency to rapid decomposition is recorded of common manna." — *Spk. Com.*

^g Ma. vi. 31-34.

"It is labor only which gives relish to pleasure. It is the appointed vehicle of every good to man. It is the indispensable condition of possessing a sound mind in a sound body." — *Blair*.

none to be gathered on the Sabbath

^h Ge. ii. 3; Ex. xxxi. 15; xx. 8; xxxv. 8.

ⁱ Ex. xx. 9, 10.

13-15. (13) quails,^a Heb. *slav*, the common quail. These birds at certain seasons are easily taken in large numbers. (*Coturnix dactylisonans*); Arab. *selwa*. **came . . camp**, see Nu. xi. 31. (13) **a . . thing**, it was "a substitute for bread, and the main sustenance of the the Israelitish people." — *Pulp. Com.* (15) **it is manna**,^b R. V., "What is it?"

Jesus the living bread that came down from heaven. — The old manna — I. Sustained the body. So Christ sustains the spirit. II. Was supplied in the wilderness of Sinai. So Christ is present in the world-wilderness of sin. III. Had to be renewed daily. So our spiritual food must be constantly fresh. IV. Prefigured the broken body in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. V. Was to be gathered in the morning. A lesson to seek Christ early. VI. When neglected, was lost. So with Christ. — *Fowler*.

Constancy of Providence. — "Never did man die of hunger who served God faithfully," was a saying of Cuthbert, the apostle of Northumbria, when he and his companions were overtaken by night without food or shelter. "Look at the eagle overhead," he would add; "God can feed us through him if He will." And this faith was on one occasion signally justified by the bird in question letting fall a fish, which furnished the needed meal. — *J. R. Green's Short History*. *Satisfied with God's provision.* — Another time Billy Bray tells us that his crop of potatoes turned out poorly; and as he was digging them in the autumn, Satan was at his elbow, and said, "There, Billy, isn't that poor pay for serving your Father the way you have all the year? Just see those small potatoes." He stopped his hoeing, and replied, "Ah, Satan, at it again, talking against my Father, bless His name. Why, when I served you, I didn't get any potatoes at all. What are you talking against Father for?" And on he went hoeing and praising the Lord for small potatoes. — *Bib. Ill.*

16-21. (16) **gather . . eating**, enough for use, but not for waste. **omer**,^a perh.=to six half-pints, or cotylæ. (18) **omer . . lack**,^d "whatever the quantity gathered by any one, the measurement showed, exactly as many omers as there were persons in the family." — *Pulp. Com.* (19) **let . . morning**, but trust in Him for to-morrow, who has provided to-day. (20) **some . . morning**, through lack of faith, disobeyed. **and . . stank**,^e miraculous,^f to teach that mercies abused may become curses. (21) **they . . morning**,^g time appointed: cool of the day. **when . . melted**, *i. e.* that wh. was left ungathered melted. "In this respect the miraculous manna resembled both the manna of commerce and the 'air-honey.'"

Gum, or manna, of the tamarisk. — There is a kind of tree or shrub — a species of tamarisk found in this and other regions — which yields at certain times and in small quantities a kind of gum, to which the name of manna has been given, in the belief that it really was, or that it resembled, the manna by which the Israelites were fed. If any folly of those who deem themselves wiser than their Bible, could astonish, it might excite strong wonder to see grave and reverend men set forth the strange proposition, that two or three millions of people were fed from day to day, during forty years, with this very substance. A very small quantity — and that only at a particular time of the year, which is not the time when the manna first fell — is now afforded by all the trees of the Sinai peninsula; and it would be safe to say, that if all the trees of this kind, then or now growing in the world, had been assembled in this part of Arabia Petræa, and had covered it wholly, they would not have yielded a tithe of the quantity of gum required for the subsistence of so vast a multitude. — *Kitto*.

22-26. (22) **bread**, the manna not the gum of the tamarisk nor of the tarfa-tree, while resembling both, but was substantial food. (23) **to-morrow . . Lord**,^h the institution of the Sabbath wh already existed had been neglected "so that the idea was new, to those whom Moses addressed;" it is now revived and was afterwards established by law. **bake . . seethe**, "Do," *i. e.*, "as you have done on other days," manna could be ground and treated as meal. (24) **and . . therein**, God honored the Sabbath by the miracle. (25) **to-day . . field**, no manna would fall, another Divine mark of the Sabbath. (26) **six . . it**,ⁱ fr. day to day: daily bread.

Sabbath. — To rest from weary work one day in seven;
 One day to turn our backs upon the world,
 Its soil wash from us, and strive on to heaven,
 Whereto we daily climb, but quick are hurled
 Down to the deep of human pride and sin,
 Help me, ye powers celestial, to come nigh;
 Ah, let me catch one little glimpse within
 The heavenly city, lest my spirit die.

—R. W. Gilder.

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“The green oasis,
 the little grassy
 meadow in the
 wilderness, where,
 after the week-
 days’ journey, the
 pilgrim halts for
 refreshment and
 repose.” — Dr.
 Reade.

27—31. (27) went . . gather,^a regardless of the Sabbath. and . . none, and had to fast that day. (28) how long . . laws?^b not Moses, but the people blamed, “refuse ye.” There had now been two acts of disobedience in connection with the manna (*see vs. 20, 27*); when will they learn to obey? (29) Lord . . sabbath, the Sabbath made for man: a gift, a privilege, a blessing, as well as an ordinance. therefore . . days, that you may rightly observe and fully enjoy the Sabbath. abide . . place, *i. e.* within the camp. (30) so, *etc.*, from toil and travel: *i. e.* restored the Sabbath and observed it during all their journeying. (31) called . . manna, which was not a name defining its nature, but a question confessing their ignorance of its nature. (*See vs. 15.*) like . . seed, Heb. *gad* = coriander (*coriandrum sativum*); an annual two feet high (nat. ord. *umbelliferae*) white,^c grayish-white.

Queen Victoria and the Lord’s day. — One Saturday night, in the first year of Queen Victoria’s reign, a certain noble visitor came at a late hour to Windsor. He informed the Queen that he had brought down some documents of great importance for her inspection, but, that, as they would require to be examined in detail, he would not encroach upon Her Majesty’s time that night, but would request her attention the next morning. “To-morrow is Sunday, my lord,” said the Queen. “True, your Majesty, but business of the State will not admit of delay.” The Queen then consented to attend to the papers after Church the next morning. The nobleman was somewhat surprised that the subject of the sermon next day turned out to be the duties and obligations of the Christian Sabbath. “How did your lordship like the sermon?” asked the Queen on their return from Church. “Very much indeed, your Majesty,” was the reply. “Well, then,” said the Queen. “I will not conceal from you that last night I sent the clergyman the text from which he preached. I hope we shall all be improved by the sermon.” Sunday passed over without another word being said about the State papers, until at night, when the party was breaking up, the Queen said to the nobleman, “To-morrow morning, my lord, at any hour you please — as early as seven, my lord, if you like — we will look into the papers.” — *T. E. Ball.*

the rule of
 the Sabbath
 violated

a 2 Ki. xvii. 14; Ps.
 lxxviii. 10, 11, 22,
 23.

b Ps. cvi. 10, 14.

c Nu. xl. 7, 8.

“A man says he
 must sell his goods
 on the Sabbath in
 order to support
 his family; his in-
 terest demands it.
 But if he follows
 duty as against
 apparent interest,
 we assert that he
 engages on his side
 all the aids of
 Providence. If
 you cannot be re-
 ligious but
 through bank-
 ruptcy, let not
 your name in the
Gazette scare you
 from inscribing it
 in the Lamb’s book
 of life.”

32—36. (32) that . . bread, *etc.*, evidence of past mercy miraculously preserved. (33) pot,^d *i. e.* jar. Lord, the “pot of manna” was laid up before the Lord with the “tables of the covenant,” and “Aaron’s rod that budded.” — *Pulp. Com.* (34) Testimony,^e the Law. “The pot of manna was laid up inside the ark (Heb. ix. 4) in front of the two tables.” (35) did . . years, the supply never failed, though they may not have fed exclusively on manna, until . . Canaan,^f no further need of manna in a land flowing with milk and honey. (36) omer . . ephah, both wds. Egyptian; precise quantities not known. “It is not improbable that the verse is an addition by a later writer.”

Physical providence. — Consider — I. That God’s physical providence recognizes the personal wants of each individual: manna fell for each babe and man — not one overlooked. II. That the enjoyment of God’s physical providence depends on trustful labor. III. That an avaricious accumulation of the blessings of physical providence will disappoint the possessor. IV. That the seeking of the blessings of physical providence should never interfere with religious institutions. To prevent labor on the Sabbath, a double portion came on the sixth day. — *Thomas.*

Former mercies remembered. — Mr. Kidd, minister of Queensferry, near Edinburgh, was one day very much depressed and discouraged. He sent a note to Mr. L —, minister of Culross, a few miles off, informing him of his distress of mind, and desiring a visit as soon as possible. Mr. L — told the servant he was so busy that he could not wait upon his master, but desired him to tell Mr. Kidd to remember Torwood. When the servant returned, he

the pot of
 manna to
 be laid up

d Heb. ix. 4.

e Ex. xxv. 16-21;
 De. x. 5; Nu. xvii.
 4, 10.

f Josh. v. 12; Rev.
 vii. 16.

“Oh what a bless-
 ing is Sunday,
 interposed be-
 tween the waves
 of worldly busi-
 ness like the
 divine path of
 the Israelites
 through Jordan!
 There is nothing
 in which I would
 advise you to be
 more strictly con-
 scientious than in
 keeping the Sab-
 bath-day holy. I

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can truly declare that to me the Sabbath has been invaluable." — *Wilderforce*.

said to his master, "Mr. L—— could not come, but he desired me to tell you to remember Torwood." This answer immediately struck Mr. Kidd, and he cried out, "Yes, Lord! I will remember Thee, from the hill Mizar, and from the Hermonites!" All his troubles and darkness vanished upon the recollection of a day which he had formerly spent in prayer along with Mr. L—— in Torwood, where he had enjoyed eminent communion with God. — *Baxendale*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

Rephidim

a Robinson, Bib. Res. i. 121.

b Stanley, Sin. and Pul. p. 40. See

Kitto, D. Bib. Read. c Nu. xx. 3.

d Ps. lxxviii. 18, 19, 41-42; xcv. 8, 9.

e Ex. xiv. 11, 12; xv. 24; xvi. 2, 3; Nu. xiv. 2, 3; xxi. 5.

Blessed be God for water. I love to

hear it fall in the shower and dash in the cascade, and to

see it rush from the ice pitcher into the clear glass.

Hand round this nectar of the hills and drink, all of

you, to the praise of Him who brewed it among the

mountains. Thank God for water. —

Talmage.

1-3. (1) **Rephidim**, signifies "resting place," locality not identified: perh. *Wady es-Sheikh*,^a or *Wady Feiran*.^b there . . drink, a dry and thirsty land. "The Wady Feiran is watered ordinarily by a copious stream; but at times the brook is dry. — *Pulp. Com.* (2) **did . . Moses**,^c i. e., "quarrelled," made open murmurs and complaint — as before (ch. xiv. 11, 12; xv. 24; xvi. 2, 3). **wherefore . . Lord?** to "tempt the Lord" is to try his patience by doubting His care and reproaching His servants. (3) **murmured**, they cast the blame of their situation on Moses with great satisfaction. **kill**,^d i. e., make or suffer to die.^e

Refreshing thoughts for the hot season. — I was told by a gentleman who walked over one of the battle-fields on a hot summer night, after a day of carnage, that the cry of the wounded was absolutely unbearable, and after giving all supply that he could, he put his fingers to his ears, for the cry all over the plain was from hundreds of dying men, "Water! Water! For God's sake, give us water." Coming home from the store on a hot summer day, in the eventide every muscle of your body exhausted with fatigue, what do you first ask for? A cup of water — fresh, clear, sparkling water. This Bible is all agleam with fountains, and rivers, and seas. The prophet sees the millennium, and cries, "Streams in the desert." David thinks of the deep joy of the righteous, and calls it "A river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." While the New Testament holds forth ten thousand chalices filled with living water for a thirsty world. — *Talmage*.

the rock is smitten and yields water

f 1 Sa. xxx. 6; Jo. viii. 59.

g Ex. vii. 20.

h "This stone made more impression upon me than any natural object claiming to attest a miracle ever did." — *Dr.*

Durbin, Obs. on the East.

i Nu. xx. 10, 11; Ps. cxiv. 7, 8; Is. xli. 17, 18; xliii. 20; lv. 1; Ps. cv. 41; 1 Co. x. 4; Jo. iv. 14; vii. 37-39; Re. xxii. 17.

k Nu. xx. 13; Ps. lxxxii. 7; He. iii. 8; Ps. xcv. 8.

4-7. (4) **cried . . Lord**, a prominent trait in the character of Moses that in difficulty he takes it to the Lord. (See ch. xv. 25; xxiv. 15; xxxii. 30; xxxiii. 8; Num. xi. 2, 11; xii. 11; xiv. 13-19, etc.) **they . . me**,^f the first mention of stoning, an easy mode of popular vengeance. Known to the Greeks as early as the Persian war (Herod. ix. 5.) (5) **Go . . people**, leave the people in Rephidim, for perh. they would stone Moses. **take . . Israel**, as witnesses. **rod . . river**,^g past wonders to inspire present confidence. (6) **rock**,^h which tradition points out to this day.ⁱ (7) **Massah (temptation). Meribah (strife)**. Moses gave the same name to the place near Kadesh, where water was brought out of the rock, near the end of the wanderings. (See Deut. xxxii. 51; Ps. cvi. 32.) — *Pulp. Com.*

The rock-fountain. — In great distress, appeal to God. Moses in distress and fear called on God; disciples on the stormy sea, Peter sinking. Note the miracles of the rod on water. On — I. The Nile. II. The fountains. III. The Red Sea. IV. The rock. The rocks obey God, even when men murmur.^k

Water the purest drink. — Water is the fittest drink for all, persons of all ages and temperaments; of all the productions of nature or art, it comes nearest to that universal remedy so much searched after by mankind, but never discovered. By its fluidity and mildness, it promotes a free and equable circulation of the blood and humors through all the vessels of the body, upon which the due performance of every animal function depends; and hence water-drinkers are not only the most active and nimble, but also the most cheerful and sprightly of all people. — *Fowler*.

Amalek defeated

l Nu. xxiv. 20; xxv. 17-19; 1 Sa. xv. 2.

m Ac. vii. 45; He. iv. 8.

8-13. (8) **Amalek**,^l see Ge. xxxvi. 12, 16. These Amalekites were the posterity of Esau. A nomad people, dwelling in tents, rich in flocks and herds. The attack on Israel's rear was successful. (See Deut. xxv. 18.) (9) **Joshua**, (whose *help is Jehovah*, or *Jehovah the salvation*) now forty-five years of age; orig. name Oshea; forty years later Moses changed it to Jehoshua, contracted to Joshua. Called Jesus in N. T.^m **choose . . Amalek**, select suitable and sufficient men to fight. **to-morrow . . hand**, while using the means he trusted in God. (10) **Hur**, (*cavern* acc. to Jews, husband of Miriam, descendant of Judah (see 1 Chr. ii: 18-20.) **went . . hill**, to watch

the fight and intercede for Israel. (11) *when*,^a etc., the battle won by prayer, not by prowess. (12) *heavy*, weary. *they . . thereon*, sympathy with, and help for a man of prayer. *Aaron . . side*, strengthening influence of prayerful sympathies; *hands . . sun*, a fiercely contested battle lasting a whole day. God gave Israel a complete victory. (13) *with . . sword*, an express. sig. not so much the weapon used as *great slaughter*.

Encouragement. — There were four boys, all brothers, walking along the banks of a stream, and playing as they went. At length one of them fell into a deep place. He could not swim, but immediately his brother, who could, plunged in to rescue him. He got hold of him, but could not bring him to the bank. Then another brother, catching hold of a branch, stretched his body out its whole length so that the swimmer could catch hold, and thus all three were brought safe to land. When they got home they all began to tell their father about the affair. "Now give me time," he said, "and I'll hear you all." Turning to the oldest he asked, "When your brother fell into the river what did you do towards his rescue?" "Well, father, at first I was paralyzed with fear, and I stood on the bank for some seconds trembling for his safety; then I recovered myself and plunging in, caught hold of him, and strove to bring him to shore." Then facing the second boy he said, "And what did you do to rescue your brother?" "I could not swim, father, but when I saw they could not reach the shore, I bridged the water between them and the bank so that they might pull themselves in." Now there only remained the youngest, a little fellow of four years, and turning to him the father asked, "And what did you do?" "Oh, father, I could do nothing. I just stood on the bank and clapped my hands and shouted, 'Well done, well done!'" Christians standing safe on the bank, What have you done for the rescue of your brother? At least you can by your words and prayers encourage others who are stronger to go to the rescue of the lost. — *G. F. Cushman*.

14-16. (14) *Write . . book*, the original has, "Write this in the book." A book already existed, in which Moses entered events of interest. — *Pulp. Com.* and *. . Joshua*, for his future encouragement and guidance. *for . . heaven*,^b a warning to those who obstruct the progress of God's people. (15) *altar*, acknowledging the source of victory with a sacrifice of thanksgiving. *Jehovah . . nissi*,^c meant "the Lord is my banner," and was his ascription of the honor of the victory to Jehovah. (16) *because . . generation*,^d and under this banner God's people should war against Amalek from generation to generation, successfully.

Amalek destroyed. — This is the first time any mention is made of writing. Simple and familiar as the art now appears, it is difficult, if not impossible, to account for it without Divine origin. How much do we owe to it as Christians? What is the "Scripture" but the *writing*? — I. It is probable that from this time Moses began to keep a journal of striking and useful occurrences. Great men have frequently done the same for intellectual, and good men for religious purposes. II. Whatever may be said of the particular mode, the thing itself is of importance. If we are to be affected with transactions and feeling, they must be in some way secured and retained. III. A reason is assigned for the recording and rehearsing of this transaction in a dreadful menace. The threatening was executed partially by Saul; but fully by David. — *W. Jay*.

Jehovah-nissi. — In the opening days of the first French Revolution, it is said that a timid trimmer fixed a cockade beneath the lappel of his coat on one breast, and a tricolor in the corresponding portion of the other; and that when he met a royalist he exposed the cockade and shouted, "Long live the king!" but when he met a republican he showed the tricolor, and cried, "Long live the Republic!" That, however, sufficed only for a short time: for as the strife increased, every man was forced to make a decision between the two. So sometimes, in times of indifference, it has been possible for men to seem to combine the services of God and mammon; but happily, as I think, for us, we have fallen on an earnest age, in which it is becoming impossible even to seem to be neutral. Everywhere the cry is raised, "Who is on the Lord's side?" and it becomes us all to hoist our flag, and display to the world in its expanding folds this old inscription, "Jehovah-nissi — the Lord is my banner." — *W. M. Taylor*.

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a Jas. v. 16; Ps. lvi. 9; He. vii. 25; ii. 10.

"Am I bravely and honestly upholding His cause, because it is His, not merely because those around me do so?" — *Miss Havergal*.

"Remember whatever warrant you have for praying, you have the same warrant to believe your prayers will be answered."

Jehovah-nissi

b 1 Sa. xv. 3, 7; xxx. 1, 17; Pr. x. 7; Ps. lxxxiii. 4, 7.

c Ps. xx. 5, ix. 4

d Nu. xxiv. 20; De. xxv. 19.

"The course of none has been along so beaten a road that they remember not fondly some resting places in their journeys, some turns of their path in which lovely prospects broke in upon them, some soft plats of green refreshing to their weary feet. Confiding love, generous friendship, disinterested humanity, require no recondite learning, no high imagination to enable an honest heart to appreciate and feel them." — *Tatfourd*.

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CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

Jethro, etc.,
come out to
meet Moses

a Ac. vii. 29.

"Nothing tests a man more than his bearing toward his former friends after he has passed through some experiences which have brought him great honor and prosperity; and when, as in the present instance, he comes back with his old frankness and cordiality, and is not ashamed of his old piety, he is a great man indeed."—*W. M. Taylor.*

"What an argument in favor of social connections is the observation that by communicating our grief we have less, and by communicating our pleasures we have more."—*Greville.*

Moses
rehearses
the story of
the Exodus

b Ps. cv. 2; cxlv. 10, 11.

c Ro. xii. 15.

d Ge. xiv. 20; 2 Sa. xviii. 28; Lu. i. 68.

e Ex. v. 2; xiv. 8; Ps. xcv. 3; Dan. iv. 37.

f 1 Co. x. 31.

"If thy friends be of better quality than thyself, thou mayest be sure of two things; the first, that they will be more careful to keep thy counsel, because they have more to lose than thou hast; the second, they will esteem thee for thyself, and not for that which thou dost possess."—*Sir W. Raleigh.*

1-6. (1) **Jethro**, "rather, Jethro, priest of Midian, Moses' brother-in-law." See ii. 18, and iii. 1. **heard . . Egypt**, the report of such astounding events must have rapidly circulated. (2) **Zipporah**, see ii. 21, and iv. 25. **after . . back, lit.**, "after her dismissal." The reason not given. (3) **And . . sons**, Zipporah had borne Moses two sons before his return to Egypt. **Gershom**,^a see ii. 22. (4) **Eliezer**, (*God is help*), "Eliezer had not been mentioned; but he was probably the son circumcised by Zipporah, as related in ch. iv. 25" (5) **came . . wilderness**, a valley near Horeb opening into *Er Rahah* is still called by the Arabs *Wady Shueib*, i. e., the valley of Hobab. **where . . God**, see iii. 12. (6) **said, etc.**, the message Jethro sent to Moses.

Lessons.—1. It is not unbeseeming the highest places or persons in kingdom or Church of Christ to give due respect to relations. 2. Grace doth not unteach men manners and civil carriage respectively unto men. 3. Natural affection and expressions of it to friends beseeemeth God's servants. 4. It is a natural duty for relations to inquire of and wish each other's peace.

—*G. Hughes.*

Family affection.—A fellow-student of mine had very poor parents, but they had a great desire to give their son the very best possible education; and if you had looked into that home you would have seen much pinching and self-denying on the part of those parents to give their boy a university training. Once, when he was away at college they went up with proud hearts to see him, for was it not with great efforts on their part that he was there? He was walking in the street with a fellow-student when he met them, and he tried to avoid them. You ask me, why? Because he was ashamed of them in their simple dress, and he was not going to own them until his friend had gone. That man reached the Presbyterian ministry, but he did not long stay in it. He fell from his position, and the broken-hearted parents followed him step by step. He went down lower and lower, until a fellow-minister and myself have rescued him again and again from police cells. Oh, the foulness of heart of one who is ashamed to own his mother, however poor. And yet there is still a greater sin; to be ashamed of that self-sacrificing love that nailed to the Cross the Son of God.—*J. Carstairs.*

7-12. (8) **all . . sake**,^b Moses ascribes all deliverances to God. **travail**, toil, trial, affliction. **and . . them**, fr. Amalek, etc. (9) **rejoiced**,^c with religious joy as well as natural affection. (10) **and . . said, etc.**,^d joining Moses in ascribing all praise to God. (11) **Lord . . gods**,^e "Perh. Jethro had hitherto regarded the God of the Israelites as merely one among many. Now he declares his belief that Jehovah is above all other gods."—*Pulp. Com.* See xv. 11. (12) **Jethro . . God**, Jethro a priest. **eat . . God**,^f "This expression designates the feast upon a sacrifice, which was the custom of ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Phenicians, Persians, Greeks and Romans."

—*Pulp. Com.* The rights of hospitality sanctified by religion.

The meeting of friends (vs. 7).—We may notice several kinds of feeling which prevail in the meeting, after a considerable absence, of genuine friends. I. Kind affection. What a difference between meeting an estimable friend and an entire stranger. II. Inquisitiveness. The mutual inquiries respecting welfare, are made in a very different spirit from unmeaning complaisance. III. Reflective comparison. Not invidious, but instructive. IV. Gratitude to God, in pious minds at least. V. Serious anticipation. Each meeting should admonish them that their life is shortened, sometimes much shortened, since they met before.—*J. Foster.*

Mutual sympathy.—A gentleman traveling on one of the river steamers to Philadelphia mentions his sensations over the rescue of a fellow-passenger from a watery grave. It was a cold winter night, and every one was impatient to be ashore. Before the boat reached the wharf a man slipped into the water. The icicles had frozen on the wharf and they had frozen on the steamer. The ropes were lowered, and all stood with anxiety lest the man should not be able to grasp the rope owing to the cold. When he grasped it and was pulled on to the deck, and we saw he was safe, although we had never seen him before, how we congratulated him. A life saved! With what fervency, then, must Jethro have congratulated Moses and his liberated

host? The greater the peril, the fuller the tide of exultancy! The more hopeless the prospect of success and reunion, the deeper the fount of gladness! — *Adamson*.

13-16. (13) *sat . . people, i. e.*, took his seat probably at the door of his tent, to hear and decide causes. — *Pulp. Com.* and . . *evening*, many "complaints may have arisen out of the division of the spoil of the Amalekites." (15) *to . . God,^a lit.* to seek God, *i. e.* to know His mind and will. 'Others could not know God's will as Moses knew it. (16) *matter,^b word, controversy. statutes . . laws*, as yet unwritten: this was before the giving of the law on Sinai, prob. ref. to principles of equity.

Moses, the judge (vs. 13). — Consider how Moses discharged his duties as judge. He acted with—I. Great consideration. II. Great condescension to the people who stood by him. He was easy of access to all. III. Great constancy. He sticks to his duty. — 1. Although Jethro was present as a visitor, which might give reason for a holiday; 2. Though he was advanced to great honor; 3. Though the people had but recently been provoking him (xvii. 4); 4. Though he was an old man. — *M. Henry*.

Consulting with God. — My heavenly Father is my "other partner" in my business. I consult with Him. It is remarkable how I am relieved from the worry and anxiety so common to business men. Frequently, when I desire to "think over a matter," it is really to consult with Him, after which my way is clear. And unto Him I render one-tenth. I often think this order should be reversed, and I take the tenth. — *William A. Lay*.

17-20. (17) *the . . good*, neither for thee nor for others. (18) *thou . . away,^c* suffer exhaustion. (19) *and God shall, R. V.*, "and God be with thee," *i. e.* "incline thine heart to follow my advice." *be . . God,^d* be the people's advocate in the presence of God. (20) *thou . . them,^e etc.*, and God's interpreter of His will to the people.

How to receive counsel. — In Montreal, some years ago, a certain English nobleman who had been recently converted, and was preaching the gospel to large multitudes who gathered to hear him, unfortunately had his heart lifted up within him, and began to speak bitterly and scornfully of the Churches of Christ in the city. An excellent and revered Presbyterian elder approached the young nobleman in the kindest way, spoke with great appreciation of the value of his work in preaching the gospel, but suggested that it would be better for the cause if he would cease abusing Christians and Christian Churches, and confine himself to the preaching of Christ. In reply he curled his lip in scorn, and said, "I take my counsel from the Lord!" What a contrast between the grand nobleman of the olden time, and the small one of yesterday. Moses might with some reason have claimed a monopoly of Divine counsel. God has chosen him out from all other men to make known His will to him; but when Jethro, though an outsider, and one who had only good common sense on his side, makes his suggestion, Moses does not scorn to listen to his advice, and take it, too. And the event showed that the Lord fully approved His servant's course. — *J. M. Gibson*.

21-24. (21) *able men,^f lit.* men of force, *i. e.* of character and ability. *such . . God,^g* such as possess the three qualities of piety, veracity, and strict honesty, or incorruptness. Fear of the Lord a judge's first requisite. *truth*, speaking the truth boldly, kindly, and impartially. *covetousness,^h* judges should not take bribes. and . . *them, i. e.* Israel. *rulers . . tens,* prob. involving superior as well as inferior courts. (22) *judge . . seasons,ⁱ* that justice may not be delayed. *that . . matter, involving vital or important issues. they, i. e.* the rulers. *so . . thyself,* and better for others. (23) *endure,^k lit.* stand *i. e.* continue in office and in strength. *people . . peace,* "in peace" means "cheerfully, contentedly." The people will make the rest of the journey to Canaan quietly and without complaint. — *Pulp. Com.* (24) *so . . voice, etc.* Moses took the advice after the law had been given at Sinai, and the journeying was about to be resumed. See Deut. i. 9-15. — *Pulp. Com.*

Lessons. — 1. That positions of trust should not be monopolized by the few. 2. That the common crowds of men have unsuspected abilities. 3. That good men should not be prodigal of their physical and mental energy to the shortening of their lives. — *Exell*.

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Moses in the seat of justice

a Nu. xxvii. 5.

b De. xvii. 8; 1 Co. vi. 1.

"They bear the palm and rule the best, who merely wish to serve." — *Henry Abbey*.

"No man is born into the world whose work is not born with him." — *Lowell*.

Jethro's advice

the reason of it

c Nu. xi. 14; De. i. 9, 12.

d Ex. iv. 16; xx. 19; De. v. 5.

e De. iv. 1; Ps. cxliii. 8.

"Advice is seldom welcome. Those who need it most like it least."

v. 17. *J. Foster*. Lect. ii. 208.

the nature of it

f 2 Ch. xix. 5-10.

g Ge. xlii. 18.

h De. xvi. 19; Ia. xxxlii. 15; Pr. xxviii. 16; Ne. v. 15; 2 Sa. xxiii. 3.

i Ac. vi. 3.

k Nu. xi. 16, 17.

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"Government is only a necessary evil, like other go-carts and crutches. All governing overmuch kills the self-help and energy of the governed."—*W. Phillips.*

"God give us grace,
Each in his place,
To bear his lot;
And, murmuring
not,
Endure and wait
and labor."—*J. G. Whittier.*

parting of
Moses and
Jethro

a De. 1. 13-15.

b Nu. x. 29-30.

"Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again. I have a faint, cold fear thrills through my veins, that almost freezes up the heat of life."—*Shakespeare.*

Mount Sinai

Moses goes
up the mount
e *Stanley, Sin. and Pal. p. 42; Headley's Sac. Mts. p. 37-40.*

d "There can be scarcely any doubt that the last is the Mt. of the Lord; every requirement of the sacred narrative is supplied, and every incident ill. by the features of the surrounding district."—*Kittó.*
e De. xxxii. 11, 12; Is. lxiil. 9; Ma. xxxiii. 37.
f De. v. 2; xxix. 9.
g Ps. cxxxv. 4; De. vii. 6; Ti. ii. 14.
h Ps. xxiv. 1, 12; i Le. xx. 24-26; Is. lxii. 12; i Co. iii. 17; i Pe. ii. 5, 9; Re. i. 6; v. 9, 10, xx. 6.

Jethro's advice.—When we are over eager in our labors for present good, or what we think good, God sends some rugged Jethro—some warning sickness or calamitous loss, some sorrow that, passing through all our defenses, smites and cleaves our very heart. Not because He grudges our prosperity, or would abate our happiness, but because He would have us rise to that sacred rest and satisfying peace which even adversity cannot take away. He often sends a chastening whose message, if we will hear it, is, "The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear thyself away, and wastefully expend thy life on things which perish as you handle them. Turn ye at my reproof; for why should ye die?"—*S. Cox.*

The difficulties of government.—

Each pretty hand
Can steer a ship becalm'd; but he that will
Govern and carry her to her ends must know
His tides, his currents, how to shift his sails;
What she will bear in foul, what in fair weather;
Where her springs are, her leaks, and how to stop them;
What strands, what shelves, what rocks do threaten her;
The forces, and the natures of all winds,
Gusts, storms, and tempests: when her keel ploughs hell,
And deck knocks heaven, then to manage her
Becomes the name and office of a pilot.—*Ben Jonson.*

25-27. (25, 26) and . . people, etc.,^a see vs. 21, 22. "The 'rulers' were not merely judges, but 'heads' of their respective companies, on the march and in the battle-field (Num. xxxi. 14). Thus the organization was at once civil and military."—*Pulp. Com.* (27) depart, sent away with customary formalities. he . . land,^b Midian, where afterwards Moses met with his son, or brother Hobab.

The co-operation of the laity in the government and work of the Church (vs. 25).—I. By the co-operation of Christian laymen in the practical work of the Church, the clergy are enabled to give more time and thought to the work of public instruction. II. The labors of a layman for the spiritual good of others are sometimes more influential than those of the clergymen, as being gratuitous and unprofessional. III. The combination of lay with clerical agency constitutes an admirable means for carrying the influence of the Church and of religion into the affairs of ordinary life.—*Caird.*

Jethro.—The visit must have formed an important era in Jethro's life, and though we know of no particular authority for the statement of the Chaldee version, that he returned to make proselytes of his children, and of the people of his land, yet nothing would be more natural than that he should endeavor to impart to others the deep religious impressions which had doubtless been made upon his own mind. From Num. x. 29, it would appear that his son Hobab, who probably came with him to the camp, remained with Moses in compliance with his own request.—*Bush.*

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1-6. (1) month, moon. "The month Sivan, corresponding nearly with our June." the . . Sinai, wilderness of Sinai, district at the S. end of peninsula formed by Gulfs of Suez and Akaba, in the midst of wh. is a group of mountains called Horeb, of which one is Sinai. (2) Rephidim, see xvii. 1, 8. pitched, in the plain of Er-Râhah.^c (3) mountain, three mts. Serbal, Jebel-Musal, Ras-es-Sufsâfeh.^d (4) on . . wings,^e (compare Deut. xxxii. 11), where the metaphor is expanded. The strength and might of God's sustaining care, and its loving tenderness, are brought out. brought . . myself, "brought you," i. e., "to Sinai, the mount of God, where it pleases me to reveal myself."—*Pulpit Commentary.* (5) if . . obey . . keep,^f etc., Divine love and favor conditioned. then . . treasure,^g it denotes a possession of which the owner is peculiarly choice, one on which his heart is set, and which he neither shares with others nor resigns to the care of others.—*Bush.* for . . mine,^h to give to whom I will—they alone shall be his "peculiar people" (Deut. xiv. 2). (6) a . . priests,ⁱ a royal priesthood. and . . nation, comprising holy people, laws, institutions.

Deliverance of Israel (vs. 4).—"On eagle's wings." The qualities of the

eagle admirably depict—I. The power with which God had delivered Israel. The eagle the most powerful bird of prey of ancient times. II. The astonishing quickness of this deliverance. The eagle most rapid in flight. III. The majesty which God had displayed in His intervention. The eagle soars the highest, and is the most majestic in its aerial courses. IV. The tender care of God towards Israel. The eagle is one of the most tender of birds to its young. — *Gaussen*.

Mount Sinai.—No fewer than five mountains in different parts of the peninsula had been identified or at least suggested by various writers as the true Sinai, and although the claims of three out of the five were so slight as to have attracted but little notice, the other two viz., Jebel Musa (the Mountain of Moses), situated at about the centre of the peninsula, and Jebel Serbal, some twenty miles further west (Jebel being the Arabic for mountain), had divided between them, though with a preponderance in favor of the former, the support of the great majority of travelers and authorities of eminence in our own and past times. A spacious plain, El Rahah, confronts a precipitous cliff 2,000 feet in height, which forms the north-western extremity or front of that great mountain block called Jebel Musa, which Bedawin and monastic tradition alike point to as the mountain of the law. The appearance of this locality is extremely impressive and grand; so majestic indeed that its natural scenery at once rivets the attention, apart altogether from the sacred associations. No one who examines it with special reference to the Bible account of the proclamation of the law can fail to be struck with its entire accordance with the details of the narrative. The plain derives its name Rahah from its level character; it is flat as the palm (raha) of the open hand. There are fully 400 acres of the plain proper exactly facing the mount and sloping down to it with just such a gentle inclination as would best enable a large number of people to see at once. The area of four hundred acres would accommodate with ease about two millions of spectators at the ample allowance of a square yard each, and besides this there is a considerable further open space extending northward from the watershed or crest of the plain, but still in sight of the mount—the very spot it may be to which the trembling Israelites “removed and stood afar off” when they feared to come nigh unto the cloud and the thick darkness, when they said unto Moses, “Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” — *Pulmer*.

7-9. (7) *came . . people*, that by the elders he might reach the rest laid . . faces, “a Hebraism, meaning simply ‘before them.’” (8) *all . . together*, unanimous acceptance of covenant. *all . . do*, i. e. “we will obey His voice indeed, and keep His covenant” (see vs. 5). (9) *I . . cloud*, dark to be visible, not so bright as to “blind with excess of light.”

The prophet's message and the people's reply (vs. 7, 8). — I. The message: “All the words of the Lord.” 1. Not his own words, but the Lord's. Hence he would feel his responsibility, exercise his memory, and faithfully discharge his trust (He. iii. 2); 2. No alteration of the message: “all the words.” Without exception, addition, or perversion. II. The answer: “all that the Lord hath spoken we will do.” 1. A promise; 2. A unanimous promise; 3. A promise laid before the Lord.

Plain preaching. — A good minister had long preached the same congregation without much apparent good result. It was a source of deep grief of soul to the pastor, who longed to see sinners converted. While studying on the matter one Saturday morning, after he had finished writing his sermon, the thought occurred to him, “Perhaps I shoot too high; I will go down and see if Betty can understand it.” Betty was a pious servant girl. He went to the kitchen, and called Betty to come and hear his sermon. She hesitated. He insisted. She came. He read a few sentences, and asked her, “Do you understand that?” “No.” He repeated the idea in simpler language, and asked if she saw it? — “I see it a little, minister.” He again simplified. She saw it more clearly, and showed deep interest; but said to him, “Plain it a little more.” And once more he simplified. Then she exclaimed with ecstasy, “Now I see it; now I understand it!” He returned to his study, and rewrote his sermon in that simple style that Betty could understand. On Sabbath morning he went to church fearing and trembling, lest his people would be disgusted with his sermon, but fully resolved to try the experiment. He preached it. All was attention as never before. Many eyes were filled with

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“Earth has scarcely an acre that does not remind us of actions that have long preceded our own, and its clustering tombstones loom up like reefs of the eternal shore, to show us where so many human barks have struck and gone down.” — *Chapin*.

“Think what God doth for man; so may'st thou know How God-like service is, and serve a so.” — *W. L. Linton*.

he lays the message before the people, and their reply before God
a De. v. 27; xxvi. 17.
b Ex. xxiv. 15, 16; Ps. xviii. 11, 12; Ma. xvii. 5.
“The minister should preach as if he felt that although the congregation own the church, and have bought the pews, they have not bought him. His soul is worth no more than any other man's, but it is all he has, and he cannot be expected to sell it for a salary. The terms are by no means equal. If a parishioner does not like the preaching, he can go elsewhere and get another pew, but the preacher cannot get another soul.” — *Chapin*

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the people to
come before
God

a Le. xix. 2; Josh.
iii. 5; vii. 13; He
xii. 28, 29.

b Ge. xxxv. 2; He.
x. 22.

c He. xli. 20, 21;
Ro. iii. 20.

d Joel ii. 16; 1 Co.
vii. 5.

"Dr. Stanley speaks of the low line of alluvial mounds at the foot of the cliff of Ras Safsafah as exactly answering to the bounds which were to keep the people off from touching the mount; but the bounds here spoken of were to be set up by Moses."—*Spk. Com.*

God descends
on Sinai

e Re. iv. 5; vii. 5,
xi. 19.

f He. xli. 21.

Nether, beneath,
lower; A.—S. *niz-
thera*, comp. of
nither, below.

g De. iv. 11; xxxiii.
2.

h Pr. lxxviii. 7, 8;
Jud. v. 5; He. xli.
20; Ps. cxliv. 5.

"The whole district is called Horeb in Scripture, which uniformly preserves the distinction between Sinai and Horeb, by using 'on Sinai,' and 'in Horeb.' The preposition upon is frequently used in reference to Sinai, but not once in reference to Horeb,—a clear indication that Sinai was the mountain, and Horeb the region,"—*Bonar*.

warning
against
heedlessness
repeated

i Ex. iii. 5; 1 Sa.
vi. 19.

tears, and sinners began to cry out, "What must I do?" He changed his style of language thenceforth, and the Lord blessed his labors abundantly. — *Beecher*.

10-15. (10) sanctify,^a or "purify them." The Israelites seem to have purified themselves by washing. to-day . . . to-morrow, the fourth and fifth of Sivan, according to the Jewish tradition, the Decalogue having been given upon the sixth.—*Pulp. Com.* let . . . clothes,^b as an outward sign of inward purification. (11) ready, in heart and mind, to hear, remember, and obey. sight . . . people, "that a visible manifestation of the Divine presence is intended appears, from verses 16 and 18."—*Pulp. Com.* (12) bounds . . . about, limits beyond wh. they should not pass. whosoever . . . death,^c vividly to teach the holiness of God and reverence for Him. (13) shot through, transfixed with dart. they . . . mount, *i. e.* those to whom the privilege belonged. (14) Moses, having received these instructions. sanctified . . . clothes, *see vs.* 10. (15) ready . . . day, *etc.*,^d their minds to be wholly absorbed by the work of preparation.

Salutary bounds.—A traveler relates that, when passing through an Austrian town, his attention was directed to a forest on a slope near the road, and he was told that death was the penalty of cutting down one of those trees. He was incredulous until he was further informed that they were the protection of the city, breaking the force of the descending avalanche which, without this natural barrier, would sweep over the homes of thousands. When a Russian army was there and began to cut away the fence for fuel, the inhabitants besought them to take their dwellings instead, which was done. Such, he well thought, are the sanctions of God's moral law. On the integrity and support of that law depends the safety of the universe. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," is a merciful proclamation. "He that offends in one point is guilty of all," is equally just and benevolent. To transgress once is to lay the axe at the root of the tree which represents the security and peace of every loyal soul in the wide dominions of the Almighty.—*Family Treasury*.

16-20. (16) thunders,^e voices. trembled,^f at what they heard and saw; (17) stood . . . mount,^g *see vs.* 12, "between the first tents and the 'fence' which Moses had erected close to the mount. Into this vacant space Moses now led 'the people.'"—*Pulp. Com.* (18) mount . . . smoke, *lit.* "smoked all of it." the . . . greatly,^h terrors of the scene heightened by an actual earthquake. (19) when . . . louder, the preconcerted signal, *vs.* 13. (20) Lord . . . mount, in fire.

The voice of God (vs. 19).—Observe—I. God so heralds His revelations as to leave no room for doubt. Look at—1. The testimony of nature at Sinai; 2. The witnesses for Jesus—angels and a star; 3. The miracles of Jesus. II. This voice spoke fifty days after the Passover, and was commemorated by the apostolic Pentecost. A voice and a tongue—the voice of God and a tongue of fire—were the armament of the Church. By our testimony we conquer. III. God trains us by the Law for the Gospel. First tutelage, then freedom; the letter, then the spirit; Moses, then Christ; the natural, then the spiritual. The law our schoolmaster to lead us to Christ. IV. God's voice indicates some marked movement. 1. At the bush, deliverance; 2. On Sinai, the Law; 3. At Christ's baptism, the entrance on public ministry; 4. At the Transfiguration, the type of coming glory. Learn—"Hear ye Him" in (1) His word; (2) His church; (3) His spirit.—*Fowler*.

Thunder storm at Mount Sinai.—Every ball, as it burst, with the roar of a cannon, seemed to awaken a series of distinct echoes on every side; . . . they swept like a whirlwind among the higher mountains, becoming faint as some mighty peak intervened, and bursting with undiminished volume through some yawning cleft, till the very ground trembled with the concussion. . . . It seemed as if the mountains of the whole peninsula were answering one another in a chorus of the deepest bass. Ever and anon a flash of lightning dispelled the pitchy darkness, and lit up the mount as if it had been day; then, after the interval of a few seconds, came the peal of thunder, bursting like a shell, to scatter its echoes to the four quarters of the heavens, and overpowering for a moment the loud howlings of the wind.—*Stewart*.

21-25. (21) charge, warn. lest . . . gaze,ⁱ in their curiosity forgetting the command. *See vs.* 12. (22) priests, prob. those perh. the firstborn) who

discharged priestly functions before the office itself was definitely established **sanctify . . them,**^a 'the meaning is, that considering the force of their example, the obedience which they were to evince was to be so conscientious that it would be considered a 'sanctification' of themselves in the sight of God. Comp. Lev. x, 3."—*Bush* (24) **away . . down,** God repeats warnings to save His people. Both the *priests* and the people were to be again solemnly warned that it would be death to break through the fence. (25) **spake,** the warning, *see vss. 12, 21.*

Reverential coming before God.—A duty—I. Marked by preparation (*vs. 15*). II. Universally binding: priests as well as people (*vs. 22*). III. To be spiritually discharged. Not in a spirit of idle curiosity (*vs. 21*). IV. Fraught with danger to the careless. Learn the great difference between worship under the law and the gospel. That marked by fear; this by love. Draw nigh with reverence, boldness, yet with godly fear (*He. xii. 18-24*).

Communion with God.—The windows of Somerset House that face the Strand are all double-cased, so as to deaden the roar of the traffic outside. It would be impossible to do mental work unless some such system were adopted. There is but one way to be "in the world and not of it;" it is to be shut in with God, away from the din of its cares, temptations, and strifes. Outside, confusion, hurly-burly; inside, quiet, peace, under the shadow of the Almighty. — *Bib. III.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1-3. (1) **God . . words,**^b God, not Moses, the Author of the Law. "The utterances of Sinai are unlike anything in the entire range of Egyptian literature." (2) **I . . God,** *etc.,*^c He reminds them of what He had done as an incentive to attention and grateful obedience. (3) **thou,** the use of the second person singular indicates that each individual was required to obey. **no . . gods,**^d as objects of love, trust, worship. **before me,**^e in preference to Me, in the place of Me, *lit.* before My face, only one God.

No other gods before me.—1. The help of the true God, Jehovah-Jesus should be sought by us to overthrow our false gods. By that very act we should offer rightful allegiance, and, in so doing, consecrate our life to the rightful service of Him who is our rightful King. 2. How watchful we should be in this earth, where the false gods are not only plenty, but exactly after the fashion of our own depraved hearts! It was said of Athens that at each corner there was a new god, and some have even said that in population Athens had more gods than men. It is so with our unseen gods of the unregenerate heart. They abound with different names and different characters, according to the taste and characters of different men. 3. The Word of God ought to be in our hands all the while. This is the only offensive weapon against our false gods. — *H. Crosby.*

God supplemented.—"No other gods before Me." That is, "No other gods in My presence; in sight of Me." God will not share His sovereignty with any being. And this is the commonest way of breaking this commandment in our day. There is no danger of breaking it through over-loving a fellow-creature, through loving a child, or a wife, or a parent, or a friend, too dearly. It is a frightful error to suppose that. But it is possible for us to think that God's power must be supplemented by man's power, by man's influence, by man's wealth, by man's work. A pastor may lean on God—and a rich member of his congregation; but not without breaking the first commandment. A politician may think that, besides God's favor, he must have popular favor, to give him success. A business man may have it in his mind that public sentiment—even against strict right—must be yielded to in his business, although he believes in God as above all. A parent may feel that fashion and wealth have a power that cannot be dispensed with in giving his child a desirable place in life. A professed Christian may feel that Jesus Christ will save him, if only he does enough for his own salvation. All these are ways of breaking the first commandment; not very uncommon ways, either!—*H. C. Trumbull. I am the Lord thy God.*—A friend calling on the Rev. Ebenezer Erskine, during his last illness, said to him, "Sir, you have given us many good advices; pray, what are you now doing with your own soul?" "I am doing with it," said he, "what I did forty years ago: I am resting on that word, 'I am the Lord thy God;' and on this I mean to die." To another he said, "The covenant is my charter, and if it had not been for that blessed word, 'I am the Lord thy God,' my hope and strength had

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a 2 Sa. vi. 7.

"Turks carefully collect every scrap of paper that comes in their way, because the name of God may be written thereon." — *Richter.*

"My son," said Nushirvan, king of Persia, in the directions of his last will to his successor, "present yourself often at the gate of heaven to implore its succor in your need, but purify your soul beforehand." *Bib. III.*

the moral law
—
first com-
mandment

b De. v. 22.

c Hos. xlii. 4.

d Jer. xxxv. 15; xxv. 6; De. vi. 14; 2 Ki. xvii. 35; xix. 17, 18.

e 1 Co. viii. 5, 6; Eph. iv. 6; Jas. iv. 4.

"There is the same love in the Law as in the Gospel; the difference is only in expression; as when I warn one against venturing into the roaring flood, and when on his leaping madly in, I follow to save him. In the Law, love warns; in the cross it redeems. Both are the true mirror of Him who thus defines His own character.—'God is love.'"—*Guthrie.*

God hath written a law and gospel: the law to humble us, and the gospel to raise us up; the law to convince us of our misery, and the gospel to convince us of His mercy; the law to discover sin, and the gospel to discover faith and Christ.—*J. Mason.*

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th. second
commandment

a De. iv. 16, 18;
xxvii. 15; Ps.
xcvii. 7; Nu.
xxxiii. 52.

b Ex. xxiii. 24;
Josh. xxiii. 7.

c Ex. xxxiv. 14;
De. iv. 24; Is.
xlvi. 11; Josh.
xxiv. 19.

d Jer. ii. 9; Nu.
xiv. 18, 33; Job
xxi. 19; Le. xx. 5;
xxvi. 39-42; 1 Ki.
xxi. 29; Is. xiv. 20,
21; lxv. 6, 7.

e De. vii. 9; Ps.
lxxxix. 34; Jo. xiv.
21; Ro. xi. 28;
Mic. vii. 18-20.

"A man is an om-
nibus in which all
his ancestors are
seated."

He is truly learned
that doeth the will
of God, and for-
saketh his own
will. — *The Imita-
tion of Christ.*

the third
commandment

f De. v. 11; Ps.
xv. 1-5; Ex. xxiii.
1; Le. xix. 12;
xxiv. 16; Ma. v.
33-37.

"Profaneness is a
brutal vice. He
who indulges in
it is no gentleman.
I care not what his
stamp may be in
society. I care not
what clothes he
wears; or what
culture he boasts.
Despite all his re-
finement, the light
and habitual tak-
ing of God's name
betrays a coarse
nature and a brutal
will." — *Chapin.*

A coachman,
pointing to one of
his horses, said to
a traveler, "That
horse, sir, knows

perished from the Lord." A little afterwards he breathed out his soul into the hands of his living Redeemer. Happy the man that is in such a state! Happy the man whose God is the Lord! — *Whitecross.*

4-6. (4) graven, carved. image,^a likeness, representation. of . . . heaven, as heavenly bodies, etc. or . . . earth, as men or animals. or . . . water, fishes, reptiles, etc. The triple division used embraces the whole material universe. The Egyptians worshiped animals and their images. (5) thou . . . them,^b nor even worship Jehovah Himself by means of them. jealous,^c God "will not give his glory to another" (see Isa. xlii. 8, xlviii. 11). He will not suffer any rival for divine honors. visiting, etc.,^d this by the outworking of natural law. (6) mercy, etc.,^e God more abundant in mercy than in wrath. keep . . . commandments, "Thus only is love shown." Compare John xiv. 15-21; 1 John ii. 5; 2 John 6.

The second commandment. — Observe precisely what this second commandment forbids. (1) And, first, negatively: It does not forbid all use of art in worship. For Jehovah Himself commanded Moses to adorn the tabernacle with figures of cherubim, and trees, and flowers, and pomegranates, and bells, and all manner of cunning workmanship. The imaging faculty, or faculty of making images — imagination in the primary sense of the term — is itself a Divine endowment, and must therefore be cultivated. (2) What, then, does the second commandment forbid? It forbids all idolatrous representations of Deity (see John iv. 24). We must worship God according to His nature; His nature is spiritual, and, therefore, we must worship Him spiritually — spirit-wise, not image-wise; for only what is spiritual in us can worship what is spiritual above us. — *Bib. Ill.*

Inherited character. — An old man died a few years ago in the Massachusetts State prison. He was seventy-six years old, and had spent the last eight years of his life in a cell in that gloomy gaol. His wife for years had been a prisoner there too, and so had his daughter, and seven of his sons. Were not "the iniquities of the father visited upon the children?" In that same State, seventy years ago, a good minister died, who for forty-one years had been a beloved pastor over the same church. He was the fourteenth eldest son of that same name and family who had been a preacher of the gospel. Since his death, one hundred of his descendants have been Christians, and eight of his sons and grandsons have also been ministers. Through that blessed family, for many long years, the Great Father of love has been "showing mercy to thousands in them that love Him and keep His commandments." — *Bib. Ill.*

7. take, use, repeat, employ. in vain,^f (1) lightly, frivolously; (2) false oaths; (3) general profanity.

Wrong using of the sacred Name. — This is seen — I. In profane swearing, which betrays absence of right thought towards God — the Almighty Creator, the bountiful Provider, the gracious Redeemer. Men would not so speak of earthly parents, friends, etc. II. In light conversation, as in godless speaking of the book, the day, the works, etc., on which God's name is stamped. This shows irreverence towards the highest, holiest, and best Being. Anon. We want reverence in the house of prayer — reverence in attitude, reverence in demeanor, reverence in worship. — *W. J. Woods.*

Punishment of impiety. — It was near the close of one of those storms that deposit such a volume of snow upon the earth, that a middle-aged man, in one of the southern counties of Vermont, seated himself at a large fire in a log house. He was crossing the Green Mountains from the western to the eastern side; he had stopped at the only dwelling of man, in a distance of more than twenty miles; he was determined to reach his dwelling on the eastern side that day. In reply to a kind invitation to tarry in the house, and not dare the horrors of the increasing storm, he declared that he would go, and that the Almighty was not able to prevent him. His words were heard above the howling of the tempest. He travelled from the mountain valley where he had rested, over one ridge, and one more intervened between him and his family. The labor of walking in the snow must have been great, as its depth became near the stature of a man; yet he kept on, and arrived within a few yards of the last summit, from whence he could have looked down upon his dwelling. But he never reached it. He was found dead near a large tree, partly supported by its trunk; his body bent forward, and his ghastly intent features told the stubbornness of his purpose to overpass that little eminence. The Almighty had prevented him, — the currents of

his life's blood were frozen. For more than thirty years that tree stood by the solitary road, scarred to the branches with names, letters, and hieroglyphics of death, to warn the traveler that he trod over a spot of fearful interest. — *Bib. Treas.*

8—11. The institution of the Sabbath dates, at any rate, from the giving of the manna (ch. xvi. 23). Its primeval institution, which has been thought to be implied in Gen. ii. 3, is uncertain. — *Pulp. Com.* **remember**, implies more than the mere mental act of memory, as it is the only Hebrew word equivalent to our *celebrate* or *commemorate*, importing that it was to be remembered by appropriate observances. — *Bush.* **the . . day,**^a *i. e.* the day of rest (fr. toil, etc.). **to . . holy,**^b *i. e.*, to sanctify or set it apart. (9) **six . . labour,**^c "Thou shalt not labor more than six (consecutive) days." **do . . work,** thy proper, lawful work. So as to have the Sabbath free for the worship and service of God. (10) **but . . day,**^d *i. e.* the seventh day shall be a day of holy rest dedicated to religion. **thou . . work,** save works of necessity and mercy. **thou . . son,** etc., do not employ others on what is unlawful for thyself. **stranger,** proselyte. **that . . gates,** neighbors should share in our privileges. (11) **six days,** etc., see Ge. ii. 2, 3. Two vows assigned for the observance of the Sabbath in the books of the Law. (1) That the work of creation took six days and God rested the seventh and sanctified it. (2) That God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and gave them a time of rest after a time of toil (see Deut. v. 15).

Duties enjoined. — 1. The duty of work. This is man's normal condition. (1) For the soil's sake. Nature's capacities are latent as well as vast, and need the quickening, unfolding, marshalling power of a tireless, and skilful labor. (2) For man's own sake. He who does not use his faculties is as though he had none. Indolence and barbarism go hand in hand. (3) For God's sake. Stewardship. 2. The duty of rest. The seventh day is to be a day of rest for the body, jaded with the toils of the week: a day of rest for the mind, jaded with the cares of the week: a day of rest for the heart, jaded with the griefs of the week. 3. The duty of worship. "Keep it holy." The Sabbath, if I may so say, is God's weekly toll on mankind, the periodical tribute which He demands in token of human fealty. — *G. D. Boardman.*

Result of a weekly rest. — "Tell me," said a gentleman, addressing a clean, tidy cabman, "how is it that some of the men on the stand look so smart on a Monday morning — they have clean shirts, and are much happier-looking than the other men; and their horses are sprightlier, too. What is the cause of the contrast?" "Oh, they are six-day men, sir. They have green plates; their cabs don't run on Sundays; both men and horses have now a weekly rest. That's the reason why they are not jaded like the others, sir." — *Bib. Ill.* **Honoring the Sabbath.** — Dr. Edward W. Hitchcock says: "While I was minister of the American chapel in Paris, General Grant was invited by the President of the Republic of France to occupy the grand stand at 'Le Grand Prix,' the great day of the races, which comes on Sunday. Such an invitation from the chief magistrate of a great nation is an honor which is almost a command. But General Grant, replying in a note to the President, said in substance, 'It is not in accordance with the custom of my countrymen, or with the spirit of my religion, to spend Sunday in this way. I beg that you will permit me to decline the honor.' Instead of accepting the invitation, he attended public worship at the American chapel." — *Bib. Ill.*

O Day most calm, most bright,
The fruit of this, the next world's bud,
The indorsement of supreme delight,
Writ by a Friend, and with His blood;
The couch of time, care's balm and bay!
The week were dark, but for thy light!
Thy torch doth show the way.

Sundays the pillars are
On which heaven's palace arched lies:
The other days fill up the spare
And hollow room with vanities.
They are the fruitful beds and borders
Of God's rich garden; that is bare
Which parts their ranks and orders.

— *George Herbert.*

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when I swear at him." "Yes," replied the traveler; "and so does your Maker." — *Bib. Ill.*

the fourth
commandment

a Ex. xxxi. 13, 14;
Le. xix. 3, 30.

b De. v. 12; Is. lviii. 13.

c Ex. xxiii. 12, xxxi. 15; Le. xxiii. 3; Ex. xxxiv. 21, xvi. 26; Lu. xiii. 14.

d Ezek. xx. 12; Ex. xxxi. 13; Ne. xiii. 16—19.

"Sunday, that day so tedious to the triflers of earth, so full of beautiful repose, of calmness and strength for the earnest and heavenly mind." — *Maria M'Intosh.*

The only worthy obedience is that which is hearty and complete. — *D. C. Hughes.*

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the fifth
command-
menta Ds. v. 16; Ma.
xv. 4; Mk. vii. 10.

b Eph. vi. 2.

"The voice of
parents is the
voice of gods, for
to their children
they are heaven's
lieutenants" —
Shakespeare.

"I do not like pun-
ishments. You
will never torture
a child into duty;
but a sensible
child will dread
the frown of a ju-
dicious mother
more than all the
rods, dark rooms,
and scolding
schoolmistresses in
the universe." —
H. K. White.

the sixth
command-
ment

c Ge. ix. 6; Ma.
xv. 19; Ge. iv. 8-
12; 2 Sa. xii. 9;
Ma. v. 21, 22; 1
Jo. iii. 15; Ro. xii.
9; 1 Pe. iv. 15.

"From the earliest
dawn of policy to
this day, the in-
vention of men
has been improv-
ing the art of mur-
der, from clubs
and stones to the
present perfection
of gunnery." —
Burke.

the seventh
command-
ment

d 2 Sa. xii. 10; Ma.
v. 28; Pr. xxii. 14,
xxxi. 3; Jer. v. 7-9;
Eph. v. 3-7; Col.
iii. 5; 1 Thess. iv.
5-7; 2 Pe. ii. 9-14;
Re. xxi. 8.

"Human brutes,
like other beasts,
find snares and
poison in the pro-
visions of life and
are allured by
their appetites to
their destruc-
tion." — *Swift*.

12. honour,^a respect, esteem, obey. **that . . long,**^b filial obedience not only secures the Divine blessing directly, but tends to lengthen life — (1) By saving youth from perils; (2) and manhood fr. that violation of law to which a spirit of disobedience tends. "The objection that good sons are not *always* long-lived is futile. God governs the universe by general, not by universal laws." — *Pulp. Com.*

Obedience to parents. — I. This commandment is an express and positive injunction of Almighty God to the active exercise of a specified duty, with the promise of a particular blessing attached to it, as a reward. It is "the first commandment with promise." II. Of the importance of the injunction we have further ample evidence in the attention bestowed on it by inspired writers. III. Our Lord Himself has recommended it to all, by the sanction of His own most holy example. — *W. Layng*.

Honoring parents. — A little boy hearing a party of gentlemen applauding the sentiment "an honest man is the noblest work of God," boldly said, "No;" and being asked, "What do you think is the noblest work of God?" said, "My mother." That boy made a good man. Who can doubt it? — *Anec. Illus. of Old Test. Parent and child.* — The command is reflexive. It speaks to the child and says, "Honor;" but in that very word it springs back upon the parent and says, "Be honorable; because in your honorableness your child shall grow reverent." Of all things in this world the soul of a reverent child is the most beautiful and precious, and therefore of all things in this world honorable parents are the most important. One thing cannot be too strongly insisted on. Parental goodness must be genuine and unaffected, of the heart, flowing easily through the life, in order to evoke reverence. — *W. Senior*.

13. kill,^c take life violently or unjustly in the sense usually called murder. The Israelite was told that to take human life is a crime, which God forbids.

The law of mercy. — 1. In preferring the old Prayer Book reading "Thou shalt do no murder," the revisers have done well. Killing may be no murder. The right of self-defense belongs both to the individual and the community. 2. Human life is sacred, but not so sacred as the end for which it is given, viz., that man created in the image of God should do His will. That is the paramount obligation. The will of God may make it right for us to lay down our lives, or right to defend them at the cost of death to others. — *W. T. Woods*.

Refusing to fight a duel. — Colonel Gardiner, having received a challenge to fight a duel, made the following truly noble and Christian reply: "I fear sinning, though you know, sir, I do not fear fighting;" thus showing his conviction of a fact too often forgotten, that the most impressive manifestation of courage is to "obey God rather than man." — *Bib. Ill. Evil of murder.* — It is an awful thing to send a man unprepared into eternity. And hence Shakespeare is, as always, true to human nature, when, in *Hamlet*, he makes the ghost dwell so much on the fact that he was killed —

"With all his sins broad blown,
Unhouselled, unanointed, unannealed,"

— *Gilfillan*.

14. adultery,^d our second duty towards our neighbor is to respect the bond on which the family is based, and that conjugal honor which to the true man is dearer than life.

Sensuality. — 1. Be sure that you keep a narrow watch over your senses. For those are the sluices which, instead of letting in pleasant streams to refresh, do commonly let in nothing but mud to pollute the soul. 2. Addict thyself to sobriety and temperance; and, by these, beat down thy body and keep it in subjection to thy reason and religion. 3. Continually exercise thyself in some honest and lawful employment. Lust grows active when we grow idle. 4. Be earnest and frequent in prayer; and, if thou sometimes joinest fasting with thy prayers, they will be shot up to heaven with a clearer strength. For this sin of uncleanness is one of those devils that goes not out but by fasting and prayer. God is a God of purity. Instantly beg of Him that He would send down His pure and chaste Spirit into thy heart, to cleanse thy thoughts and thy affections from all unclean desires. — *Bp. E. Hopkins*.

Value of purity. — A Greek maid, being asked what fortune she would bring her husband, answered: "I will bring him what is more valuable than

any treasure—a heart unspotted, a virtue without a stain, which is all that descended to me from my parents." No woman could have a more valuable dowry!—*Bib. III.*

15. steal,^a by force or craft deprive another of his property. Our third duty towards our neighbor is to respect his rights in possessions.

The eighth commandment considered in reference to motives and desires.—We will—I. Strongly insist on the controlling influence of motives and desires. II. Lay down as a positive truth that stealing rests not with the mere act—that its guilt is not limited to its notoriety or extent, but is chargeable where, and in a way, little suspected. Instance, the man of business, the man of slander, the self-plunderer. III. Show that this commandment may be broken in respect even to God Himself. Is not the "withholding part of the price" of our obligations to God, be that part small or great, a robbery? IV. Consider how very far short we may be in theory or practice of the true spirit and meaning of this precept.—*Poole.*

An example of honesty.—Speaking of the early American prairie settlements, a modern historian says: "Theft was almost unknown; the pioneers brought with them the same rigid notions of honesty which they had previously maintained. A man in Mancoupin county left his wagon, loaded with corn, stuck in the prairie mud for two weeks near a frequented road. When he returned he found some of his corn gone, but there was money enough tied in the sacks to pay for what was taken.—*Bib. III. Honesty.*—We must resist little temptations. Everything must have a beginning. I remember reading once about a man who was going to be hung for robbery and murder. On the scaffold, he said he began to steal by taking a farthing from his mother's pocket while she was asleep. Many children begin to steal at the sugar-bowl or the cake-basket. To take the smallest thing that does not belong to us, without permission, is stealing. And, then, there is another thing to do: we must pray to God to keep us from temptation.—*R. Newton. True honesty.*—There is an anecdote told of a brave general of the American Revolution, that he one day overheard the remark of a grandson that "he hoped to be middling honest." The old gentleman stopped, turned short upon the speaker, and broke out: "What is that I hear? *Middling honest!* let me never hear again such a word from your lips. *Strictly honest* is the only thing you ought ever to think of being."—*Bib. III.*

16. thou. . . neighbour,^b two kinds of false witness, public and private, either (1) by bearing testimony in a court of justice, or (2) giving currency to false reports in common conversation.

Bearing false witness.—This is done—I. When one commits perjury in a court of justice. The crime of which consists in—1. The injury done to the case prejudiced; 2. The depreciation of the value of judicial swearing; 3. The shaking of public confidence in judicial proceedings. II. When one testifies falsely to character. By which—1. Employers are deceived; 2. The worthy are prevented obtaining an honest livelihood; 3. The unworthy are helped to situations for which they are incompetent or morally disqualified. III. When one aids in the circulation of slander.

The ninth commandment.—This commandment requires us, as the Catechism says, "to keep our tongues from evil-speaking, lying and slandering." Slandering means saying anything that will injure the character of another person. There was a company of ladies once at the house of a clergyman. As he entered the room he heard them speaking in a low voice of an absent friend. "She's very odd," says one. "Yes, very singular, indeed," says another. "Do you know, she often does so and so?" says a third, mentioning certain things to her discredit. The clergyman asked who it was. When told, he said, "Oh yes, she is odd; she's very odd—she's remarkably singular. Why, would you believe it?" he added, in a slow, impressive manner; "she was never heard to speak ill of any absent friend!"—*Bib. III. Scandal.*—The story is told of a woman who freely used her tongue to the scandal of others, and made confession to the priest of what she had done. He gave her a ripe thistle top, and told her to go out in various directions and scatter the seed, one by one. Wondering at the penance, she obeyed, and then returned and told her confessor. To her amazement, he bade her go back and gather the scattered seeds; and when she objected that it would be impossible, he replied, that it would be still more difficult to gather up and

B. c. 1491.

the eighth
commandment

^a Le. xix. 11, 13; De. v. 19; Ex. xxii. 1-4; Pr. xxii. 22, 23; xxviii. 8, 24; Josh. vii. 24; 25; Pr. xxix. 24, xxx. 8, 9; 1 Co. vi. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 6; Eph. iv. 28.

"Virtuosi have been long remarked to have little conscience in their favorite pursuits. A man will steal a rarity who would cut off his hands rather than take the money it is worth. Yet, in fact, the crime is the same."—*H. Walpole.*

"Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind; the thief still fears each bush an officer."—*Shakespeare.*

the ninth
commandment

^b Ex. xxiii. 1; De. v. 20; xix. 16-19; Ps. xv. 1-4

"It is not the many oaths that make the truth, but the plain single vow, that is vowed true."—*Shakespeare.*

"There is nobody so weak of invention that cannot make some little stories to vilify his enemy."—*Addison.*

We must not only not raise a false report, but not take it up. He that raiseth a slander carries the devil in his tongue; and he that receives it carries the devil in his ear.—*T. Watson.*

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the tenth commandment

α De. v. 21; Ma. v. 28; Pr. vi. 27-29; Hab. ii. 9; Ro vii 7; He. xiii. 5; Lu. xii. 15; A.c. xx. 33; Eph. v. 3, 5.

"Covetousness teaches men to be cruel and crafty, industrious and evil, full of care and malice."—*J. Taylor.*

"Of covetousness we may truly say that it makes both the Alpha and the Omega in the devil's alphabet, and that it is the first vice in corrupt nature which moves, and the last which dies."—*South.*

the people are filled with awe

b He. xii. 18 ff.

c De. v. 25-27.

d Is. xlii. 10

e De. vii. 2; xiii. 3.

f Pr. iii. 7; xvi. 6; Ne. v. 15; Ma. x. 28.

g De. v. 5.

"We always believe that God is like ourselves; the indulgent affirm Him indulgent; the stern, terrible."—*Joubert.*

Our loftiest conceptions, embodied in the most costly and precious material forms, must fall short of infinite perfectness. — *W Burrows.*

rules respecting worship

destroy all evil reports which she had circulated about others. Any thoughtless, careless child can scatter a handful of thistle seed before the wind in a moment, but the strongest and wisest man cannot gather them again. — *Bib. III.*

17. covet,^a earnestly desire, long after. "Thou shalt not covet" teaches men that there is One who sees the heart; to whose eyes "all things are naked and open;" hence beware of vain passing wishes, since such may prompt strong and irrepressible desires.

The danger and folly of covetousness.— Consider—I. The sin itself. Although apparently a small sin, it is—1. Against God's commandments; 2. Degrading to the mind; 3. Full of folly. II. The danger arising from indulgence in it. It is the prelude to other and more heinous crimes. We wish for a thing; and then endeavor, by unlawful means, to obtain it. — *R. H. Wilton.*

Riches unsatisfying.— "How strange it is," said a young man one day to Dr. Franklin, "that when men get rich they are just as unsatisfied and anxious to make money as when they were poor." There was a little child playing in the room near them. "Johnny, come here," said Dr. F. The little fellow came up to him, "Here, my man, is an apple for you," said he, handing one from a fruit basket on the table. It was so large that the child could hardly grasp it. He then gave it a second, which filled the other hand; and picking out a third, remarkable for its size, and beauty, he said, "Here's another." The child tried hard to hold his last apple between the other two, but it dropped on the carpet, and rolled away over the floor, "See," said Dr. F., "there is a little man with more riches than he can enjoy, but not satisfied." — *Bib. III.*

The folly of covetousness proved at death.— It is told of Alexander the Great that he gave orders that when he should die his hand should be left outside his coffin, so that his friends might see that, though he had conquered the world, he could take nothing of his conquests into the hereafter. In like manner, the famous Saladin, it is said, ordered a long spear with a white flag attached to it to be carried through his camp bearing this inscription: "The mighty King Saladin, the conqueror of all Asia and Egypt, takes with him, when he dies, none of his possessions except this linen flag for a shroud." — *Bib. III. Covetousness.*—The covetous man pines in plenty—like Tantalus, up to his chin in water, and yet thirsty. — *T. Adams.*

18-21. (18) saw, etc., see xix. 16. they . . off,^b moved by fear and awe, and the warning. (19) speak . . hear, they could endure the voice of Moses. but . . die,^c God's voice, in the midst of thunderings and lightnings, had been fatal in Egypt, and they feared it would prove so to them. (20) fear . . not,^d seasonable encouragement from lips of authority. prove,^e test, try. fear . . faces, stimulated by this spectacle of His majesty and power. that . . not,^f fear of God a preventive of guilt. (21) and . . off, tremblingly obedient. Moses . . near,^g also obedient to the Divine command.

Nearness to God.—Once or twice, at least, in his own life, almost every one of us has found himself face to face with God, and felt how natural it was to be there. And often the question has come, "What possible reason is there why this should not be the habit and fixed condition of our life? Why should we ever go back from it?" And then, as we felt ourselves going back from it, we have been aware that we were growing unnatural again. And as this is the revelation of the highest moments of every life, so it is the revelation of the highest lives; especially it is the revelation of the highest of all lives, the life of Christ. Men had been saying, "Let not God speak to us, lest we die;" and here came Christ, the man—Jesus, the man; and God spoke with Him constantly, and yet He lived with the most complete vitality. And every now and then a great man or woman comes who is like Christ in this. There comes a man who naturally drinks of the fountain and eats of the essential bread of life. Where you deal with the mere borders of things, he gets at their hearts; where you ask counsel of expediences, he talks with first principles; where you say, "This will be profitable," he says, "This is right." And in religion, may I not beg you to be vastly more radical and thorough? Do not avoid, but seek, the great, deep, simple things of faith. — *Phillips Brooks.*

22-26. (22) talked . . heaven, "Ye have seen the manner in which I appeared and spake with you from heaven; that no manner of similitude, no visible figure or form or sculptured semblance, entered into the scene." —

Bush. (23) **silver . . gold**, "Therefore do not think of embodying your conceptions of me in a material image, of silver or of gold. I will have no images or idols, the work of your own hands." — *Bush.* (24) **an . . earth**, (1) Such an altar suited to the need of a wandering people; (2) Prevented them having pride in the work of their hands. **burnt-offerings**, to effect reconciliation. **peace-offerings**, thanksgiving. (25) **if . . stone**,^a stone in some places as easily obtainable as earth in others. **thou . . stone**, *i. e.* carved, with ornamental devices, which might lead to superstition and idolatry. (26) **neither, etc.**, "as the garments of the priests were long and flowing, their ascending a flight of steps might indecorously expose their persons."

The gospel in Exodus.—From these words (*vs.* 24) we learn—I. That God demands from His creature man reverent and intelligent worship. II. That such worship, to be acceptable to God, must always be associated with Divinely-appointed sacrifice. III. That such worship and sacrifice obtain for man the best blessings of heaven." — *F. W. Brown.*

Robes of holiness.—When the saintly John Chrysostom came to his dying day, he asked the brethren to bring him some clean white robes. Throwing aside his soiled garments, he arrayed himself in white, and so awaited his coming Lord. He closed his remarkably pure life, exclaiming, "Glory be to God for all things that happen!"

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1—6. (1) **judgments**,^b the government of the Israelites being a theocracy, all laws, civil and ecclesiastical, were from God. (2) **if . . servant**,—(*a*) he being in debt,^c or (*b*) having committed theft.^d Every Israelite was free born, but slavery existed under certain restrictions by reason of poverty and crime. **six . . serve**,^e in point of fact it was his labor for the time being, and not the man himself that was purchased. **seventh . . nothing**,^f however short the time before that seventh year when his bondage commenced. (3) **if . . married, etc.**, very diff. this fr. recent slave-laws. (4) **if . . wife**, she being a bondwoman her master's claim not lost by this gift. (5) **if . . say**, it was for the servant and not for the master to decide. **I . . children**, his fetters were those of love and self-imposed. **I . . free**, his continued bondage should be his own voluntary act. (6) **then . . judges**,^g who shall be assured by the servant himself that he acts of his own free will. **bore . . aul**,^h a common mark of slavery in the old timesⁱ (see Deut. xv. 17).

Hebrew slavery.—It was altogether different from modern slavery in—I. The circumstances under which it was entered, which were threefold.—1. Crime (see xxii. 3); 2. Debt, or poverty; 3. Conquest by war. II. The time during which it lasted. Not for life, but till the next Sabbatical year. III. The condition on which it was left or renewed. Provisions made for voluntary action of the bondman. *Servants for life.*—Do you mean to be bound for life? Christians, do you really mean it? Come, sit ye down, and count the cost. 1. And, first, let your ears be bored with the sharp awl of the Saviour's sufferings. No story wrings a Christian's heart with such anguish as the griefs and woes of Christ. The bleeding Lamb enthralls me. I am His, and His for ever. That is one way of marking the ear. 2. Next, let your ear be fastened by the truth, so that you are determined to hear only the gospel. The gospel ought to monopolize the believer's ear. 3. Furthermore, if you really give yourself to Christ, you must have your ear opened to hear and obey the whispers of the Spirit of God, so that you yield to His teaching, and to His teaching only. — *Spurgeon.*

Love for a master.—In the latter days of Sir Walter Scott, when poverty stared him in the face, he had to announce to his servants his inability to retain them any longer. But they begged to be allowed to stay, saying they would be content with the barest fare if only they might remain in his employ. This was permitted, and they clung to him until the last. — *H. O. Mackey.*

7—11. (7) **sell . . maidservant**,^k *i. e.* sell her services, compelled by poverty. *Selling persons* under the Mosaic law was simply equivalent to *selling one's services.* — *Bush.* **she . . do**, but on better terms. (8) **if . . master**,^l *lit.* if she be evil in the eyes of her master, *i. e.* wanting in personal attractions, etc. **who . . himself**, the service being prob. entered on that condi-

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^a De. xxvii. 5; Josh. viii. 30, 31.

"Everything holy is before what is unholy; guilt presupposes innocence; angels, but not fallen ones, were created. Hence man does not properly rise to the highest, but first sinks gradually down from it, and then afterwards rises again; a child can never be considered too innocent and good." — *Richter.*

laws relating to civil matters — slaves

^b Ex. xxiv. 3, 4; De. iv. 14; vi. 1.

^c Le. xxv. 39.

^d Ex. xxii. 3.

^e De. xv. 12; Jer. xxxiv. 14; i Co. vi. 20.

^f Ro. vi. 17, 18; Gal. v. 1.

^g De. xvi. 18; Ps. xv. 4.

^h Ps. xl. 6.

ⁱ Xenophon, *Anab.* III. i. 31; *Plautus Pœn.* V. ii. 21; *Juvenal*, I. 104.

^k *Aul*, old spelling = *awl*. It is *aul* in the A. V. of 1611.

"We must truly serve those whom we appear to command; we must bear with their imperfections, correct them with gentleness and patience, and lead them in the way to heaven." — *Fénelon.*

^l Ne. v. 5.

^m Mal. ii. 14, 15; De. xxi. 14.

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a Ex. xxii. 17.

b 1 Co. vii. 8, 5.

"If idleness be the root of all evil, then matrimony is good for something, for it sets many a poor woman to work."
— *Vanbrugh*.

"He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity."
— *Bacon*.

murder and manslaughter

c Ge. ix. 5, 6; Le. xxiv. 17; Nu. xxxv. 30, 31; Ma. xxvi. 52.

d Nu. xxxv. 22-25.

e De. xix. 3; Nu. xxxv. 10, 11; Josh. xx. 2; 1 Sa. xxiv. 4, 9, 10, 17, 18; Ma. x. 29, 30.

f Nu. xv. 30; xxxv. 20.

g De. xix. 11, 12; 1 Ki. ii. 28-34; He. x. 26.

kidnapping

h 1 Ti. i. 9.

i De. xxiv. 7; Ge. xxxvii. 28.

k Le. xx. 9; Pr. xx. 20; Ma. xv. 4; Mk. vii. 10.

"I think it must somewhere be written that the virtues of mothers shall, occasionally, be visited on their children, as well as the sins of fathers." — *Dickens*.

tion. **redeemed**, (a), by her father or kindred; or (b) by entering the service of another. (9) if . . **son**, etc.,^a i. e. shall treat her as a free person, giving her dowry, etc. (10) if . . **wife**, in addition to this bondwoman. **her . . diminish**,^b i. e. she shall not in any sense suffer thereby. (1¹) **three**, not the "three" points of the latter part of ver. 10; but one of the three courses laid down in vers. 8, 9, and 10. — *Pulp. Com.*

Degraded condition of girls in Africa. — The condition of girls in Africa is thus described by a missionary: "A father looks upon his girl as being of the value only of so many goats, and he is ready to sell her as soon as any man offers him the required payment. Thus, while she is quite young — perhaps only four or five — her life and liberty may have been sold away by her own father, and sooner or later she must become the wife, the slave, the drudge of her owner. While at Mayumba, near the mouth of the Congo river, I one afternoon heard a child screaming frantically behind the house where I was staying, and going out I found a little Bavilla girl, not more than four years old, who had just been brought down the lagoon from her home away in the Mamba hills, where she had been bought by a Mayumba man. The crew of the canoe in which she had been brought down — six big, fierce-looking men — were standing around the little prisoner, pointing their guns and spears at her just for the sport of seeing her shake and scream with fright; and a band of women were dancing with wild delight at the heartless game. It was possible to save the poor child from the cruel treatment just then, but that was only the beginning of a lifetime of suffering for her in the midst of a strange people, with no friend at hand to help or protect her." — *Bib. Ill.*

12-14. (12) **he . . man**, deliberately. **shall . . death**,^c punishment for wilful murder. (13) if . . **wait**,^d premeditating assassination. **but . . hand**, accidentally as we should say: case of manslaughter. **then . . thee**, the place divinely-appointed alone safe. **whither . . flee**,^e until the case shall have been "tried before the men of his own city (Num. xxxv. 22-25)." (14) **presumptuously**,^f proudly, with a high hand. **to . . guile**, craftily killing him. **thou . . altar**,^g to wh. he may have fled for protection; no official sanctity allowed to screen the wilful murderer from justice. — *Bush*. **that . . die**, his intention to kill being clearly established.

Retaliation. — When that old bearded sheik of all the Bedaween of Sinai, sitting under the shadow of a great rock in the desert, explained to us the operations of the *lex talionis* in his tribe, he set before us not only that which now is, but that which has been from the very beginning of time. It was somewhat startling, indeed, to find that laws and customs which we had supposed to belong only to an extreme antiquity still lingered among these mountains and deserts. The avenger of blood might follow with swift foot upon the murderer's track, and if he overtook him and put him to death the law held him free. But at the same time it gave the criminal a chance for his life. In the cities of refuge the manslayer was safe until he could have a fair trial. — *H. M. Field*.

15-17. [In addition to murder the three following crimes were punishable with death,] (15) **that . . mother**,^h though he might not kill. **shall . . death**, there is no parallel punishment in any known code. How heinous, therefore, is the crime of the parricide. (16) **he . . man**,ⁱ i. e. an Israelite stealing an Israelite; kidnapping (ill. by state of things on Zanzibar coast, and among the islands of Polynesia). **and . . him**, making a gain by a vile traffic; the slave-dealer. **if . . hand**, having stolen or bought him; the slave-holder. **he . . death**, slavery classed with murder. (17) **he . . mother**,^k violation of filial duty and respect. Such conduct subjected the offender to capital punishment, because it implied the utmost degree of depravity. — *Bush*.

Respect for parents. — George Washington, when quite young, was about to go to sea as a midshipman. Everything was in readiness. His trunk had been taken on board the boat, and he went to bid his mother farewell, when he saw tears filling her eyes. Seeing her distress, he turned to the servant, and said, "Go and tell them to fetch my trunk back. I will not go away to break my mother's heart." His mother, struck with his decision, said to him, "George, God has promised to bless the children that honor their parents, and I believe He will bless you."

18-21. (18) if . . together, in a quarrel. and . . bed, having received a severe personal injury. (19) walk . . staff, be clearly recovering. he . . quit, free of the charge and the punishment of murder or manslaughter. he . . time, shall pay what if in health he would have earned. and . . healed, defray the charges for medical attendance. (20) if . . rod,^a chastising for a fault. he . . hand, being brutally ill-treated. he . . punished, punishment prob. determined by the judges. (21) if . . two, not beaten to death; no intention to kill. for . . money, the loss of wh. would be itself a punishment.

Homicide. — Dr. Leland writes concerning the Spartans, that nothing could exceed their cruelty to their serfs — their helots, as they called them. Not only did they treat them in their general conduct with great harshness and insolence, but it was part of their policy to massacre them on several occasions in cold blood, and without provocation. Several authors have mentioned their *krupia* — so called from their lying in ambuscade in thickets and clefts of rocks, from which they issued out upon the serfs, and killed all they met. Sometimes they set upon them in the open day, and murdered the ablest and stoutest of them as they were in the fields at work. But English and American writers have been forced to admit the record of many such homicides in more modern times. Murdered "Uncle Toms" are no myths. — *Adamson.*

22-27. (22) and . . child, the wife of one interfering to part them. so . . her, miscarriage, premature birth. yet . . follow, no fatal result to the woman. according . . him, he shall state the amount of compensation. he . . determine,^b but in order that his demand might not be unreasonable, it was subject to the final decision of the judges. — *Bush.* (23) if . . follow, etc., punishment shall follow as for manslaughter, or in proportion to the mischief done. (24, 25) eye . . eye,^c *lex talionis*: or, law of like for like, "a principle acted upon by all primitive people," prob. not so much for retribution as compensation. (26, 27) he . . eyes's sake . . tooth's sake, i. e. he shall suffer punishment for his cruelty by the loss of his property.

Slave-rights. — We have heard a slave argue for his emancipation on the score of the accidental loss of an eye, in his master's service, from the recoil of a branch of a tree, and appeal to a traditionary law which entitles him to this compensation. — *Cruikshank.*

God gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By His donation; but man over man
He made not lord; such title to Himself
Reserving, human left from human free. — *Milton.*

Among so many can He care?
Can special love be everywhere?
I asked: my soul bethought of this;
In just that very place of His
Where He hath put and keepeth you,
God hath no other thing to do! — *Mrs. Whitney.*

28-32. (28) ox, domestic animal: responsibility of owner. gore, pierce, i. e. with the horn. then . . stoned, to induce carefulness in training and guarding of animals. his . . eaten, for the greater punishment of the owner. but . . quit, free from fine and punishment. (29) wont, accustomed. and . . owner, so knows it is a dangerous animal. he . . in, being reckless of consequences. but . . woman, wh. prudence might have prevented. ox . . stoned, to prevent further injuries. owner . . death, in punishment for his reckless neglect. (30) if . . money,^d capital punishment being commuted for a fine, through lack of distinct evidence of carelessness. (31) son . . daughter, children under age. according . . him, i. e. acc. to the principle of this law shall he be dealt with. (32) give . . silver,^e in lieu of a varying fine, the average price of a slave, thirty shekels of silver, was appointed to be paid in all cases. — *Pulp. Com.* As a penalty for carelessness and a compensation to the owner.

Negligence. — Neglect is enough to ruin a man. A man who is in business need not commit forgery or robbery to ruin himself; he has only to neglect his business, and his ruin is certain. A man who is lying on a bed of sickness need not cut his throat to destroy himself: he has only to neglect the means

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accidental
injuries and
compensation

^a Le. xxv. 45, 46;
Eph. vi. 9.

"It is an effect of sin that it uniformly works in the direction of unfitting men to receive God's love. Every transgression deprives us, in some degree, of power to receive God's truth, and make it our own." — *Bib. Ill.*

lex talionis

^b Ex. xxi. 30.

^c Le. xxiv. 20; De. xix. 21; Ma. v. 38.

"I expect to pass through this world but once. If, therefore, there is any help that I can give, let me give it now, for I shall not pass this way again." — *Amiel's Journal.*

criminal
carelessness
—
vicious ox

^d Ge. ix. 5; Nu. xxxv. 31.

^e Ma. xxvi. 15; Zech. xi. 12; Phil. ii. 7.

"A little neglect may breed great mischief; for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a

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horse the rider was lost being overtaken and slain by an enemy, all for want of care about a horse-shoe nail." — *Franklin*.

uncovered pit, etc.

"Let us do our duty in our shop or our kitchen, the market, the street, the office, the school, the home, just as faithfully as if we stood in the front rank of some great battle, and we knew that victory for mankind depended on our bravery, strength and skill. When we do that the humblest of us will be serving in that great army which achieves the welfare of the world." — *The o. Parker*.

of restoration, and he will be ruined. A man floating in a skiff above Niagara need not move an oar, or make an effort to destroy himself; he has only to neglect using the oar at the proper time, and he will certainly be carried over the cataract. Most of the calamities of life are caused by simple neglect. Let no one infer that, because he is not a drunkard or an adulterer or a murderer, therefore he will be saved. Such an inference would be as irrational as it would be for a man to infer that, because he is not a murderer; his farm will produce a harvest; or that, because he is not an adulterer, therefore his merchandise will take care of itself. — *Barnes*.

33-36. (33) pit . . it, during construction, being carelessly left open, the pit or cistern. (34) give . . them, the value of the living animal. and . . his, to whom the cistern belonged. (35) then . . ox, whose owner shall lose half the value. dead . . divide, *i. e.* share the loss by the accident. (36) he . . ox, to the owner of the ox killed. and . . own, *i. e.* a hide in the place of a living animal: a fine for carelessness in not keeping in a vicious ox.

Carelessness (vs. 33, 34). — Evils are wrought by want of thought, as well as by want of heart. I. Sin of him who leaves the pit open: a selfish and heedless disregard of the rights and personal safety of others. Apply this not only to pits literally (as open traps, doors, etc.), but to professions and callings which are as pits. The gin-palace keeper should be compelled to write up: "An open pit here." Keepers of brothels should be forced to have for their sign, "The way to the pit." II. Folly of him who, knowing there are such pits in the world, walks into them with his eyes open. He is to be blamed, while the man who falls down a trap door in a dark passage, may be pitied.

A needful warning. — On a cold Sabbath morning in February, a gentleman was walking along, somewhat hastily, through the snow. He noticed a bright-looking little lad standing upon the pavement, with his cap in his hand and his eyes fixed upon one spot on the sidewalk. As he approached him he looked up to him, and pointing to the place said, "Please don't step there, sir, I slipped there and fell down." What a different world this would be if all Christians were as particular as this lad to warn others against dangers, whether temporal or spiritual. — *Christian Herald*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

theft, house-breaking

a 2. Sa. xli. 6; Lu. xix. 8.

"The first step towards greatness is to be honest, says the proverb; but the proverb fails to state the case strong enough. Honesty is not only 'the first step towards greatness, — it is greatness itself.' — *Bovee*.

1-4. (1) five . . sheep, greater restitution for an ox, bec. it was more necessary for use. The property of the Israelites in the wilderness was largely in cattle. (2) thief . . up, *lit.* digging through, burglary. be . . die, justifiable homicide. (3) sun . . him, daylight; the burglar visible, his intention perceived. there . . him, under such conditions killing would be murder. for . . restitution, the burglar recognized might be punished, "his punishment, like that of other thieves," to restore double. then . . theft, *i. e.* he might have been sold "as a slave for the usual term." (4) theft, thing stolen. alive, if dead, see vs. 1.

Substitutionary retribution. — A coal merchant in one of our American cities was approached by a minister in regard to the salvation of his soul. The merchant declared it an impossibility for him ever to become a Christian. He gave as a reason his mode of business. For a long term of years, he had, according to a too general custom, given short weight. He had thus grown rich, and now felt the inconsistency of seeking religion without restitution. This was impossible: many of his customers were dead, others beyond his knowledge. The thought of the poor who had paid for coal they had never received rested heavily on him. He asked the minister if he thought the substitution of a gift to the poor would be acceptable to God. The minister advised him to try it. A large donation, more than equal in amount to his unjust gains, was made, and the merchant sought God in earnest. — *Bib. Ill.*

trespass

5, 6. (5) cause . . eaten, "to be browsed upon," case of trespass. shall . . beast, *etc.*, case of fraud or carelessness. restitution, compensation. (6) kindleth . . restitution, punishment for carelessness.

"That which is won ill will never wear well, for there is a curse attends it, which will waste

Honesty. — In the war in Germany, a captain of cavalry was out on a foraging party. On perceiving a cottage in the midst of a solitary valley, he went up and knocked at the door. Out came a Herrnhuter (better known by the name of United Brethren), with a beard silvered by age. "Father," says

the officer, "show me a field where I can set my troopers a-foraging." "Presently," replied the Herrnhuter. The good old man walked before, and conducted them out of the valley. After a quarter of an hour's march, they found a fine field of barley. "There is the very thing we want," says the captain. "Have patience for a few minutes," replied his guide, "you shall be satisfied." They went on, and at a distance of about a quarter of a league farther, they at length reached another field of barley. The troop immediately dismounted, cut down the grain, trussed it up, and remounted. The officer, upon this, said to his conductor, "Father, you have given yourself and us unnecessary trouble—the first field was much better than this." "Very true, sir," replied the good old man, "but it was not mine." This stroke goes directly to the heart. I defy an atheist to produce anything to be compared to this. And surely he who does not feel his heart warmed by such an example of exalted virtue, has not yet acquired the first principles of moral taste. — *Anec. on Old Test.*

7-13. (7) **stuff**, *i. e.* movables. **thief . . double**, the custodian being absolved fr. blame. (8) **master . . house**, in such case open to suspicion. **whether . . goods**, the depositary being put upon his oath. (9) **whom . . neighbours**,^a (a) he who, professing to have lost, shall have unjustly accused another of finding and retaining, shall make compensation for the unjust accusation; (b) he who had found and retained a missing article shall compensate its owner (10) **man . . it**, there being no witness. (11) **oath**,^b *etc.*, see *vs.* 8. In that case, if the man to whom the animal was entrusted would swear that he was no party to its disappearance, the owner had to put up with the loss. — *Pulp. Com.* (12) **if . . him**, the thief being found. **he . . thereof**,^c since with proper care the theft might have been prevented. (13) **let . . witness**, proof, evidence. **he . . torn**, having been reasonably vigilant.

Concerning borrowing. — Learn: 1. On the one hand — (1) To be obliging. If you can do a needy neighbor a good turn by lending advice or material assistance, do so. (2) Don't make your needy but obliged neighbor answerable for any accident that may occur through your own misfortune or fault. 2. On the other hand — (1) Be careful not to abuse that which is in kindness lent you; or — (2) Forget to return it, and thus render evil for good. Book-borrowers should note this. But — (3) Rather both in principle (2 Kings vi. 5) and in action suffer the loss than inflict it. — *J. W. Burn.*

14, 15. (14) **owner . . it**,^d the borrower is to make good the loss to the owner. (15) **owner . . it**, and therefore its custodian. **hired . . hire**, *i. e.*, for a price agreed upon, the owner not entitled to compensation.

The honest cabman. — One day, while he was Chancellor, Lord Eldon took a hackney coach to convey him from Downing-street, where he had been attending a cabinet, to his own residence. Having a pressing appointment, he alighted hastily from the vehicle, leaving papers containing important government secrets behind him. Some hours after, the driver discovered the packages, and took them to Hamilton-place unopened, when his lordship desired to see the coachman, and, after a short interview, told him to call again. The man called again, and was then informed that he was no longer a servant, but the owner of a hackney coach, which his lordship had in the meantime given directions to be purchased, and presented to him, together with three horses, as a reward for his honor and promptitude.

16, 17. (16) **endow . . wife**,^e pay the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver (see Deut. xxii. 29.) for his sanction of the marriage and with the father's consent marry the girl and be faithful to her. (17) **father . . refuse**, *wh.* even in such cases he might, for various reasons. **according . . virgins**,^f suited to her station in life.

Want of wariness. — Flamingoes are very shy and timid birds, and shun all attempts of man to approach them; the vicinity of animals, however, they disregard. Any one who is acquainted with this fact can take advantage of it by dressing himself up in the skin of a horse or an ox. Thus disguised, the sportsman may get close to them and shoot them down at his ease. They are taken in by appearances. Shy, beautiful, and harmless, the unfortunate bird meets destruction simply for want of wariness. Many a lovely human being with the like qualities has met her doom for want of that same trait. — *Scientific Illustrations.*

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it; and the same corrupt dispositions which incline men to the sinful ways of getting will incline them to the like sinful ways of spending." — *M. Henry.*

things put in trust

^a De. xxv. 1; 2 Ch. xix. 10.

^b 1 Ki. ii. 43; He. vi. 16.

^c Ge. xxxi. 39.

"I have known a vast quantity of nonsense talked about bad men not looking you in the face. Don't trust that conventional idea. Dishonesty will stare honesty out of countenance any day in the week if there is anything to be got by it." — *Dickens.*

things borrowed

^d 2 Ki. vi. 5.

"It should seem that indolence itself would incline a person to be honest, as it requires infinitely greater pains and contrivance to be a knave." — *Shenstone.*

seduction

^e De. xxii. 29.

^f Ge. xxxiv. 12.

"The pleasantest part of a man's life is generally that which passes in courtship, provided his passion be sincere, and the party beloved kind with discretion. Love, desire, hope, all the pleasing emotions of the soul, rise in the pursuit." — *Addison.*

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witchcraft, etc.

a Le. xix. 26, 31; xx. 27; De. xviii. 10, 11; 1 Sa. xxviii. 3, 9; Gal. v. 19, 20; Re. xxii. 15.
b Le. xviii. 20-23; xx. 15.
c De. xiii. 1-15; 1 Co. xvi. 22.
d Ex. xxiii. 9; Le. xix. 33; xxv. 35; De. x. 19; Jer. vii. 6, 7; Zech. vii. 10; Mal. iii. 5.

"The nature of idolatry. A giving to something below God of that worship which is due to God alone. It may be outward, or inward; an act of the body, or an act of the mind."

widows and orphans

e De. x. 18; xxiv. 17, 18; xxvii. 19; 1s. i. 17, 23; x. 2; Ezek. xxii. 7; Ps. cxlv. 6-10; Jas. i. 27.
f Job xxxiv. 28; Ps. xviii. 6; xclv. 19; Jas. v. 4; Lu. xviii. 7.
g Job xx. 23; Ps. lxi. 24; cix. 9; Lam. v. 3.

pledges, usury

h Le. xxv. 36, 37; De. xxiii. 19, 20; Ne. v. 7; Ps. xv. 5; Ezek. xviii. 8, 9.

i De. xxiv. 6, 12, 13, 17.

k Ex. xxxiv. 6; 2 Ch. xxx. 9; Ps. lxxvi. 15.

God sees that no one is so much profited as ourselves by those gifts to His poor, which are corrective of self-indulgence, expansive of our noblest sympathies and educative of our highest nature. — *Christian Age*.

18—21, (18) **witch**,^a R. V., "sorceress;" one who either had to do w. evil powers or pretended to. (19) **whosoever**,^b etc., a crime of almost inconceivable magnitude. to wh. the Canaanites were addicted. (20) **he . . god**,^c paying Divine homage to an idol. **save . . only**, the sole object of true worship. (21) **vex**,^d afflict, distress. **for . . Egypt**, your own past experience should teach you tenderness toward strangers.

Civility to strangers (vs. 21). — I. Whence it should arise. From — 1. Proper human feelings; 2. A desire to make those who are away from home feel at home; (3) The consideration of what we may be, if not of what we have been (as case of Israel in Egypt). II. Opportunities for its exercise. — 1. Kindness to servants — stranger within thy gates; 2. Kindness to strange visitors to God's house; 3. Kindness to travelers, showing them the best way to their destination; 4. Children to be kind to strange scholars; 5. Kindness to new neighbors.

Witchcraft. — The punishment of witchcraft was commanded in the Jewish law, B. C. 1491, — "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Saul, after banishing or condemning witchcraft, incurred the wrath of God by consulting the witch of Endor, 1056 B. C. But it must be recollected that God was then the real King of Israel, and manifested His will to His people visibly. The Church of Rome subjected persons suspected of the crime to the most cruel torments. In tens of thousands of cases the victims, often innocent, were burned alive, whilst others were drowned by the test applied; for if, on being thrown into a pond, they did not sink, they were presumed to be witches, and either killed on the spot, or reserved for burning at the stake. — *Hayden*.

22—24. (22) **widow . . child**,^e taking advantage of their weak and friendless state. (23) **I . . cry**,^f (see Ps. lxviii. 5.) (24) **wives . . fatherless**,^g therefore treat widows and orphans as you would have others treat your survivors.

Adoption of orphans. — A sergeant and his wife in India, having no children, adopted first an orphan babe, then a little native child left uncared for. Afterwards, two orphans more were added to their family, making four in all. The regiment was ordered to march about two hundred miles. "What will you do now with your adopted family?" asked a lady of the sergeant's wife. "You will have to leave them behind." — "Leave my children!" said this noble-hearted woman. "No, never! They shall all go with us; we could not part with one of them."

25—27. (25) **my . . thee**, God cares for the poor. **usurer**, one who takes interest. **neither . . usury**,^h "in Scripture usury means simply interest," money for the use of the loan. (26) **take . . pledge**,ⁱ for loan of money or provisions. **thou shalt, etc.**, even though the loan be not repaid. (27) **wherein . . sleep?** to this day the poor often sleep wrapped in a sort of large woolen shawl. It serves the Bedouins as robe by day, and as coverlet by night. — *Pulp. Com.* **that . . hear**,^k I will avenge the poor.

Regard for the poor and needy. — While General Grant was President of the United States, he was at one time the guest of Marshall Jewell at Hartford, Conn. At a reception tendered him by the Governor, where all the prominent men of the State were gathered, a roughly-penciled note, signed by a woman, was handed him. It was put into his hands by a young politician. "You need not bother about her; I sent her away — told her you were not here to be bored," the young man said to Grant. The President's answer much surprised the politician. "Where is this woman; where can I find her?" he inquired, hurrying from the room. The letter he held in his hand, written poorly in pencil, told a sorrowful story. It said in substance: "My son fought in your army, and he was killed by rebel bullets while fighting for you. Before he died he wrote me a letter which told how noble a man you were, and said you would look out for his mother. I am poor, and I haven't had money or influence to get anybody interested in me to get a pension. Dear General, will you please help me for my dead boy's sake?" Sadly the woman had turned away from the mansion, her last hope dead. A servant pointed her out to President Grant, walking slowly up the street. The old soldier overtook her quickly. She was weeping, and turned towards him a puzzled face as he stopped her and stood bareheaded in the moonlight beside her. The few words the great, kind man spoke turned her tears into laughter, her sorrow into joy. The pension before refused her came to her speedily, and her last days were spent in comfort. — *Christian Age*.

28-31. (28) gods, *R. V.*, "God." curse,^a vilify, speak evil of. (29) first,^b *R. V.*, "the abundance." liquors, *i.e.* wine and oil. firstborn . . me,^c *see* xiii. 2. (30) seven . . dam,^d this prob. for the mother's sake. (31) neither . . field,^e even by their diet, as well as higher things, they were to be distinguished from the nations around them.

The first ripe fruits (*vs.* 29). — Notice — I. The signs of the ripe fruits fit for God and heaven. 1. Fulness; 2. Color; 3. Fragrance; 4. Tenderness and softness. II. How they become such. 1. They must be planted in suitable soil; 2. There must be spiritual cultivation; 3. They must have heavenly sunshine; 4. There must be rain and dew. Conclusion — (1) The harvest is approaching; (2) Are we becoming fit for the garner? (3) Some fruits ripen very early. — *Burns*.

Gratitude-Gifts. — St. Paul stamps the sin of ingratitude to God as peculiarly heinous, when he says of the heathen (*Rom. i.*) that they were not thankful. Seneca — between whom and St. Paul some suppose that there was personal intercourse — says: "We are thankful to a friend for a few acres of land only, or for a little money; and yet for the possession of the whole earth, which God has given us, we care not to testify any grateful returns." The English proverb declares a humiliating axiom: "The river passed, and God is forgotten." The Italian form of it sounds a still sadder depth of ingratitude: "The peril passed, the saint mocked." Mandrabelus the Samian, having vowed to the goddess Juno a golden ram if she disclosed to him a certain mine, the Greek story runs that under her auspices and direction he was the discoverer. Once in possession, however, his votive-offering of a golden ram dwindled down into a silver one; that again for a brass one; and at last nothing at all. — *Adamson*.

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reverence,
gratitude,
holiness

^a Jude 8; Eccl. x. 20; Ro. xiii. 4; Ti. iii. 1; Ac. xxiii. 5. ^b Pr. iii. 9, 10; Ex. xxiii. 16, 19; Mal. iii. 10.

^c Ex. xxxiv. 19. ^d Le. xxii. 27; De. xv. 19.

^e Ezek. xlv. 31; Le. xiii. 8; Ezek. iv. 14.

Does not God want those lovely and precious fruits which grow on the household vine? The only true dedication of children to God is that Christian nurture which leads to their dedicating themselves. — *R. B. Brindley*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

1-3. (1) not . . report,^f not take up, repeat or circulate slander. put false reports, . . witness,^g "join not hands" to take part in plots. (2) thou . . evil, evil fash-
etc.,^h *lit.* "thou shalt not follow the many to do evil; neither shalt thou bear witness in a cause so as to incline after the many to pervert justice; *i.e.*, do not pursue a wrong thing bec. many others do. (3) countenance weakness
cause,ⁱ *i.e.*, simply bec. he is poor. Do right, without swerving to favor the rich or the poor.

Punishment of the slanderer. — I. He is excluded from religious fellowship (*Ps. xv. 3*). 2. He is the object of Divine vengeance (*Ps. x. 5*). 3. He is exposed to the contempt of mankind (*Prov. x. 18*). 4. He is excluded from the kingdom of heaven (*Rev. xxii. 15*). In conclusion — 1 *Exod. xx. 16*; 2 *Matt. xviii. 15*; and 3. *Gal. vi. 1*. — *J. W. Burn*.

Description of Calumny. — Apelles painted her thus: There sits a man with great and open ears, inviting Calumny, with his hand held out, to come to him; and two women, Ignorance and Suspicion, stand near him. Calumny breaks out in a fury; her countenance is comely and beautiful, her eyes sparkle like fire, and her face is inflamed with anger; she holds a lighted torch in her left hand, and with her right twists a young man's neck, who holds up his hands in prayer to the gods. Before her goes Envy, pale and nasty; on her side are Fraud and Conspiracy; behind her follows Repentance, clad in mourning, and her clothes torn, with her head turned backwards, as if she looked for Truth, who comes slowly after. — *A. Tooke*.

4-7. (4) surely . . again,^k thus do good to an enemy. (5) wouldest . . treatment of
him, as the first motion of a resentful spirit. thou . . him,^l conquering thy- enemies,
self. (6) wrest, pervert. thy . . cause,^m comp. with *vs. 3. i.e.* do not favor justice to the
him if wrong, nor be adverse if right. (7) keep . . matter, do not counte- poor
nance it by word or deed. innocent . . not,ⁿ however powerful their
oppressors.

The example of Euclid. — Euclid, a disciple of Socrates, having offended his brother, the brother cried out in a rage, "Let me die, if I am not revenged on you one time or other;" to whom Euclid replied, "And let me die, if I do not soften you by my kindnesses, and make you love me as well as ever." What a reproof to unforgiving professors of Christianity. *Aristides in judgment*. — Aristides, being judge between two private persons, one of them declared that his adversary had greatly injured Aristides. "Relate rather, good friend,"

^a Jude 8; Eccl. x. 20; Ro. xiii. 4; Ti. iii. 1; Ac. xxiii. 5.

^b Pr. iii. 9, 10; Ex. xxiii. 16, 19; Mal. iii. 10.

^c Ex. xxxiv. 19. ^d Le. xxii. 27; De. xv. 19.

^e Ezek. xlv. 31; Le. xiii. 8; Ezek. iv. 14.

^f Ex. xx. 16; Le. xix. 16; Ex. xxiii. 7; Ps. ci. 5.

^g Pr. xxiv. 28; x. 18; Ma. xxvi. 59-61; Ps. xxxv. 11; Ac. vi. 11, 13; Eph. iv. 25.

^h Pr. i. 10, 15; iv. 14, 15; Ma. vii. 13; Job xxxi. 84; Ma. xxvii. 24-26; Mk xv. 15; Ac. xxiv. 27.

ⁱ De. i. 17; Ps. lxxii. 2; Le. xix. 15.

^j Calumny would soon starve and die of itself, if nobody took it in, and gave it lodging. — *Leighton*.

^k Pr. xxiv. 17, 18; xxv. 21, 22; Ma. v. 43, 45.

^l Ro. xii. 19-21; 1 Th. v. 15.

^m De. xxvii. 19; Is. x. 1, 2; Eccl. v. 8; Am. v. 12; Mal. iii. 5.

ⁿ De. xxvii. 25; Pr. xvii. 15; Ps. xciv. 21-23; Ma. xxvii. 4

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bribes,
strangers,
sabbatical
year, Sab-
bath, careful
obedience

a 2 Ch. xix. 7; De.
xvi. 19; 1 Sa. viii.
7; xii. 3.

b Pr. xv. 27; xvii.
8, 23; xxix. 4;
Ezek. xxii. 12;
Am. v. 12; Ac.
xxiv. 26.

c De. x. 19; xxvii.
19.

d Le. xxv. 3, 4.
e De. v. 13; Lu.
xiii. 13, 14.

f De. iv. 9; Josh.
xxii. 5; Ps. xxxix.
1; Eph. v. 15; 1
Ti. iv. 16.

"Judges and sen-
ates have been
bought for gold."
—Pope.

"And sell the
mighty space of
our large honors
for so much
trash as may be
grasped thus?" —
Shakespeare.

the three
yearly feasts

g Ex. xxxiv. 23;
Le. xxiii. 4; De.
xvi. 16.

h Le. xxiii. 5, 6;
De. xvi. 8, 16.

i Ex. xxxiv. 22;
Le. xxiii. 10; De.
xvi. 13.

k Ex. xxxiv. 23;
Le. ii. 11; De. xvi.
14.

So I know if I toll
and faint not,
Nor falter upon
the way,

Mine eyes shall
behold His
glory,

And the dark be
turned to-day
—Helen J. Wood.

The test of religion
is not religious-
ness but love. —
Henry Drummond.

promised
guidance,
preservation,
conquest, etc.

l Ge. xlviii. 15, 16;
Ex. xxxiii. 14; xiv.
19, 20; Is. lxiii. 9;
Ac. vii. 38.

m De. xviii. 19.
n Nu. xiv. 11; He.
iii. 10, 16; Ps.
lxxviii. 40, 56, 57;

o Nu. ix. 35; 1 Jo.
v. 16.

p Is. ix. 6; Jer.
xxiii. 6.

said he, interrupting him, "what wrong he hath done to thee, for it is thy cause, not mine, that I now sit judge of."

8—13. (8) gift,^a as a bribe. perverteth . . righteous,^b defeats the ends of justice. (9) also, etc.,^c see xxii. 21. (10) six . . land,^d etc., fr. yr. to yr. (11) seventh . . still, first mention of sabbatical yr. that . . eat, the poor might gather whatever grew spontaneously. See xxv. 5-7. (12) six days,^e etc., see xx. 8, 9. (13) all . . you, each one of these Divine precepts. circumspect,^f self-restrained. mention . . gods, etc., either in blessing or cursing, that unnamed they may be forgotten.

The Sabbatic year. — This law was intended — 1. To show the fertility of the land of promise. Every seventh year, without skill or toil, the land would produce of itself sufficient for the poor and the beasts of the field. 2. To encourage habits of thrift and forethought, so that they might provide for the year of rest. 3. To test (1) their faith in the providence, and (2) their obedience to the laws of God. — J. W. Burn.

Bribes declined. — "Why," asked one of the English Tories of the Tory Governor of Massachusetts, "why hath not Mr. Adams been taken off from his opposition by an office?" To which the Governor replied, "Such is the obstinacy and inflexible disposition of the man, that he never would be conciliated by any office whatever." His daughter used to say that her father refused a pension from the British Government of £2,000 a year. Once, when a secret messenger from General Gage threatened him with a trial for treason if he persisted in his opposition to the Government and promised him honors and wealth if he would desist, Adams rose to his feet and replied, "Sir, I trust I have long since made my peace with the King of kings. No personal consideration shall induce me to abandon the righteous cause of my country." —

Bib. Ill. The gift blindeth the wise. — It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale that upon his circuit as a judge he refused to try the cause of a gentleman who had sent him the customary present of venison, until he had paid for it; for he well understood the spirit of the excellent law in Exodus xxiii. 8. — *Anec. Illus. of O. Test.*

14—19. (14) feast,^g religious festival. (15) feast . . bread,^h etc., see xii. 15 ff. (16) and . . harvest, or feast of weeks observed 50 days after waving the sheaf of first fruits, hence called *Pentecost* = the *fiftieth*. and . . ingathering,ⁱ on 15th day of Tisri, our October. (17) males . . Lord, in humble acknowledgment of Him as their Master and King. (18) thou . . bread, etc.,^k "my sacrifice" means the Paschal lamb. Ref. to mode of keeping the Passover, see xii. 8. (19) first-fruits . . God, in acknowledgment of Him as the great Landowner. kid . . milk, the simplest meaning is that men are to exercise a fine sensibility even toward animals. — *Exp. Bib.*

The feast of harvest. — This was their Pentecost: so called from a Greek word signifying "fifty" — because it occurred on the fiftieth day from the feast of unleavened bread. It was, properly, a harvest festival, in which the Jew offered thanksgiving unto God for the ripened fruits of the earth. To understand the peculiar interest the Jew took in this holiday, you must remember that the Israelites, after their establishment in Canaan, were almost entirely a nation of farmers. The peasant and the noble, in their respective spheres, were alike husbandmen. And the whole land of Israel was in the highest state of cultivation. Now, to such a people, inhabiting such a country, the feast of harvest was necessarily a grand festival. — *Bib. Ill. Cherish the finer instincts.* — The prohibition in vs. 19 suggests the duty of cherishing the finer instincts of our nature. The act here forbidden could hardly be called cruelty, the kid being dead, but it was unnatural. It is beautiful to see the ancient law inculcating this rare and delicate fineness of feeling. The lesson is that everything is to be avoided which would tend to blunt our moral sensibilities. — J. Orr.

20—25. (20) send . . thee,^l "probably 'the Angel of the Covenant,' — whom many expositors identify with the Second Person of the Trinity, the Ever-Blessed Son of God." keep . . way, Divine protection. bring . . place, Divine guidance, prepared place for a prepared people. (21) beware . . him, fear Him. obey,^m proof of fear. provoke . . not,ⁿ by disobedience. he . . transgressions,^o wilful sins after repeated warnings. for . . him,^p "This angel is frequently called Jehovah and God." (22) if . . speak, and be uni-

versally obedient. **then, etc.,** I will be practically thy friend and helper. (23) **mine Angel,** *i. e.* Angel of the Lord. **bring . . . Amorites,^a etc., *i. e.*** unto the land now occupied by these nations. (24) **not . . . gods,^b** adopt their religion. **nor . . . them,** submit to their rule. **nor . . . works,^c** imitate their customs. (25) **bless . . . water,^d** make the simplest fare more nourishing than choice dainties. **take . . . thee,^e** health a special Divine blessing.

There is a divine way. — 1. Through the wilderness. 2. Beset with enemies. 3. Many privations. 4. Contrary to mere human liking. God's way is not our way! Ours may be pleasant at first but bitter at last, but God's way is the reverse; and yet not exactly, for sweets are graciously mingled with the bitters. There is hunger, but there is manna. There is thirst, but there is clear water from the smitten rock. There is perplexity, but there is an angel to guide and protect. — *W. Burrows.*

Christ at the head of the column. — It is said when the Duke of Wellington, on one occasion, rode up to his retreating army, a soldier happened to see him first and cried out: "Yonder is the Duke of Wellington; God bless him!" and the retreating army had courage to nerve itself afresh and went forward and drove the enemy away. One has said that the Duke of Wellington was worth more at any time than five thousand men. So it would be if we had the Captain of our salvation in front, we would go forward. How gloriously would this church contend if Christ were visibly in front of them! But the army was sometimes without the Duke of Wellington. There was a place where he could not be. And if Christ were visibly present, He would be present at the same time, only at one church in one locality. But an unseen Saviour is at the head of the column everywhere. We know He is there. The Captain of our salvation is where two or three are gathered in His name to inspire us; and to-day, in every city on the face of this globe, where the columns meet to march, His voice sounds "Onward!" in their ears. — *M. Simpson.*

26-33. (26) there . . . land, "Divine favor and providential care would have rendered them rich in flocks and herds beyond any other nation." — *Pulp. Com.* **number . . . fulfil,^f** promise of long life. (27) **send . . . thee,^g** their march to be preceded by a panic, arising from reports of their numbers, strength and prowess. **backs, *lit.* necks, *i. e.*** they shall be easily subdued. (28) **hornets,^h** here, as in Deut. vii. 20, plagues or troubles divinely sent, perh. Egyptian invasions to make them an easy prey to the Israelites. (29) **drive . . . year,** as they perh. would wish. **lest, etc.,** giving reasons for that wh not understood might discourage them. (30) **little . . . thee,ⁱ** for above reasons, and discipline of patience and perseverance. (31) **unto . . . Philistines, *i. e.*** the Mediterranean. **desert, the Arabian.** **river,^k** the Euphrates. (32) **thou . . . shalt, etc.,^l** see vs. 24. (33) **lest . . . me,^m** this law forbade any Canaanite communities being suffered to remain in Palestine on friendly terms with the Hebrews, because of the corrupting power of evil. — *Pulp. Com.*

The power of little things. — I. It is through little things that a man destroys his soul; he fails to take note of little things, and they accumulate into great; he relaxes in little things, and thus in time loosens every bond. II. It is by little and little that men become great in piety. We become great in holiness through avoiding little faults, and being exact in little duties. III. There is great difficulty in little things. In daily dangers and duties, in the petty anxieties of common life, in the exercise of righteous principles, in trifles — in these we must seek and find the opportunity of ejecting "by little and little" the foes we have sworn to expel from our hearts. — *H. Melvill.*

Importance of little things. — Giotto, a distinguished Roman painter, was desired by one of the Popes to paint a panel in the Vatican. Some doubt of his ability, however, being entertained, the Pope's messenger first asked him for an example of his art. Giotto's study was adorned with his paintings, but instead of offering any of these, he took a sheet of white paper, and with a single stroke of his pencil drew a perfect circle, and handed it to his visitor. The latter, in surprise, reminded him that he had asked for a design. "Go," said Giotto; "I tell you, his Holiness asks nothing else of me." He was right, for the evidence of his command of the pencil was accepted as conclusive, and his eccentric though reasonable reply gave rise to the proverb, "Round as Giotto's O." To do a small thing well is the best proof of ability to do what is great. — *Bib. Ill.*

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^a Jos. xxiv. 8-11.

^b Ex. xx. 5; xxxiv. 13.

^c Le. xviii. 3.

^d De. vii. 12, 13; xxviii. 5, 8; 1 Ti. iv. 8; Ma. vi. 33.

^e Ex. xv. 23; De. vii. 15; 1 Sa. xii. 24.

promise of blessing and inheritance in Canaan

^f Job v. 26; Ge. xxv. 8; xxxv. 29; Job xlii. 17; 1 Ch. xxiii. 1; Ps. lv. 23.

^g Ge. xxxv. 5; De. ii. 25; xl. 25; Josh. ii. 9, 11.

^h Josh. xxiv. 12.

ⁱ Josh. xxi. 44; Jud. i. 4; xi. 21; 2 Sa. viii. 3.

^k 1 Ki. iv. 21, 24; Ge. xv. 18; De. xi. 24; Ps. lxxii. 8.

^l Ex. xxxiv. 12; Ps. cvi. 34-38; 2 Co. vi. 14, 15.

^m Josh. xxiii. 13; Jud. ii. 3.

"Exactness in little duties is a wonderful source of cheerfulness." — *Faber.*

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CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

Moses,
Aaron, etc.,
called to the
mount

the altar and
the pillars

a Ex. xxviii. 1; Le.
x. 1, 2.

"Being cleansed
by Thy precious
blood, O Christ,
may we ever
render unto Thee
a pure worship,
thorough Jesus
Christ our Lord.
Amen.

"Sweet is the
breath of morn,
her rising sweet
with charm of
earliest birds."—
Milton.

the altar,
etc.,
sprinkled
with blood

b Ex. xii. 23.

c Josh. xxiv. 24.

d He ix. 18-20.

e He. xlii. 20; 1
Pe. i. 2.

"Obedience, as it
regards the social
relations, the laws
of society, and the
laws of nature and
of nature's God,
should commence
at the cradle and
end only at the
tomb."—H. Ballou.

the glorious
vision of the
Holy One

f Ex. xxxiii. 20, 23;
Jo. i. 18; 1 Jo. iv.
12; 1 Ti. vi. 16;
Ex. iii. 6; 1 Ki.
xxii. 19; Is. vi.
1, 5.

g Ezek. i. 26, x. 1;
Re. iv. 3; Ma. xvii.
2.

"I know by my-
self how incompre-
hensible God is,
feeling I cannot
comprehend the
parts of my own
being."—Bernard.

1—5. (1) *Nadab*,^a (*spontaneous, liberal*), eldest son of Aaron. *Abihu*, see vi. 23. *seventy* . . *Israel*, "that is, seventy of the aged men distinguished, respected, and venerated among the different tribes,"—*Bush*. (2) *but* . . *nigh*, see xix. 12. (3) *all* . . *do*, see xix. 8. (4) *wrote*, the recorded origin of the first portion of Holy Scripture that ever existed.—*Exp. Bible*. *altar*, sign of a present God. *and* . . *pillars*, sig. that the twelve tribes were there before God. (5) *he* . . *men*, having strength and skill for the work.

Morning prayer.—Milton speaks of the breath of morning being sweet, "Her rising sweet with the charm of earliest birds." Vaughan quaintly says that mornings are mysteries. Mysteries of good are they when well used, but mysteries of evil, when, as too oft, much abused. Mornings are well used when prayer ushers them in. Beecher says, "Let the day have a blessed baptism by giving your first waking thoughts into the bosom of God. The first hour of the morning is the rudder of the day." Carlyle says we have a proverb among us that "the morning is a friend to the muses," i. e. a good time for study. Is it not more true that it is a great friend to the graces—that it is a good praying time? Therefore

"Serve God before the world; let Him not go
Until thou hast a blessing; then resign
The whole unto Him, and remember who
Prevailed by wrestling ere the sun did shine."—*Vaughan*.

6—8. (6) *half* . . *basons*, see vs. 8. The blood symbolized the life of the victim and was the essential part of every sacrifice. *half* . . *altar*,^b sign of God's faithfulness to His people. (7) *book* . . *people*, "The first book of the Bible actually mentioned as written, the gem of the Holy Scriptures."—*Pulp. Com.* *all* . . *do*,^c see vs. 3. (8) *and* . . *blood*,^d that in the basons, vs. 6. *and* . . *people*,^e in token of their pledged fidelity to the covenant: prob. it was sprinkled on the pillars representing the tribes. *covenant*, wh. you promise to accept and obey.

The covenant.—1. Christ is the Mediator of a better covenant. 2. His blood is sprinkled on the altar of God (Heb. ix. 12) and in the heart of His people (Heb. ix. 13-15). 3. He has instituted a "perpetual memorial of His precious death until His coming again" (1 Cor. ix. 25).—*J. W. Burn*.

The strictness of God's love.—"The Bible is so strict and old-fashioned," said a young man to a gray-haired friend who was advising him to study God's Word if he would learn how to live. "There are plenty of books written now-a-days that are moral enough in their teaching, and do not bind one down as the Bible." The old merchant turned to his desk, and took out two rulers, one of which was slightly bent. With each of these he ruled a line, and silently handed the ruled paper to his companion. "Well," said the lad, "what do you mean?" "One line is not straight and true, is it? When you mark out your path in life, do not take a crooked ruler!"—*S. S. Chronicle*.

9—11. (9) *went*, etc., see vs. 1. The mountain was to be partially ascended. *Nadab*, *Abihu*, and the elders were to "worship God afar off."—*Pulp. Com.* (10) *saw* . . *Israel*,^f the glorious *Shekinah* more distinct and glorious than ever. *and* . . *feet*, etc.,^g "the pure blue of the heaven above them lent its influence to help the inner sense to realize the vision wh. no mortal eye could behold."—*Spk. Com.* (11) *nobles*, the seventy elders and other persons already named. *he* . . *hand*, to harm them—a ref. to the impression th. a vision of the Divine glory would be fatal to the beholder. *also* . . *God*, His manifested presence fr. afar off on the plain. *and* . . *drink*, securely, joyously, in Jehovah's presence.

On the mountain.—Note that—I. God encourages social communion. Moses and the seventy saw God's glory. II. God especially honors individual communion. Moses dwelt in the all-consuming glory. III. Exalted spiritual state is compatible with natural and temporal relations and duties. The seventy looked upon the glory, and ate and drank. IV. Communion with God ennobles. Before they ascended they were "elders;" after, "nobles."—*Fowler*.

The elders. — Among this people the elders exercised great authority, and were held in high respect (Josh. xxiii. 2; xxiv. 1; Job xii. 12), as their experience made them the natural counsellors and judges of the nation. At a later period the word became a regular title, conferred on those who by their wealth or wisdom had placed themselves at the head of a tribe, or taken a lead in public affairs. They are found among the Hebrews in Egypt, in the desert, and at every epoch of the national history. Sometimes the elders of all Israel are mentioned (Josh. vii. 6; 1 Sam. iv. 3; 2 Sam. iii. 17; 2 Chron. x. 6); sometimes those of a tribe or of the cities (Deut. xix. 12; xxi. 20; Judges viii. 14; 1 Sam. xi. 3; 1 Kings xxi. 8). In certain expiatory rites they represented the city or the whole nation (Deut. xxi. 2; Lev. iv. 15; ix. 1). They were the municipal authorities, and frequently formed a court for trying crimes (Deut. xxi. 19; xxii. 15; xxv. 7). They also assisted the chief with their counsels, with whom we often find them in direct union; whom also they sometimes compelled to yield to their will. Moses, at the time of a dangerous revolt, availed himself of their services by selecting a body of seventy to aid in supporting his authority (Numb. xi. 16). They required Samuel to resign his office and appoint a king (1 Sam. viii. 4), and at a later period conferred the royal power on David (2 Sam. v. 3). — *Pierotti.*

12—18. tables . . written,^a prob. the ten commandments, that . . them, to all Israel. (13) **minister,** servant, attendant. (14) **tarry . . you,** a hint that his absence *might* be protracted. **let . . them,**^b as representing me for the time being. (15) **and . . mount,** into wh. at the end of six days Moses entered. (16) **seventh . . cloud,**^c "God summoned Moses to enter the cloud — and draw as nigh to him as possible." (17) **sight,** appearance. **devouring,**^d intensely brilliant. (18) **Moses . . nights,**^e "Quitting Joshua, Moses in obedience to the call out of the midst of the cloud, entered within its shadow and disappeared from human vision. Alone with God, he continued for thirty-four days, making, together with the six days before he entered the cloud, the forty days and forty nights." — *Pulp. Com.*

On the mount with God. — Moses would never have been the lawgiver he was had he not remained there on the mount, in sight of the glory and in communion with his God. The disciples would never have wrought as they did, had they not tarried in Jerusalem. Eminent preachers and teachers would never have thrilled and won hearts to Christ as they have, had they not gained their power in long seasons of prayer and communion with God. 1. Spiritual endowment is always the measure of success in work for Christ. Preachers fail and teachers fail because they are so little on the mount with God. 2. The want of Christian workers everywhere is revelation of the Divine glory. From this, power springs. God can use us only as we become equipped by vision of, and communion with, Him. We can tell only as we know. We know only as we are taught of God. Have we been on the mount, under the cloud? Have we seen the glory and heard the voice? What is our message from God to men? — *J. E. Twitchell.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

1—9. (2) willingly,^f a willing giver makes a willing receiver. **heart . . offering,**^g and from no others. (3) **brass,** copper, or perh. bronze. (4) **blue . . scarlet,** *i. e.* violet-purple,^h red-purple,ⁱ crimson. **goat's hair,** finer wool of sheep. Soft inner wool of the Angora goat. (5) **rams' red,** red morocco. **badgers' . . wood,** *R. V.*, "seal skins and acacia wood." (6) **oil, olive,*** spices, incenses, perfumes. (7) **onyx,** *see* Ge. ii. 12. **ephod,** *etc. see* Ex. xxviii. 4, ff. (8) **sanctuary,** holy place. (9) **even . . it,**^j acc. to the Divine plan, not acc. to human ingenuity.

Rams' skins dyed red. — Salim led me through an entire street of shoe-shops this morning. Is the red leather which the shoe-makers use the rams' skins dyed red, which formed one of the three covers of the tabernacle? No doubt, there is a definiteness in the name rams' skins which is worth noticing. From time out of mind, the southern part of Syria and Palestine has been supplied with mutton from the great plains and deserts on the north, east, and south; and the shepherds do not ordinarily bring the females to market. The vast flocks which annually come from Armenia and Northern Syria are nearly all males. The leather, therefore, is literally rams' skins dyed red. It is pleas-

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"It is one of my favorite thoughts, that God manifests Himself to men in all the wise, good, humble, generous, great and magnanimous men." — *Lavater.*

Moses enters the cloud and remains on the mount forty days

^a Ex. xxxi. 18; De. v. 22.

^b Ex. xviii. 25, 26.

^c Ma. xvii. 5; Ex. iii. 2.

^d Ex. xix. 18; He. xii. 18, 29.

^e Ex. xxxiv. 28; De. ix. 9; 1 Kl. xix. 8; Ma. iv. 2.

"There is no God but God, the living, the self-subsisting." — *Koran.*

Moses commanded to exhort the people to contribute to the tabernacle

^f 1 Ch. xxix. 9, 14; Pr. xi. 25; Ro. xii. 8; 2 Co. viii. 12, ix. 7.

^g "The public service of Jehovah was to be instituted by free-will offerings, and not by an enforced taxation." — *Spk Com.*

^h Ex. fr. shellfish called *murex*.

ⁱ Ex. fr. shellfish *purpura*.

^j Ex. xxvii. 20.

^k He. iii. 5, 6; 1 Ch. xxviii. 19.

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ant to meet such perfect accuracy in the most incidental allusions and minute details of the Mosaic record. — *Thomson*.

the ark of the covenant

a 1 Ki. viii. 8.

b De. x. 1, 2, 5; xxxi. 26; 1 Ki. viii. 9; 2 Ch. v. 20.

"And yet we are not left without a visible sign of God's presence. So long as we have the Bible we have the ark of the covenant." — *J. Parker*.

"If it be the characteristic of a worldly man that he desecrates what is holy it should be of the Christian to consecrate what is secular, and to recognize a present and presiding divinity in all things." — *Chalmers*.

the mercy-seat

c He. ix. 5; 1 Pe. i. 12.

d Le. xvi. 2; Ex. xxix. 42, 43.

e Ps. lxxx. 1; 2 Ki. xix. 15; He. iv. 16.

"We may imitate the Deity in all His attributes, but mercy is the only one in which we can pretend to equal Him. We cannot, indeed, give like God, but surely we may forgive like Him." — *Sterne*.

"Between the humble and contrite heart and the majesty of heaven there are no barriers. The only password is prayer." — *H. Ballou*.

10-16. (10) **ark**, box or chest, three feet nine inches long, two feet three inches wide, and two feet three inches deep. **shittim**, the acacia is hard, close-grained, "wood that will not rot." — *Septuagint*. (11) **overlay** . . gold, prob. thin plates, though the art of gilding was then known. **crown**, an ornamental molding around the top of the chest. (12) **corners**, bases, or feet; the ark when carried would therefore be elevated above the heads of the bearers. (13) **staves**, for bearing-rods. (14) **ark** . . them, on the shoulders of the bearers. (15) **they** . . it,^a perh. to prevent the ark fr. being touched. The bearers took hold of the poles, and on the danger of touching the ark see 2 Sam. vi. 6, 7. (16) **testimony**,^b stone tables of ten commandments. Called testimony because God by it testified to His sovereign authority over Israel.

The ark. — Was the ark a treasure chest? In Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead. Was it a small chest? Christ made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant. Was it made after a heavenly pattern? Christ came down from heaven. Was it made of wood? Behold the Man! Was it made of incorruptible wood? Behold the purity of His character. Was it overlaid within and without with gold? Behold your God! God was in Christ. The Spirit of the Lord was upon Him. Had it a crown of gold round about? Behold your King! — *R. E. Sears*.

Shittim-wood. — Concerning the shitta-tree, mentioned by the prophet Isaiah with the cedar and myrtle, different opinions are entertained by commentators. The name is derived from the Hebrew verb *shata*, to decline or turn to and fro, having for the plural *shittim*. It is remarkable for being the wood of which the sacred vessels of the tabernacle were made. The seventy interpreters generally render it by the term ἀσθμία, incorruptible. Theodotion, and after him the Vulgate, translate it by Spina, a thorn. The shittim-wood, says Jerome, resembles the white thorn in its color and leaves, but not in its size; for the tree is so large that it affords very long planks. Hasselquist also says it grows in Upper Egypt to the size of a large tree. The wood is hard, tough, smooth, without knots, and extremely beautiful. This kind of wood grows only in the deserts of Arabia, but in no other part of the Roman empire. In another place he remarks, it is of an admirable beauty, solidity, strength, and smoothness. It is thought he means the black acacia, the only tree found in the deserts of Arabia. This plant is so hard and solid as to become almost incorruptible. Its wood has the color of the lotus tree; and so large, that it furnishes plank twelve cubits long. It is very thorny, and even its bark is covered with very sharp thorns; and hence it perhaps had the Hebrew name *shata*, from making animals decline or turn aside by the sharpness of its spines. — *Paxton*.

17-22. (17) **mercy-seat**, Heb. *kapporeth*, covering. **pure gold**, an oblong slab of solid gold, the same length and breadth as the ark which it covered. Its value more than \$100,000 of our money. (18) **cherubims**, prob. resembling human figures with wings. **beaten** . . them, of solid gold: formed by repeated blows of hammer. **in** . . ends, *i. e.* "standing up from the two ends." (20) **stretch** . . high, emblematical of readiness to obey the Divine will. **covering**,^c overshadowing. **toward**, *etc.*, "The figures presented the appearance of guardian angels, who watched over the precious deposit below — to wit, the two tables." — *Pulp. Com.* (21) **ark** . . thee, see vs. 16. (22) **there** . . thee,^d to communicate My will: impart My blessing. **from** . . cherubims,^e in a bright cloud: the shekinah.

The mercy-seat. — I. The design of this appointment. It was intended to — 1. Furnish a meeting-place for God and man; 2. Encourage communion with God; 3. Impart instruction. II. Its peculiarities. 1. It was all of Divine appointment; 2. Its true name is the Propitiatory; 3. Its position is very significant. III. The superior privileges it typified. 1. Free access to God through Christ; 2. The assurance of pardoned sin; 3. Supplies of grace and strength for all we need; 4. Relief from all our trials — *Anon*.

Arks. — Sacred chests, bearing much the resemblance in principle to this ark, have been found in different ancient and modern nations; and expositors have entered into many wearying disquisitions whether this ark, or some primitive model (the existence of wh. is inferred fr. xxxiii. 7, 10), sugg. the

first idea; while Spencer and others think, as they do in the case of the tabernacle, that the Hebrew ark was itself copied fr. the heathen. The Egyptians, on some occasions, carried in solemn processions a sacred chest, containing their secret things and the mysteries of their religion. The Trojans also had their sacred chest; and the *palladium* of the Greeks and Romans was something not very unlike. It is further remarkable, that as the Hebrew tabernacle and temple had a Holy of Holies, in wh. the ark was deposited, so had the heathen, in the inmost part of their temples, an *adytum* or *penetrale*, which none but the priests might enter. — *Kitto*.

23—30. (23) *table*, "the table was to be three feet long, one foot six inches broad, and two feet three inches high." This was among the spoils carried away by Nebuchadnezzar and not the one represented on the arch of Titus at Rome. (24) *overlay*, gild or plate. *crown*, ornamental molding. (25) *border*, frame, prob. to connect and strengthen the legs. (26) *corners*, extremities. (27) *over . . border*, *i. e.* on the ends of the legs where the frame was united to them. (28) *table . . them*, raised above the shoulders of the bearers. (29) *dishes*, bowls, spoons, or cups. *bowls*,^a chalices. (30) *shewbread*,^b *lit.* bread of faces, or bread of presence, so called prob. fr. being always set bef. the face and presence of God.

The table of shewbread (vs. 30). — Introduction: — This table of shewbread may remind us of the bread on *our* tables. There is a sense in which a table with bread (food) upon it, is a table of shewbread. Shewbread means bread of faces; *i. e.* it is before the face of the Lord. Our bread being before Him, He takes note of — I. The way by wh. it was obtained. Whether by — 1. Oppression, fraud, or any species of dishonesty; 2. Honest toil; 3. A parent's loving care. II. The spirit in wh. it is partaken of. Whether of — 1. Murmuring about quantity or quality; 2. Thankfulness to the Giver of our daily bread: Jesus gave thanks. 3. Pious remembrance of Him who is the Bread of Life. III. The manner in which it is distributed. 1. Do we distribute of our abundance ungrudgingly? Do we heedlessly waste it?

The tables of grace and glory. — The incorruptible wood may be an emblem of grace, the gold an emblem of glory. God's table on earth is the table of His grace. His table in the heavenly world is the table of His glory. If we are guests at the table of grace, we shall be entertained at the table of glory. Grace is glory begun. Glory is grace perfected. Grace is the earnest of our inheritance. Glory is the possession of the estate. By grace we are prepared for glory. When the work of grace is completed, we shall hear the welcome. "Come up higher." By faith we sit at the table of grace. At the table of glory faith will be changed to sight. Both tables are furnished with the same provision. Christ the true Bread of Life is the spiritual food of the believer on earth; and in heaven we shall eat the same Divine celestial Bread. — *R. Newton*.

31—36. (31) *candlestick*,^c Heb. *menorath*, a lamp-bearer, to support oil-lamps. *shaft*, *etc.*, this candlestick is best represented on the arch of Titus. *branches*, arms. *bowls*, calyx or cup. *knops*, knobs; the branches were prob. ornamented with these. *flowers*, floral-work. (32) *three*, *etc.*, it was symmetrically formed, prob. about 3 ft. high and 2 ft. wide. (33) *almonds*, like the almond-flower. (34) *candlestick*, here prob. the stem or shaft is meant. (35) *according . . candlestick*, *i. e.* each pair of branches was divided fr. the next pair by a small spherical ornament. (36) *all . . gold*, gold pure, solid, hammered.

The candlestick a type of Christ. — I. It was the only thing that held the light wh. enlightened the sanctuary: from Christ all the light of grace comes for the benefit of His church. II. It had seven lamps (vs. 37). to signify that perfection of light that is in Christ. III. It was placed in the sanctuary: so is Christ as a glorious light placed in His Church. IV. It had an upright stem, which bore the many branches issuing from it. V. The branches were adorned with bowls, knobs, flowers, etc. So are Christ's ministers adorned with many graces. VI. Aaron dressed those lamps and renewed their oil daily: so our High Priest is the only enlightener of His faithful ministers. VII. The candle-stick had snuffers and snuff-dishes of pure gold; wh. might figure forth the good and godly discipline of the church whereby evil persons who hinder its glory are taken away. — *B. Keach*.

The golden candlestick. — The golden candlestick was placed in the first

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"When we pray for any virtue, we should cultivate the virtue as well as pray for it."

the table of shewbread

a Nu. iv. 7.

b Le. xxiv. 5, 6; Ps. xxiii. 5; 1 Co. x. 31.

"I thank my heavenly Father for every manifestation of human love; I thank Him for all experiences, be they sweet or bitter, which help me to forgive all things, and to unfold the whole world with a blessing." — *Mrs. L. M. Child*.

"As flowers carry dewdrops, trembling on the edges of the petals, and ready to fall at the first waft of wind or brush of bird, so the heart should carry its beaded words of thanksgiving, and at the first breath of heavenly flavor let down the shower, perfumed with the heart's gratitude." — *Beecher*.

the golden candlestick

c 1 Kl. vii. 49; He. ix. 2; Re. 1. 12; iv. 5; Pr. vi. 23; 2 Pe. i. 19.

"Children always turn toward the light. O that grown-up people in this world may become like little children." — *Hare*.

"And as the eye is the best composer, so light is the first of painters. There is no object so foul that intense light will not make beautiful. And the stimulus it affords to the sense, and a sort of infinitude

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which it hath like space and time, make all matter gay."—*Emerson*.

"The light in the world comes principally from two sources—the sun and the student's lamp."—*Bovee*.

the seven lamps, tongs, etc.

α Nu. viii. 4; Ac. vii. 44; He. viii. 5.

"I once asked a distinguished artist what place he gave to labor in art. 'Labor,' he, in effect, said, 'is the beginning, the middle, and the end of art. Turning then to another—'And you,' I inquired, 'what do you consider as the great force in art?' 'Love,' he replied. In their two answers I found but one truth."—*Bovee*.

apartment of the tabernacle, on the south side. It stood on a base, from which the principal stem arose perpendicularly. On both sides of it there projected upwards, in such a way as to describe a curved line, three branches. They arose from the main stem, at equal distances from each other, and to the same height with it. The height in the whole, according to the Jewish rabbins, was five feet; and the breadth, or the distance between the exterior branches, three and a half. The main stem, together with the branches, was adorned with knops, flowers, and other ornaments of gold. The seven extremities of the main stem and branches were employed as so many separate lamps, all of which were kept burning in the night, but three only in the day (Ex. xxx. 8; Le. xxiv. 4).—*Bibl. Treas.*

37—40. (37) seven, *i. e.* one for each branch and one for the stem. they . . . lamps, the lamps were lighted every evening at sunset (ch. xxx. 8), and burnt till morning, when the High Priest extinguished them and "dressed" them (ch. xxx. 7).—*Pulp. Com.* that . . . it, *i. e.* in front of it, throwing the light forward. (38) tongs, or snuffers, for trimming the wick. snuff-dishes, to receive the burnt wick. (39) talent, weight and value, variously estimated: perh. 94 pounds in weight, and from \$20,000 to \$30,000 in value. (40) look, "etc., no human additions or alterations permitted.

Something about everything in the Bible.—A number of local wits were once passing a merry hour in the house of a mutual friend, when the conversation turning on the Bible, one remarked that he could see nothing in it. A minister, who happened to be present, said there was so much in the book that he doubted if they could name anything which was not either named, alluded to or suggested by some adapted text. And he added that as he would not take advantage of his professional relation to the book, they might test this by questioning a poor man who was a servant in the family of their host, and whose knowledge of Scripture was very considerable. Presently the footman entered the room, and one of the company said abruptly to him, pointing, at the same time, to the snuffers on the table, "John, is there anything in the Bible about snuffers?" "Yes," replied John; "it is written in the book of Exodus, 'The tongs thereof, and the snuff-dishes thereof, shall be of pure gold,' and a little farther on it is said, 'He made his seven lamps, and his snuffers, and his snuff-dishes of pure gold.'" The minister, who afterwards told the story, said that the scorner was completely snuffed out.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

the tabernacle
the inner curtain

β Ex xxxvi. 8.

Tache, a catch, a loop, a button; Fr *attacher*.

"Since I have known God in a saving manner, painting, poetry and music have had charms unknown to me before. I have received what I suppose is a taste for them, or religion has refined my mind and made it susceptible of impressions from the sublime and beautiful. O, how religion secures the heightened enjoyment of those pleasures which keep so

1—6. (1) curtains,^b or breadths, of wh. five formed a curtain; hence there were two curtains of five breadths each joined by taches. fine . . . linen, woven with extreme fineness and strength. with . . . them, R. V., "with cherubim, the work of the cunning workman shalt thou make them." *i. e.* they were skillfully embroidered with cherubim. (2) length, forty-two ft. breadth, six ft., but as five breadths make a curtain, the total width would be thirty feet. (3) five . . . coupled, *i. e.* five breadths formed one curtain. (4) loops, or tapes, to fasten the breadths together. (6) taches, R. V., "clasps;" prob. an oblong button or frog; fastened to the loop on one curtain, was passed through the loop on the other.

Believers, of whom the church is composed, although scattered among many sects of professing Christians, are yet all one in Christ Jesus. As the curtains, though woven separately, were afterwards sewed together and formed two great curtains, which, when hung, were united into one by means of loops of blue and clasps of gold, so God's children are knit together by the silver ties of affection and bound together by the golden clasps of love.—*W. Brown*.

The plan of the tabernacle.—The portable temple of the Israelites had, indeed, in its whole arrangement, a resemblance with the temples of other nations of antiquity. As they had spacious forecourts, so had the tabernacle an oblong quadrangular forecourt, two hundred feet long, and one hundred broad, which was formed by the hangings or curtains which hung on pillars. The tabernacle itself was divided into two parts, the holy and the most holy; in the latter was the ark of the covenant, with the symbols of the Divine qualities, the cherubims; and no human being dared to enter this especially sanctified place, except the high priest, once a year (on the

feast of reconciliation). Thus also in many Grecian temples the back part was not to be entered by anybody. This part, where, in the heathen temples, the statue of the deity was placed, was generally towards the west, and the entrance towards the east. In the same manner the entrance of the tabernacle was towards the east, and, consequently the most holy place to the west. In the most holy, a solemn darkness reigned, as in most of the ancient temples. A richly worked curtain divided the most holy from the holy, and thus, in the Egyptian temples, the back part, where the sacred animal, to which the temple was dedicated, was kept, was divided from the front part by a curtain embroidered with gold. — *Rosenmüller*.

7-14. (7) covering upon, *R. V.*, "tent over;" to protect the inner and richer curtains, curtains, breadths. Compare *vs. 1*. (8) length . . cubits, 45 ft. breadth . . cubits, 6 ft. and . . curtains, *i. e.* breadths. (9) double . . curtain, *i. e.* equally divided, leaving one-half to overlap the curtain of five breadths in front, and the other half to overlap the same curtain at the back, *see vs. 12*. (11) fifty . . brass, *etc.*, *see vs. 6*. (12) remnant, *i. e.* the half breadth (or curtain), *see vs. 9*. (13) and a cubit, *etc.*, the tabernacle cloth, *see vs. 1, 2*, was 40 cubits by 28; this tent cloth was 44 cubits by 30; hence, whence spread over the former, it reached at the back and front two cubits (the half breadth of *vs. 9, 12*) lower than the other hang . . side, here on each side it fell one cubit farther than the other. (14) rams' skins, *see xxv. 5*.

The art of weaving. — Anc. art lost in antiquity, [Acc. to Gk. tradition, the idea gathered fr. web of spider. Minerva changed Arachne into spider, because surpassed her in weaving and spinning (hence the spider class called Arachnida).] W. more anc. than spinning; at first matting, simple interlacing of shreds of bark, lacustrine plants, vegetable stalks, (straw, rushes). At length fibres were used (flax, hemp, cotton, silk); presently wool (first mentioned by Homer), and hair. Wool, dyed, brought in costly vase; spindles or distaffs of precious material; spinning, *etc.*, by ladies of quality. Hence the present of Queen of Egypt to consort of Menelaus on their return from Troy:—

"Alcandria consort of his high command,
A golden distaff gave to Helen's hand;
And that rich vase, with living sculpture wrought,
Which, heap'd with wool, the beauteous Phyle brought;
The silken fleece, empurpled for the loom,
Rivall'd the hyacinth in vernal bloom." — (*Odyssey*, iv.)

Formerly all women in a fam. spun, esp. the unmarried daus. of a house. Hence spinster, a woman who spins = an unmarried female. Anc. same in principle and similar in form to modern hand-loom.

15-18. (15) boards, planks. standing up, they were not to have one end sunk in the ground, but to be fitted by means of "tenons" into silver "sockets." (16) cubits . . board, hence the side of the tab. was about 15 ft. high. cubit . . breadth, perh. the boards were joined.^b (17) tenons, Heb. *yadoth*, hands. These prob. projected fr. the side of each board and fitted into cavities in the next board. (18) twenty . . southward, the length of the tabernacle would therefore be 30 cubits or about 45 ft.

The shittim tree (Acacia Seyal). — A notorious sceptic has put forth the objections that there could be no timber found in Sinai in sufficient quantity, and that the acacia does not grow to sufficient size to supply such planks. To the second objection I can only refer to numerous trees which I have measured in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, and in wadys in the south country of Judah. To the first, that there is every evidence of the former abundance of the tree. The use of timber for smelting in Sinai has been already referred to. Rambling on foot among the mountains of Sinai, the Rev. F. W. Holland has found many old mines, the workings of which may yet be seen, of which history gives no hint. Great heaps of slag and scoria abound everywhere, marking the ancient smelting-works. Perhaps the Hebrew bondmen toiled at them before the Exodus. There must have been timber then, for fuel could never be brought there from a distance. The seyal, the tree which now sparsely occurs, grew in forests to provide for such consumption, and when the supply of shittim-wood was exhausted, the mines were abandoned. All wore another aspect when timber covered the

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many from God by their becoming a source of pride." — *H. Martyn*.

"The learned understand the reason of the art, the unlearned feel the pleasure." — *Quintilian*.

the outer curtain

a Ex xxxvi. 14.

"The refining influence is the study of art, which is the science of beauty; and I find that every man values every scrap of knowledge in art, every observation of his own in it, every hint he has caught from another. For the laws of beauty are the beauty of beauty, and give the mind the same or a higher joy than the sight of it gives the senses. The study of arts is of high value to the growth of the intellect." — *Emerson*.

the boards, etc.

^b Mr. Tristram states that there are acacia trees near England which would furnish boards four feet wide.

"Art neither belongs to religion nor to ethics; but, like these, it brings us nearer to the infinite, one of the forms of which it manifests to us. God is the source of all beauty, as of all truth, of all religion, of all morality. The most exalted object, therefore, of art is to reveal in its

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own manner the sentiment of the infinite."—*V. Cousin*.

the sockets and couplings

a Eph. iv. 15, 16.

"Art is the effort of man to express the ideas which nature suggests to him of a power above nature, whether that power be within the recesses of his own being or in the Great First Cause."—*Lytton*.

the bars, etc.

b Ac. vii. 44; He. viii. 5; Eph. ii. 19-22.

"Moral beauty is the basis of all true beauty. This foundation is somewhat covered and veiled in nature. Art brings it out, and gives it more transparent forms."—*Victor Cousin*.

the veil

c He. ix. 3, 6-8; x. 1; Ex. xxv. 51; 2 Ti. i. 10; He. x. 19, 20; ix. 24; vi. 19.

"Color is, in brief terms, the type of love. Hence it is especially connected with the blossoming of the earth; and, again, with its fruits; also, with the spring and fall of the leaf, and with the morning and evening of the day."—*Ruskin*.

"The beautiful things that God makes are His gift to all alike. I know there are many of the poor who have fine feeling and a keen sense of the

sides of the hills. Streams washed the dry ravines, which still bear the marks of their former presence; rain would be attracted by the foliage, and herbage would carpet the soil. Nor would this perish at once with the denudation of the wood. Its extinction would be the work of time, as the streams gradually failed, and the sun converted the turf to dust. At the time of the Exodus, then, we have every reason to believe that the state of the Peninsula of Sinai was very different from what it is now. Doubtless those granite peaks made it still "a great and terrible wilderness," but its valleys and plains might afford no inconsiderable sustenance for cattle.—*Tristram*.

19-25. (19) sockets, bases: a metal base would serve the purpose of preventing decay. (20) north . . . twenty, see vs. 18. (21) forty, etc., see vs. 19. (22) six boards, hence the width of the tabernacle was 15 ft. 9 in. (23) two . . . corners, prob. more like pillars than planks. (24) they . . . corners,^a and their thickness would thus increase the length of the end to about ten cubits. (25) they . . . boards, i. e. the six (vs. 22), and the two corners (vs. 23).

Believers typified by the boards.—Were they golden boards? Every believer is a partaker of the Divine nature (2 Peter i. 4). They are born from above, and they are heavenly-minded. Their affection is set on things above. God's people are a holy people. "The beauty of holiness" is the gold with which God will beautify and adorn His people. The knots and grains of the wood were all hidden from view beneath plates of pure gold. God hides all our imperfections from view beneath the gold of His perfect righteousness.—*R. E. Sears*.

26-30. (26) bars . . . boards, one sufficiently long to reach from end to end of the tabernacle, the four others being less than half the length of the longer, the whole being put in three rows. (27, 28) five, etc., see vs. 26. (29) overlay . . . gold, the rings were to be of solid gold; the boards and the bars of acacia wood overlaid with gold. (30) fashion,^b etc., another warning not to depart from the Divinely-given pattern.

Invincible strength underlies the apparent weakness of the Gospel.—When we regard the veils and curtains of the tabernacle, we might think it a frail structure, to be swept away by the winds; but under these draperies are solid boards fixed in solid sockets, and strong bars, giving to the whole framework of the building the greatest consistency and compactness. In the days of His flesh how weak Christ appeared, and yet what power dwelt in His word and spirit! "He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God." How contemptible the gospel in the eyes of worldly wisdom, and yet how powerful and invincible! How feeble the church of Christ often appears, and yet the mightiest storms of persecution have failed to sweep it away!—*Hom. Com.*

31, 32. (31) vail,^c Heb. *paroketh*, a separation. blue . . . scarlet, see xxv. 12. fine . . . work, etc. the veil was to be of the same material and workmanship as the inner covering, and like that, was to have figures of cherubim woven into its texture by a skilled weaver.—*Pulp. Com.* See vs. 1. (32) upon . . . silver, the sockets belong to the pillars, not to the hooks.

The veil of the Holiest (vs. 31).—I. It was glorious, of embroidered work; this faith guild signified the body of Christ, filled with the fulness of God, and beautified with all the most excellent graces of the Spirit. II. It was replenished and wrought full of cherubim, noting thereby that serviceable and ready attendance of the angels on Christ's natural and mystical body. III. It was borne up by costly pillars, to show that the humanity of Christ, esp. in His sufferings, should be borne up by His deity. IV. By the veil only, there was entry into the holiest place of all; so by the veil, i. e. the flesh of Christ, which was rent, as it were, upon the cross, a new and living way is made for us to the Father.—*Keach*.

The veil.—The inner shrine or recess was covered by a veil; the sanctuary was divided from the court by a screen. By both the people were admonished how reverently God's majesty must be regarded, and with what seriousness holy things are to be engaged in. The veil intimated to the Israelites that the spiritual worship of God was as yet enshrouded in a veil; and thus might extend their faith to their promised Messiah, at whose coming the truth would be discovered and laid bare.—*Calvin*. And more than all, does not the fact of the cherubim upon the veil being the same as those in the shrine show

to us that our life is continuous here and hereafter — that it is one history and one development? If you are to behold and enjoy the glorious cherubim of the heavenly world, you must have them represented, as it were, upon the veil of your earthly tabernacle. Your hearts must be turned now to the heavenly harmonies. When certain conditions of light are present, if you look through a window at a particular angle into the street, you see a flame apparently outside, flickering strangely in the air. It is only the reflection of the fire in the room on the window-pane. Is not the heaven you see beyond the window of this life, the projected reflection of your present experience? What you are now determines your future; and the heaven of each man is just what he himself makes it, according as the fire of love and holiness burns more or less brightly on the hearth of his heart. — *H. Macmillan.*

33-37. (33) *taches*, *i. e.* of the tabernacle cloths, *see vs. 6.* **holy . . holy**, the latter containing the ark. (34) **in . . place**,^a so called bec. the place of divine manifestation. (35) **table . . veil**,^b in the holy place. **over against**, opposite to. In the holy place, into which none but the priests were allowed to enter, were stationed the Candlestick, the Table of Shewbread, and the Altar of Incense. In the Most Holy, into which none but the high priest could enter, and he but once a year, was deposited only the Ark of the Covenant or Testimony, with its surmounting Mercy-seat. — *Bush.* (36) **hanging**, covering, curtain. **needlework**, embroidered, the designs on the other veil being inwoven. When let down, it probably covered the eastern side, or front of the tabernacle. When raised, it allowed the eye to penetrate into the holy place. — *Pulp. Com.* (37) **five . . wood**, of wh. it is supposed the centre pillar would be taller than the others, supporting a ridge-piece; the others of shorter length supporting purlines, across wh. the cloth would fall, sloping down fr. the ridge to the planks on each side. Hence the front of the tabernacle would resemble the gable end of a house.^c

The door of the tabernacle. — The hanging, which formed the door, was made of the same materials as the veil: the only difference being that in the former the colors were skilfully intermixed, whereas in the latter a pattern of cherubim was cunningly or ingeniously embroidered. The priests, who entered within the door of the tabernacle alone beheld the cherubim or glory worked into the veil and roof, whilst the worshipers in the court saw the same colors intermingled in the door-curtain. May not this teach us that every worshiper of God recognizes the beauty and perfection of Christ, God manifest in the flesh, as his eye rests upon the door-curtain. But the nearer we approach to God, the more intimate our fellowship with Him in heavenly places, the more shall we discern the glories of Jesus, and realize His power, majesty, and strength. He will be the one object that fills our soul, and under the shadow of His wings shall we abide. — *H. W. Soltan.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

1-4. (1) **altar**,^d Heb. *misbēah*, for sacrifice; **five**, *etc.*, about 7½ ft. long and broad, and 4½ ft. high. (2) **horns**,^e projections or pinnacles, perh. horn-shaped. (3) **pans**, pots. **to . . ashes**, in wh. to carry them away; shovels, hoe-shaped scrapers. **basons**, for catching the blood. **fleshhooks**, for placing the victim on the altar. **firepans**, braziers in which fire was carried from one place to another. **brass**, copper with an alloy of tin, *i. e.* bronze; brass was unknown. (4) **grate . . brass**, through which the ashes would fall.

Building timber in the wilderness. — Mr. Palmer, the professor of Arabic at Cambridge who explored the Wilderness of the Wanderings, or the Desert of Tih, and recovered many of the ancient sites hitherto unknown, as Hazeroth, Hormah, and others, discovered some very interesting ruins at Contillet Geraiyah, a spot thirty miles south of Kadesh Barnea, and eighty miles south of Beersheba. "Digging into the ruins," he says, "we found some sun-dried bricks, and beams of wood with signs of mortises, bolts, etc., which proved to be a sort of framework, covering a series of large amphoræ, or water-jars, four of which we uncovered. One of these we dug out and put together; it was marked on the shoulder with a Phœnician aleph. . . . The use of wood in the building was worth notice, as the pieces we found were of *seyal* or shit-tim-wood, and, excepting one on Wady Fahdi, there is not a single tree of the kind in the Tih at the present day. Indeed, the only tree we saw after leaving Sinai, besides the one just mentioned, was the *nebuk* or *sidr* (thorn-tree)

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beautiful, which rusts out and dies because they are too hard pressed to procure it any gratification." — *Mrs. Stowe.*

the most holy place

a Ex. xl. 21; Le. xvi. 2; He. ix. 5.

b He. ix. 2.

c See cut in *Spk. Com.*

"It was a very proper answer to him who asked why any man should be delighted with beauty, that it was a question that none but a blind man could ask; since any beautiful object doth so much attract the sight of all men, that it is in no man's power not to be pleased with it." — *Clarendon.*

the altar of burnt offering

d Ex. xxxviii. 1; Ezek. xliii. 14; He. xiii. 10

e Ps. cxviii. 27; Le. iv. 7; xvi. 18; 1 Ki. i. 51; He. vi. 18.

"Order is a lovely nymph, the child of beauty and wisdom. Her attendants are comfort, neatness, and activity; her abode is the valley of happiness. She never appears so lovely as when contrasted with her opponent, disorder." — *Johnson.*

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beside the fort at Nakhl." We have thus a proof that in Hebrew times, far beyond the limits of South Judæa, the shittim was the ordinary timber of the country. — *Tristram*.

the staves, etc.

"Whatever may be the means, or whatever the more immediate end of any kind of art, all of it that is good agrees in this, that it is the expression of one soul talking to another, and is precious according to the greatness of the soul that utters it." — *Ruskin*.

5-8. (5) compass . . beneath, a ridge projecting round the interior of the altar. net, see vs. 4. even . . altar, halfway betw. the top and the bottom. (6, 7) staves, poles by which to carry altar from place to place, "as ever ready to remove." (8) hollow, etc., prob. plated with bronze, to resist action of fire. as . . mount, the pattern of each part, as of the whole tabernacle, minutely given.

The altar of burnt-offering. — This altar was a sort of square chest of shittim-wood overlaid with brass. It was five cubits long by five broad, and three in height (about three yards square and five feet high), and had a horn or projection at each corner. It was hollow within, and in the middle of its surface was a sunk grating of brass to support the fire, which was furnished with four rings, that it might be taken out and carried separately from the body of the altar. The ashes from the fire sank through the grating, and were received in a pan that was placed under it. The altar had four rings or staples at the sides, into wh. poles of shittim-wood covered with brass were inserted when the altar was to be removed from place to place. This is the account which seems to agree best with the text, although some of the details have been differently understood by various expositors. — *Kitto*.

the court of the tabernacle

curtains for the length

9-11. (9) court, "rectangular enclosure within wh. the tabernacle stood. hundred . . side, i. e. about 150 ft. (10) sockets, bases. fillets, connecting-rods which joined the pillars at the top, and probably helped to support the "hangings." These, and the "hooks" were of solid silver. — *Pulp. Com.* (11) likewise, etc. The north side the same as the south in all respects; see vs. 9, 10.

a Ex. xxxviii. 9.

"There is scarcely a single joy or sorrow, within the experience of our fellow creatures, which we have not tasted; yet the belief in the good and beautiful has never forsaken us. It has been medicine to us in sickness, richness in poverty, and the best part of all that ever delighted us in health and success." — *Letitia Hunt*.

Fine linen seems to be used in Scripture as a type of righteousness — a righteousness equal to all the demands of God — enabling him who possesses it to stand in God's glory; in contrast with sin, by reason of which all come short of the glory of God. The Israelite, who entered through the gate of the court, would be encompassed, shut in, and protected by this hanging of fine-twined linen. Though in a wilderness, he stood on holy ground; and the fine linen by which he was surrounded shut out from his eye the dreary, barren prospect, through which he was wending his way. The lovely Tabernacle of God stood partially revealed to his gaze. The courts of the Lord's house, overshadowed by the cloud of glory, were before him. The altar, with its lamb for the burnt-offering, sent up an odor of a sweet savor on his behalf. The laver, filled with water, told him of a fountain filled with life and purity, which would cleanse away even the ordinary defilement contracted whilst passing through a wilderness of death. He had entered through the gate of the court, the appointed doorway; within, every object proclaimed life, peace, righteousness, acceptance, and nearness to God. Moreover, no deadly foe could enter these precincts. Thus the court presented a place of security, of holiness, and of intercourse with God. Jerusalem on earth will hereafter afford some such place of refuge for the nations of the earth. — *H. W. Soltan*.

curtains for the breadth

12-15. (12, 13) breadth . . cubits, i. e. 75 ft. (14, 15) fifteen cubits, or 22½ ft. each side of the gate, wh. would therefore be 30 ft.

"Order is the sanity of the mind, the health of the body, the peace of the city, the security of the state. As the beams to a house, so is order to all things." — *Southey*.

Divine design. — There are few subjects that confuse the mind more thoroughly than the numerous and diverse mineral substances which form the great mass of the earth's crust; and it was not till Abbé Haüy dropped his beautiful specimen of calcareous spar, and noted that all the shivered fragments of the original prism had the same rhomboidal form, that men dreamt of any regularity among inorganic objects. God formed His manual of religious instruction after this analogy of nature. Its unity does not stand out upon the surface, neither does its unity of design. We have to make due, devout, and diligent search to find the Divine design in these Exodus unveilings. — *Adamson*.

the gate and pillars of the court

16-17. (16) hanging, curtain. (17) shall . . silver, connected with silver bars.

Linen weaving was extensively carried on in ancient Egypt. On the tombs

are found various representations of the mode of carrying on this art. Pharaoh arrayed Joseph in vestures of fine linen. There can be no doubt that during the captivity in Egypt the Israelitish women were thus employed. It was as bond-slaves in the houses of the princes of Egypt that they acquired the arts which were afterwards used in the service of the Lord. Thus the disciplines of life are often enlisted by God to enable His chosen ones to render to Him agreeable service. *The fine twined linen* probably alludes to the great pains taken in the bleaching of linen in ancient Egypt. Osburn says that, after being marked, the piece of wet linen was probably wrapped in strong sacking made for the purpose, one end of which was fastened to a post, and a staff was inserted in a loop in the other. It was then wrung by the united strength of two men, so as to force out as much of the water as possible, and thus prevent any impurity that might be in the water or in the cloth from drying in. It may, therefore, be called fine twined, or twisted, or wrung linen. Such was the righteousness of God, wrought out by the Lord Jesus on the plains of earth; that fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints. Through the ordeal of trial the Lord Jesus wrought it; and through much tribulation the saints enter the kingdom to wear it. — *Adamson*.

18—21. (18) *length . . cubits*, see *vss.* 9-11. *breadth . . where*, see *vss.* 12-15. (19) *pins . . court*, tent-nails; spikes to which the boards, hangings, etc., were attached by cords. *brass, i. e. bronze.* (20) *pure . . light*, oil obtained by bruising, hence “cold-drawn.” *lamp*, candlestick. *to . . always,* *i. e.* every night. (21) *tabernacle . . congregation*, tabernacle of appointment, place of stated meeting. *without . . vail,* the holy place. *Aaron . . Lord,* *i. e.* shall superintend the oil, the lamps and the lighting. Compare *ch.* xxiv. 1. The intention to confer the priesthood on the descendants of Aaron, first openly revealed in the next chapter (*vss.* 1-43), is tacitly assumed from time to time in the earlier narrative. — *Pulp. Com.*

Burning with pure oil. — It is related in the biography of one who lived to become a devoted Christian man, that while he was yet a little boy, the passage read from the Bible in the family on a certain occasion was *vs.* 20, describing the oil used in the vessels of the tabernacle. This boy was then but five years old, and it was not supposed that he could understand or feel the slightest interest in a subject considered far beyond his age. The older children left the room after family worship, but the little boy was detained, as usual, to be taught some simple verses of the Bible by his mother, and to pray with her. He kneeled down at length to pray, and in the midst of his prayer he paused, and exclaimed, “O my God, make me to burn this day with pure oil!” “Most evidently,” says his biographer, “was this prayer heard and answered throughout the day of his life.” How appropriate is this petition for the morning offering of every Christian, “Make me to burn this day with pure oil!” If He who hath all hearts in His keeping vouchsafe a gracious answer to that prayer, the example of the disciple must be one that will glorify the name of Jesus. Such a man will walk with God. No unhal- lowed fires will be lighted in his bosom. Neither revenge nor hate can burn there. — *Bib. Ill.*

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“The mother of useful arts is necessity; that of the fine arts is luxury. For father the former has intellect; the latter genius, which itself is a kind of luxury.” — *Schopenhauer*.

“That is the best part of beauty which a picture cannot express.” — *Bacon*.

beaten oil for the light

a 1 Jo. ii. 20; Ps. cxix. 105; Ma. v. 16.

b Ex. xxvi. 31, 32.

c Ac. xx. 27, 28.

“The golden beams of truth and the silken cords of love, twisted together, will draw men on with a sweet violence whether they will or no.” — *Cudworth*.

“Truth is a torch, but a terrific one; therefore we all try to reach it with closed eyes lest we should be scorched.” — *Goethe*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

1—5. (1) *take, R. V.*, “bring thou near unto thee.” *that . . office,* after the tent and the altar comes the priest to serve in the one and at the other. *Nadab, etc.,* see *vi.* 23. (2) *holy garments,* *i. e.* set apart for special holy services. *glory*, honor, the office honorable. *beauty*, ornament, decoration. the priest's garments were to be of gorgeous appearance to impress and inspire the people with respect for them. (3) *wise-hearted,* expert, ingenious, skilful. *to . . him, i. e.* to be a badge of his consecration. *minister . . office*, not a lord of the heritage, but a servant of God. (4) *breastplate*, see *vs.* 15 *ff.* *ephod,* see *vs.* 6 *ff.* *robe*, see *vs.* 31 *ff.* *coat*, see *vs.* 39. *mitre*, see *vs.* 36 *ff.* (5) *take . . linen*, materials of which the priestly garments should be wrought.

The four colors of the tabernacle signified that the wearer belonged to the institution. This badge of office certified that he had a right to enter the habitation where these significant colors were dominant. The Arab wears on

the high priest's vestments

d Nu. xviii. 7; He. v. 1, 4.

e Ex. xxix. 5, 6, 29; Le. viii. 30; Ps. cxxxii. 9, 16; Is. lxi. 10; Jo. i. 14; He. vii. 26.

f Ex. xxxi. 3, 6; xxxvi. 1; 1 Co. xii. 8-11; Jas. i. 17.

g Le. viii. 7, 8; 1 Sa. xxiii. 9-12.

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All the higher arts of design are essentially chaste. They purify the thoughts, as tragedy, according to Aristotle, purifies the passions." — *Schlegel*.

A holy life has a voice; it speaks when the tongue is silent, and is either a constant attraction, or a perpetual reproof.

the ephod

α 1 Sa. ii. 18; xxii. 18; 2 Sa. vi. 14.

b Re. i. 12, 13; Is. xi. 5; Eph. vi. 14.

c Acc. to Rabbins, on the right Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali; on the left, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin. — *Josephus*, with a view to their mothers, places them thus—on the right, Reuben, Levi, Issachar, Naphtali, Gad, Joseph; on the left, Simeon, Judah, Zebulun, Dan, Asher, Benjamin.

d 2 Ti. ii. 19; He. vii. 25; Is ix. 6; Eph. v. 27.

the breastplate

"The misfortune in the state is that nobody can enjoy life in peace, but that everybody must govern; and in art, that nobody will enjoy what has been produced, but that everyone wants to reproduce on his own account." — *Goethe*

the stones of the breast-plate

his head a cap similar to the Turkish *fez*, which he calls a *tarbush*. The Bedouin spreads over it a handkerchief folded so that three of the four corners hang down on the back and shoulders, and binds it in place with a twisted rope of goat's hair or camel's hair, reaching around his head. The Syrian Arab, if he wishes any addition to his *tarbush*, ties a handkerchief over it, or winds around it a shawl of wool, silk, or cotton, so as to form a turban. The oriental turban has exhibited both in modern times and in the remotest antiquity, a great variety of form, material, and color. By means of this diversity it has served to distinguish between the men of different nations, and of different classes in the same nation. As an ancient Assyrian king was distinguished by a head-dress of peculiar shape and ornamentation, as a descendant of Mohammed is known by the color of his turban, so the dignity of the Hebrew priest, as an attendant on Jehovah in His holy habitation, was symbolized by a turban peculiar to his order in its material, its color, and perhaps its shape. — *E. E. Atwater*.

6—12. (6) **ephod**,^a waistcoat, apparently a kind of short apron, to wh. the breastplate was attached. **cunning**, skilful. (7) **shoulder-pieces**, prob. badges of dignity, etc., like the modern epaulette. **joined**, etc., prob. the ephod was formed of two principal pieces, one for the back, the other for the front, connected by shoulder-straps. (8) **curious**, ornamented. **girdle**,^b band. **shall . . same**, material and kind of work. (9) **onyx**, excellent stone for engraving, see Ge. ii. 12. (10) **according . . birth**, in the order of age. (11) **engraver**, artificer, worker. **signet**, seal or ring. **ouches**, settings, sockets. (12) **put . . shoulders**,^c thus sig. that the priest bore the burden of Israel in the presence of the Lord. **memorial**,^d remembrance; the priest remembered whose representative he was; the Lord remembered His covenant people.

The ephod. — The ephod, with its "curious girdle" and the onyx stones upon its shoulder-pieces, was the distinctive priestly garment. It hung upon the shoulder down to the waist, and was formed of the most costly and beautiful materials, corresponding exactly to those employed in the interior decoration of the holy place. The girdle was made of the same materials, with the same combination of colors. But the most important parts of the ephod were the shoulder-pieces, on which were set two onyx stones, with the names of the tribes engraved on them (see vs. 12). Here we have the idea of representation clearly and beautifully symbolized. The shoulders, to a Hebrew mind, were the symbol of strength; and the idea was, that when the high priest entered the holy place he did not go alone, but carried with him on his strong shoulders the children of Israel whom he represented; and the estimation in which the people were held was expressed in the value of the precious stones on which the names were engraved, and the setting of pure gold with which they were surrounded. — *J. M. Gibson*.

13—16. (13) **ouches**, see vs. 11. sockets or rosettes. (14) **at the ends**, etc., "like cords shalt thou make them of wreathen work." and . . **ouches**, fr. the chains the breastplate was suspended. (15) **breastplate**, *lit.* ornament **judgment**, prob. in ref. to its use as an oracle. (16) **span**, about 9½ in.

Qualities of the artist. —

He is a being of deep reflection — one
That studies nature with intensest eye,
Watching the works of air, earth, sea, and sun —
Their motion, altitude, their form, their dye —
Cause and effect. The elements which run,
Or stagnant are, he traces to their source,
With vivid study, till his pencil makes
A perfect likeness; or, by fancy's force,
A new creation in his heart he takes,
And matches nature's progress in his course
Toward glory. In the abstractions of the mind,
Harmony, passion, and identity,
His genius, like the summer sun, is shrined,
Till beauty and perfection he can see. — *Wordsworth*.

17—21. (17) **sardius**, or ruby, or perh. cornelian. **topaz**, perh. the chryso-

lyte, greenish yellow. (18) **diamond**,^a "Here all the names must be wrong, for none of these three stones could be cut by the ancient engravers. Probably, garnet, lapis lazuli, and onyx are intended."—*Pulp. Com.* (19) **figure**, an unknown mineral in modern times, perh. amber. **agate**, well known. **amethyst**,^b purple of diff. shades. (20) **beryl**, doubtful; perh. a kind of topaz. **jasper**, prob. the brown Egyptian variety, or the green jasper. **inclosings**, settings. (21) **according . . names**,^c i. e. each by the name on it shall stand for one of the twelve tribes.

Precious stones.—They were all precious stones; not one was mean or contemptible. God's church has ever been costly. No jewel is what it afterwards becomes when first found. Let not the stone which sparkles in its setting sneer at that which only looks like a pebble. The Master has chosen it; He knows that He has put within its rude exterior that which only needs time and skill to make it "shine as the stars for ever and ever."—*J. Champness.*

The value of jewels in their association.—

HELEN. Why, what could it be?
Jewels are baubles only; whether pearls
From the sea's lightless depths, or diamonds
Cull'd from the mountain's crown, or chrysolith,
Cat's eye or moonstone, or hot carbuncle,
That from the bed of Eden's sunniest stream
Extracted, lamp'd the ark, what time the roar
Of lions pining for their free sands, smote
The hungry darkness,—toys are they at best.
Jewels are not of all things in my sight
Most precious.

FESTUS. Nor in mine. It is in the use
Of which they may be made their value lies;
In the pure thoughts of beauty they call up,
And qualities they emblem. So in that
Thou wearest there thy cross;—to me it is
Suggestive of bright thoughts and hopes in Him
Whose one great sacrifice availeth all,
Living and dead through all eternity.
Not to the wanderer over southern seas
Rises the constellation of the cross
More lovely o'er the sky and calm blue wave,
Than does to me that bright one on thy breast.
As diamonds are purest of all things,
And but embodied light which fire consumes
And renders back to air, that nought remains;
And as the cross is symbol of our creed,
So let that ornament signify to thee
The faith of Christ, all purity, all light,
Through fervency resolving into heaven.
Each hath his cross, fair lady, on his heart;
Never may thine be heavier or darker
Than that now on thy breast, so light and bright,
Rising and falling with its bosom-swell.—*Bailey.*

22—25. chains . . work, *R. V.*, "chains like cords, of wreathen work."
(23) rings . . rings, for the chains. (24) chains . . breastplate, the mode
in which the breastplate was to be fastened to the ephod. (25) and the other,
etc., minute directions: God's people have need to be taught little things.

Durability of gold.—It does not melt like ice, nor rust like iron, nor burn like wood, nor crumble into dust like stone. On opening the grave of an old Etruscan king, they found him lying robed and crowned as his warriors had entombed him two thousand years before. An impressive spectacle! but one they had hardly seen, when it vanished from their sight. Touched by the fresh air admitted at the open door, body and robes dissolved in a moment, leaving nothing where they had lain but a thin layer of dust. Not so the golden fillet that bound his brows; of all that funeral pomp, it only remains unchanged. Not time, nor even fire itself, destroys this precious metal: the flames may cleanse, but they cannot consume it. They esteem themselves happy who have their coffers filled with it: but how much happier those who

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^a Gk. *adamos* invincible; hence we say as hard as adamant. "On a diamond our wrongs we all engrave, but write our benefits upon the wave."—*King.*

^b Gk. *amethystos* not drunken: wine fr. an amethyst cup supposed by ancients to prevent intoxication.

^c Is. xliii. 4; Mal. iii. 17.

Sardonyx is a precious stone; probably named from its likeness to both the sardius and the onyx. It is dark, variegated with bluish white, black, and red lying in circles, as if inlaid by art. It is only mentioned in Rev. xxi. 20; appearing to be the fifth row of stones on which the heavenly city in John's vision seemed to rest.

"Like other beautiful things in this world, its end (that of a shaft) is to be beautiful; and, in proportion to its beauty, it receives permission to be otherwise useless. We do not blame emeralds and rubies bec. we cannot make them into heads of hammers."—*Ruskin.*

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the use and place of the breastplate

a Cant. viii 6; Is. xl. 11; xlix. 16.

"When I behold the passion for ornamentation and the corresponding power, I feel as if women had so far shown what they are bad for rather than what they are good for."—*Julia W. Howe.*

"Ornaments were invented by modesty."—*Job u. bert.*

Urim and Thummim : and robe of the ephod

a *The manifestation and the truth;* Syr., "the lucid and the perfect;" Arab., "illuminations and uncertainties;" Lat. *Vulg.*, "doctrine and verity;" Luth., "light and right."

"Every true specimen of perfection, or even excellence, of whatever kind it may be, from the moral down to the physical, elevates every instance of an inferior degree of excellence that we meet with, and sheds over it a portion of its own perfection."—*F. Lieber.*

"Among the other excellences of man, this is one, that he can form an idea of perfection much beyond what he has experience of in himself; and is not limited in his conception of wisdom and virtue."—*Hume.*

have obtained what the Spirit counsels men to buy—"gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich!"

26-29. (26) rings . . thereof, attached to the two lower corners. inward, behind and out of sight. (27) two sides . . forepart . . coupling, these were attached to the shoulder-pieces, just above their union with the girdle. By these four fastenings at its four corners, the breastplate was securely attached to the ephod. — *Pulp. Com.* (29) Aaron . . heart,* this refers appy. to the bearing of the engraved names upon his breast.

Aaron's breastplate.—Consider—I Its primary use. 1. Show what this breastplate was; 2. Enlarge upon its particular use. II. Its typical intent. It was designed to represent what Christ—1. Is doing for us: He "appears in the presence of God" for us; 2. Will do in us.—*C. Simson.*

The breastplate.—This was a piece of rich cloth, set with twelve precious stones, one for each tribe of Israel, the size and beauty of which, according to Josephus, placed this ornament beyond the purchase of men. The cloth was of the same embroidered stuff as the outer robe or ephod, over which it was placed, and this stuff was doubled, the better to hold the precious stones with which it was set. When thus doubled, it was a span (or nine inches) square. There was at each corner a ring of gold, to the two uppermost of which were attached wreathed chains of gold, by which the breastplate was fastened to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod; and the two under rings were furnished with blue laces, to be fastened to rings in the embroidered girdle of the ephod.—*Kitto.*

30-32. (30) Urim, lights. Thummim,* perfections. The precious stones of the breastplate; the high priest, putting his hand on the Urim and Thummim, asked the counsel of God in behalf of the people.—*Jamieson, F. & B.* and . . heart, they were prob. kept in the bag formed by the doubling of the breastplate, see vss. 15, 16. (31) robe . . ephod, worn beneath, and seen above and below the ephod; without seam. (32) hole . . thereof, hence it was drawn on over the head. woven work, no cunning handiwork employed upon it; this robe woven throughout (ill. Christ's seamless coat: He, the great high priest, had no breastplate, the names of His people being in His heart). habergeon, coat of mail (chain-armor) covering head and shoulders, drawn on over the head.

Aaron a type of Christ.—I. Aaron, a teacher, or the mountain of fortitude; so is Christ the true teacher of God's word. II. Aaron was Moses's mouth to the people; so is Christ His Father's mouth to men, declaring His will and mind to them. III. Aaron was the blesser of the people (Lev. ix. 22); so is Christ the true blesser of His people (Acts iv. 27). IV. Aaron was the high priest of the Lord; Jesus Christ is the only true High Priest of the church. V. Aaron died upon the mount; Christ was crucified on Mount Calvary.—*B. Keach.*

Urim and Thummim.—Much ingenious speculation has been brought to bear on the subject of Urim and Thummim, through wh. the high priest obtained responses fr. God. The questions on wh. the discussion has turned have been: were the Urim and Thummim distinct from or identical with the precious stones of the breastplate? if distinct, what were they? and in what manner were they instrumental in obtaining answers from God to the questions of the high priest? The word "Urim" means "lights," and the word Thummim "perfections," and might be very well applicable to the precious stones of the breastplate, if taken as epithets instead of names. The most judicious interpreters are generally disposed to concur in the statement of Josephus, that the Urim and Thummim were identical with the precious stones. It does, indeed, seem remarkable that had they been something separate, they should not have been described in the minute statement; and we are inclined to think that a careful examination of the different texts will leave little doubt as to their identity. In the description in the breastplate in Ch. xxxix. 8-21, the Urim and the Thummim are not mentioned, but the precious stones are; while in the description in Lev. viii. 8, the Urim and Thummim are mentioned, but not the stones, from whence it is obvious to infer that they were the same things. Even the text before us, as compared with the preceding verse, can only be well understood by supposing the Urim and Thummim to be the substance on which the names of the tribes were engraven. In the previous verse Aaron is directed to wear the names upon his

heart before the Lord continually; and in the present text he is directed to wear the *Urim and Thummim upon his heart before the Lord continually*. This certainly seems a more reasonable and proper account than that of Gesenius and others, who imagine that the *Urim and Thummim* were small oracular images, like the *teraphim*, by which revelation and truth were personified, and which were placed in the inner cavity of the breastplate. — *Kitto*.

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33-35. (33) *hem*, bottom of the skirt. *make*, embroider. *pomegranates*, emblem of fruitfulness. (34) *bell*, *etc.*, ill. the sound of the gospel and the fruit of preaching. (35) *sound* . . *Lord*,^b by wh. the people might know he was discharging the functions of his office, and be themselves incited to devotion.

the hem of the robe

A chime of bells. — Consider the gospel as having many voices like to bells, and note that these are — I. Golden bells. No one can estimate the value of the gospel. It is the sweetest sound to sinners, the best consolation to mourners, and the mightiest hope for all. II. Bells of invitation. When the Jews heard the clash of those bells in the hem of the priest's robe, they knew it was an invitation to worship. III. Bells of warning. The Jews were warned by the bells to worship, lest God should be offended. The gospel warns us to serve God. IV. Bells of joy. They announced to the Jews the possibility of pardon. The gospel announces this now to us. V. Bells of triumph. — *Talmage*.

a Grows wild in the E., fruit size of orange flattened at the end like an apple, beautiful color, choice flavor, brownish red when ripe, inside like the orange, but filled with many reddish seeds.

The dumb bell. — Mr. Gatty, in his book on "Bells," gives the following anecdote, on the credit of Cardinal Baronius: "When Charles II., king of France, A. D. 615, was at Sens, in Burgundy, he heard a bell in the church of St. Stephen, the sound of which pleased him so much that he ordered it to be transported to Paris. The Bishop of Sens, however, was greatly displeased at this, and the bell so sympathized with him that it turned dumb on the road and lost all its sound. When the king heard of this he commanded that the bell should be carried back to its old quarters, when, strange to relate, as it approached the town, it recovered its original tone, and began to ring so as to be heard at Sens, whilst yet about four leagues distant from it." The true preacher grows silent if forced to any other service than his Lord's. If he attempts to speak on any other topic than that which concerns his Lord and the gospel, he misses his former force; he is not at home; he is glad to end his speech and sit down. Our bell is dumb if it does not ring out for Jesus. The world would soon dismiss us if it had hired us to be its orator, for our heart is elsewhere, and only upon the one dear, familiar theme can be eloquent. — *C. H. Spurgeon*.

b Ps. ii. 11.

"Music is the art of the prophets, the only art that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us." — *Luther*.

"How sour sweet music is, when time is broke and no proportion kept." — *Shakespeare*.

36. *plate*, on the front of the mitre very conspicuous. *holiness* . . *Lord*,^c *Heb.*, *kodosh lu-Yehovah*, holiness to Jehovah, sig. the holiness with which, by virtue of his calling, the priest was invested. That to which all else was to conduce, made impressive.

the plate of the mitre

Aaron's mitre. — This was intended to foreshow — I. The holiness of our great High Priest. 1. It was necessary that He should be spotless Himself; 2. It seems to have been particularly ordained of God that Christ's innocence should be established by every possible proof: 3. Thus, a sure foundation was laid for all the hopes that are built upon Him. II. The need we have of an interest in it. We need an atonement. III. Its efficacy in our behalf. Through Christ's holiness we are accepted before God. — *C. Simeon*.

c Le. xxi. 1, 7, 8, x. 4; He. vii. 26; 1 Co. 1. 30.

Mitre. — This mitre was a turban of fine linen (*vs.* 39), furnished in front with a plate of pure gold, on which were inscribed the words, "Holiness to the Lord," or "Holy to Jehovah," and which was attached to the turban by a blue lace. The word translated "plate," signifies a flower, and is rendered *πεταλον*, "petal," in the LXX., which seems to show that the plate was wrought with flowered work, or was itself in the form of a flower or petal. In Ch. xxxix. 6, this ornament is called *nezer*, from a verb signifying "to separate," and hence denoting a crown, as a mark of separation or distinction. The same word is applied to the diadem of kings. Indeed, such turbans of fine linen, with an encircling or front ornament of gold or precious stones, seem to have been the usual diadems of ancient kings. Thus we read, in Justin, that Alexander the Great took his diadem from his head to bind up the wounds of Lysimachus; which shows clearly enough that it was of linen, probably with some distinguishing ornament on the same principle as this on the turban of the Hebrew pontiff. — *Kitto*.

"Blessed is the memory of those who have kept themselves unspotted from the world; yet more blessed and more dear the memory of those who have kept themselves unspotted in the world." — *Mrs. Jameson*.

"Think not thy love to God merits God's love to thee: Man's love to God is, nothing but a faint reflection of God's love to man." — *Quarles*

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the linen coat,
mitre, and
girdle

Mitre, a head-dress; Fr.; Lat. *mitra*; Gk. *mitra*, head-dress, akin to *mitos*, thread.

a Le i. 4; Jo i. 29; He. ix. 28; 1 Pe. ii. 24; Jo. xvii. 19; He. iv. 14-16.

"In the time of Josephus the shape of the mitre had become somewhat altered. It was circular, was covered with a piece of fine linen, and sat so closely on the upper part of the head (for it did not cover the whole of the head) that it would not fall off when the body was bent down." — *Jahn*.

investments
and conse-
crations, etc.,
of priests

b Vulg. *tiaras*.

c Ex. xxxix. 27-29; Ezek. xlv. 17, 18; Ma. xxii. 12, 13; Eph. vi. 13.

d. Le viii. 12.

e Le. v. 17; xxii. 9.

"In the Bible the body is said to be more than raiment. But many people read the Bible Hebrew-wise, backward; and thus the general conviction now is, that raiment is more than the body."

consecration
of priests

their
hallowing

f Mal. i. 13, 14.

g Le. vi. 20, 22.

h Ital. version has *fritella*, fritters.

37-39. (37) put . . lace, a band or fillet, to wh. the plate (*vs.* 36) was attached. mitre, turban. (38) that . . Lord,^a the people accepted in the person of the priest. (39) coat . . linen, a kind of tunic or cassock: prob. worn next the skin. girdle . . needlework, embroidered: very long and wound several times around the body, the ends hanging down or in active service flung over the shoulders. — *Jamieson F. and B.*

Our High Priest. — Noting in Christ four things. 1. The truth and constancy in accomplishing all the gracious promises of the gospel, seeing our High Priest is girt about with a girdle of verity. 2. His justice, integrity, pure and uncorrupt judgment, as gold (Isa. xi. 5), "Righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins and faithfulness the girdle of His reins." 3. His readiness to do the office of a mediator. 4. His mindfulness and care in performing His office. For as not girding is a sign of carelessness and negligence, so girding of care and industry. So our Lord and High Priest never carelessly cast off any poor and penitent sinner; but in the days of His flesh minded their misery; and now in heaven keeps on His girdle, casts not off the care of His Church, but perpetually accomplisheth whatsoever is needful for her salvation. — *T. Taylor*.

The girdle. — This was worn by the Hebrews as an ornament and as a strengthener. It was put on Aaron, but our Jesus has in Himself everything that was symbolized by this, and everything else that was put on Aaron. I like to look at the girdle as the symbol of service, and at Jesus Christ as our girded High Priest, ever ready to go to God on His people's errands. Jesus is ever ready for any service His people may need. He will present their prayers to God and obtain answers for His beloved disciples, or He will stoop to wash their feet. — *G. Rodgers*.

40-43. (40) bonnets,^b R. V., "headtires." glory . . beauty,^c see *vs.* 2. (41) thou . . them, *etc.*,^d neither the office nor its dress to be self-assumed. (42) breeches, drawers, see *xx.* 26. Often represented in Egyptian figures. (43) that . . die,^e by appearing before God in the discharge of priestly functions negligently attired.

The high priest's vestments. — Apart from their significance they may suggest some useful reflections on dress. We observe—I. That dress may be employed, as in this case, as the insignia of office, King's robe and crown, Judge's robe, *etc.* II. That dress should be adapted to social stations; maids often more garishly attired than mistresses. III. That dress may often be regarded as an index to character. Modesty, cleanliness, *etc.*, without weak leanings to absurd extravagance of fashion, ought to be aimed at. IV. A few words on the soul's dress, — "Be clothed with humility." "The robe of righteousness."

Holy wholly. — In the raiment of Aaron, as in all the tabernacle appurtenances, every part was holy throughout. Not a carven pomengranate, not a bell, silver or golden, but was holy wholly. The table and its lamps, with flowers of silver light, tent and stones, fluttering curtains and ascending incense, altar and sacrifice, breastplate and ephod, mitre and gem-clasped girdle, wreathen chains and jewelled hangings, were holy. This signified not only (1) the entire holiness of God, with whom we have to do, but also (2) the absolute necessity for thorough sanctification of heart and life in ourselves. This is the will of God; and to accomplish this He sets His jewels in the fires that they may be purified, and like Himself in Holiness. — *Adamson*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

1-3. (1) hallow, sanctify, set apart. one . . bullock, *lit.* a youngling of the herd. and . . blemish,^f perfect. On offering to God that which is blemished see Mal. i. 6-14. (2) unleavened bread, unfermented; fermentation a sort of corruption. tempered,^g mixed with. wafers, thin cakes, pancakes.^h (3) them . . basket, *i. e.* the bread, *etc.* These to be brought with the bullock and the rams to the door of the T. and presented to the Lord. — *Bush*.

Ablutions and oblations. — The tabernacle, as Atwater remarks, is to be considered as the residence of the Divine King of Israel. The remembrance of this will aid in understanding some parts of the Jewish ritual that might otherwise be comparatively unintelligible. This explains the great importance

attached to personal cleanliness and freedom from corporal blemishes on the part of all the attendants of the sanctuary. Some of the sacrifices, such as burnt-offerings, were forms of consecration to the service of the sovereign — what in modern phraseology would be called homage. Such purification we have in the case of Joseph entering Pharaoh's presence, of Esther appearing before Ahasuerus, and of Daniel being presented to Nebuchadnezzar. The homage of offerings when persons acknowledged themselves subjects to a king, is as common to-day in eastern countries as it has ever been from the most remote historical periods. Hence the ideas were familiar to the Israelites who had just left Egypt.— *Adamson*.

4-9. (4) wash . . water,^a symbol of necessary spiritual cleanliness.^b (5) (6) see xxviii. 41. (7) take . . head,^c the ablution emphasizes moral purity, holy garments — righteousness, anointing with oil — the influences of the Spirit as essential to the exercise of the priestly office. — *J. F. and B.* (8) thou . . sons, the high priest first, then the others in their order.

The consecration of priests. — I. The priests were washed first. 1. Regeneration. 2. Remission of sin. II. After being washed, the priests were clothed. We must have the fine linen of an inward sanctification, and the outer garments for glory and for beauty, of the imputed righteousness of Christ. 1. These garments were provided for them. 2. These garments formed a complete apparel. 3. These garments were very comely to look upon. 4. The dress provided was absolutely necessary to be worn. III. These priests were anointed. Be filled with the Spirit. A man in Christ is fragrant with a holy perfume before the Lord, but out of Christ he is an unclean thing, and cannot approach the altar. IV. They had next to share in the sin offering. Lift your eyes to Jesus, your ransom and substitute. — *Bib. III.*

The unction of holiness. — The spirit of holiness gives to the church an aptness and a grace in all its movements and efforts for the conversion of the world. The influences of the Holy Spirit are, on that account, as well as for the sweet odor with which they perfume the church, called "the unction of the Holy One." The Agonistes in the Grecian games anointed themselves with unguents in order to attain quickness, agility, and nimbleness of action; and this gave a grace and beauty to their various movements. Before they could attain this, the unguent must have pervaded their frame, and not glistened in superficial application. In like manner, before the church can acquire a grace in doing good, and in acting "after the Spirit," the unction from the Holy One must penetrate all the muscles of its frame, and all the members of its body. — *Jenkyne*.

10-14. (10) put . . head,^d symbol for transference of sin to the victim. It was to be a sin-offering. (11) door, etc., that the priest might enter in as one to whom sin was not imputed. (12) horns . . finger,^e see xxvii. 2. (13) pour . . altar, where there was a trench to receive it. (14) burn . . camp,^f to show intense hatred of sin; Jesus suffered without the camp.

The necessity of holiness. — If a physician were called to see a patient who had a cancer on his breast, the only thing to be done would be to cut it out from the root. The physician might give palliatives, so that the patient would have less pain; or he might make his patient believe it was no cancer, or forget that he had a cancer near his vitals; but if the physician were to do this instead of removing the evil, he would be a wicked man, and the enemy of his patient. The man's case was such that the only favor which could be conferred upon him would be to cut out the cancer. Now all agree that sin is the great evil of the soul of man. Nothing can make man more spiritually happy here, or fit him for happiness hereafter, than the removal of sin from his nature. Sin is the plague-spot on the soul, which destroys its peace, and threatens its destruction unless removed. It is therefore certain that if the love of God were manifested towards man, it would be in turning man from sin, which produces misery, to holiness, which produces happiness — *J. B. Walker*.

15-18. (15) shalt . . ram, i. e. one of the two, vs. 1. and . . hands, as acknowledging that they were sinners. upon . . ram, to identify themselves with the victim, self-sacrifice being the idea. (16) blood.^g (18) sweet savour.^h

The righteousness of Christ. — Before you stands a bath, as it is called, — a

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Reverence for God's name. — That great and good man, the Hon. Robert Boyle, a nobleman, a statesman and an author, during his lifetime, before he ever said the name of God, always made a hush, a pause!

their purification and anointing

^a Le. viii. 6; Ti. iii. 5; He. x. 22.

^b 1 Pe. iii. 21.

^c He i. 9; 1 Jo. ii. 27.

To live in the presence of great truths and eternal laws, to be led by permanent ideals — that is what keeps a man patient when the world ignores him, and calm and unspotted when the world praises him. — *Balzac*.

the putting away of their sin

^d Le. i. 4; Is. liii. 4, 6; 2 Co. v. 21.

^e Le. viii. 15.

^f He. xlii. 11-13.

"The due completion of the various ceremonies above described was followed by the oblation of their sacrifices for Aaron and his sons; (1) A sin-offering; (2) A burnt-offering. (3) A peace-offering. — *Bush*.

an offering made for them

^g 1 Pe. i. 2.

^h Ge. viii. 21; Eph. v. 2.

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"Virtue is the nursing-mother of all human pleasures, who, in rendering them just, renders them also pure and permanent; in moderating them, keeps them in breath and appetite; in interdicting those which she herself refuses, whets our desires to those that she allows; and like a kind and liberal mother, abundantly allows all that nature requires."—*Scocrates*.

large vessel full of acid liquor. At one end, immersed in the fluid, hangs a sheet of silver; while above, and passing from side to side, is extended a thread of metal ready to be connected with a powerful battery, which, when I saw the process, was concealed in a room below. A vessel of common metal, being produced, was hung on the wire, and plunged into the bath; in which, I may remark, the fluid was so clear, that you could see to the bottom. The wire on which it was suspended was then connected with the electric battery: and what happened? A very remarkable result. By means of the mighty though unseen agent that was thus brought into action, the particles of silver were taken from the sheet of it, and passing invisibly through the translucent fluid, were transferred to the vessel that had been immersed in the bath. No sound accompanied the mysterious process, no violent action, no sign of motion; the eye saw nothing but the dull metal, beginning to assume a brilliant appearance; and in time, through what looked more like magic than common art, this base metal shone in a coating of the purest silver. Such a change, but far greater and more thorough, is wrought on the soul through the unseen and almighty influence of the Holy Spirit, as soon as faith has established a connection between the Saviour and the sinner. Righteousness is withdrawn from the former, and transferred to the latter. In the words of an inspired apostle, the believer puts on Christ, to stand before God covered with those merits, and justified by that righteousness which makes a sinner just. If this process of art suggested that resemblance, it presented under one aspect a mighty difference. Robbed of its precious metal, what was once a sheet of silver became in time a dull, attenuated, worthless thing. Its treasures were exhausted, Christ's never are; it could coat and cover a certain number, no more: but in Him there is righteousness for all the world, enough of mercy in the Father, of merit in the Son, and of grace in the Spirit, for every child of guilt. — *Guthrie*.

their wave offering

a La. viii. 22.

b He. ix. 12, 22; 1 Pe. ii. 5; Re. i. 5, 6.

c *Gescnius, Rosenmuller*.

d "As acknowledging God's omnipresence." — *Trapp*.

"A part of the blood of the ram of consecration was sprinkled upon the ears of Aaron and his sons, to remind them always to listen to the commands of God; upon their hands, to enjoin the duty of activity and zeal in the service of God; and upon their feet, to symbolize their walking in the ways of the Law." — *Kalisch*.

their heave-offering

19—24. (19) shalt . . ram,^a etc., see vs. 15. (20) put . . ear, dedication to God of the sense of hearing. thumb . . hand, executive power dedicated. toe . . foot, the complete dedication of their active service to the Lord. (21) blood . . garments,^b our robes made white with the blood of the Lamb. (22) fat . . rump, perh. the thick, fatty tail of Syrian sheep^c (*ovis laticaudata*). for consecration, i. e. for consecrating the initiation of the priests into their office. (23) loaf, etc., see vs. 2. (24) wave offering, *lit.* thou shalt wave them a waving. The offerings are laid upon the hands of Aaron and his sons, which support them, while Moses puts his hands under theirs and makes a waving motion,^d thus Moses transfers the priestly functions to his brother and his descendants. — *Pulp. Com.*

Personal consecration. — I. Christians are priests. As such, they are Divinely chosen. They are the leaders of God's worship, and repositories of saving knowledge; illustrious privileges are theirs. They fulfil the office of intercession for their fellow-men; consecration is required in them. II. Some illustrations of the character of their consecration. Observe its universality: blood on the extremes of the frame. — 1. The ear: all intellectual faculties; 2. The thumb: all practical activities; 3. The toe: all personal movements. — *Anon.*

The ram. — It is doubtless called *the ram of consecration* because there was more in this sacrifice that was peculiar to the present occasion than in either of the others. The ceremonies, therefore, were more numerous and significant. The blood instead of being merely sprinkled on the horns of the altar or effused round about it, was shared, as it were, between God and them; part of it being sprinkled, and part put upon them, upon their bodies, and upon their garments. The parts of their persons to which it was applied were no doubt selected with a view to render the rite most replete with instruction relative to the duties of their station. It was intended to imply that they ought to devote diligently their *ears*, their *hands*, and their *feet*, or in other words, all their faculties of mind and body, to the discharge of their ministerial office. By the blood's being applied to the *extreme* parts of the body, they could not but understand that the *whole* person in all its entirety, from the tip of the ear to the toe of the foot, was to be sanctified and set apart to the service of God. — *Bush*.

25—28. (25) burnt-offering, not a whole burnt-offering, but, strictly a

peace-offering. (26) *wave, etc., see vs. 24.* (27) *heave-offering,*^a perh. moved up and down, while the wave-offering was moved to and fro.

Guilty offerings. — Many of the mosques at Cairo are doubtless monuments of sincere piety; but not a few have certainly originated in ways far from creditable to their founders. I passed by one, a handsome building, respecting which I was told the following anecdote: The founder, on the first occasion of opening his mosque for the ceremonials of the Friday prayers, invited the chief 'Ulama to attend the service; and each of these congratulated him before the congregation, by reciting some tradition of the Prophet, or by some other words of an apposite nature, excepting one. This man the founder addressed, asking wherefore he was silent. "Hast thou nothing to say," he asked, "befitting this occasion?" The man, thus invited, readily answered, "Yes. If thou hast built this mosque with money lawfully acquired, and with a good intention, know that God hath built for thee a mansion in paradise, and great will be thy felicity. But if thou raised this temple by means of wealth unlawfully obtained, by money exacted from the poor by oppression and tyranny, know that there is prepared for thee a place in hell, and evil will be the transit thither." The latter was the case; and within a few hours after he had thus spoken, the only one among the company of 'Ulama who had dared to utter the language of truth on this occasion — to do which, indeed, required no little courage — suddenly died, a victim, as well known, of poison. — *Mrs. Poole.*

29—30. (29) *garments . . him,*^b symbol of succession in office. (30) *seven days*, perfect consecration: seven the perfect number.

The parish priest. —

A parish priest was of the pilgrim train;
An awful, reverend, and religious man.
His eyes diffused a venerable grace,
And charity itself was in his face.
Rich was his soul, though his attire was poor
(As God hath cloth'd His own ambassador);
For such, on earth, his bless'd Redeemer bore.
With eloquence innate his tongue was arm'd;
Though harsh the precept, yet the people charm'd;
For, letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky:
And oft with holy hymns he charm'd their ears
(A music more melodious than the spheres):
For David left him when he went to rest,
His lyre; and after him he sung the best. — *Chaucer.*

31—37. (31) *seethe*, boil, prepare as food, a sacrificial meal incident to every peace-offering. (32) *eat . . ram*, *i. e.* the remainder of the ram so prepared. (33) *eat . . made.*^c *stranger*, *i. e.* any one not a priest. (34) *burn . . fire*, gratitude to be prompt and complete: the thank-offering not kept till the morrow. (36) *atonement*, expiations, propitiations, reconciliations: these for the priests and the altar. (37) *whatsoever . . holy*,^d priest, victim, etc.

Atonement. — All bloody sacrifices embodied in themselves the idea of expiation. This idea may have existed in the mind of the patriarchs only in a vague and indefinite shape, as marking the earliest stage in the development of the plan of redemption. It may have resembled the penciled outline which the artist makes upon the canvas previous to his filling in with rainbow hues. The patriarchs and priests of the Mosaic dispensation understood that in themselves sacrifices had no atoning power. They could atone for sin only as they were symbolic — anticipatory of the real atonement afterwards effected by Christ. The idea which lies at the basis of atonement is that of covering. The sin atoned for is regarded as if no longer in existence. This paved the way for reconciliation — that idea which occurs ten times in the Greek New Testament. In nine of these ten, the Greek is translated "reconciliation;" and in the tenth (Rom. v. 11) "atonement," *i. e.*, at-onement. The death of Christ makes a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for sin; and thus opens up a way for man's reconciliation to God. — *Adamson.*

38—41. (38) *now*, the priests being consecrated and initiated, and atonement made for them. *this . . altar*, for the whole people. *two . . con-*

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^a Nu. xviii. 11, 18;
De. xviii. 3.

"The waving consisted in turning the offering to all the four parts of the earth and to heaven, as a symbol that it was destined for the Lord of heaven and earth." — *Kalisch.*

"Among the Jews the wave-offering was waved horizontally to the four points, and the heave-offering heaved up and down, to signify that He was Lord of heaven and earth." — *Bowes.*

days of
preparation
for duty

^b Nu. xx. 26, 28.

"Beauty commonly produces love, but cleanliness preserves it. Are itself is not unamiable while it is preserved clean and unsullied." — *Addison.*

the sin-offering
for atonement

^c Le. x. 14.

^d Ex. xxx. 26, 29;
He. x. 11.

"The altar sanctifieth the gift." Like a magnetized bar of iron or steel, it was first to receive itself a sanctifying influence from the oblations presented upon it, and then forever after to impart it. — *Bush.*

"He that hath slight thoughts of sin never had great thoughts of God." — *Dr. Owen.*

the daily
sin-offering

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a Nu. xxviii. 3; 2 Ch. xiii. 10, 11; Jo. i. 29; 1 Pe. i. 18, 19; He. vii. 24-27.

b Ps. lv. 17.

c 2 Ki. xvi. 15; Dan. ix. 21.

"The *Ædiles* among the Romans had their doors always standing open, that all who had petitions might have free access to them. The door of heaven is always open for the prayers of God's people." — *T. Watson*.

"Prayer is intended to increase the devotion of the individual, but if the individual himself prays he requires no formula, and scarcely requires words." — *W. Von Humboldt*.

the tabernacle sanctified

d Ex. xxv. 22; Le. xvi. 2; Nu. xxviii. 6.

e Ex. xl. 34; 2 Ch. v. 14; vii. 1; Hag. ii. 7-9; Mal. iii. 1.

"Let us accept different forms of religion among men, as we accept different languages, wherein there is still but one human nature expressed." — *Richter*.

the promise of Divine presence

f Zech. ii. 10; Jo. xiv. 17, 23; 2 Co. vi. 16.

g Re. xxi. 3.

h Jo. i. 14.

"The name of the Deity is spelt with four letters in a majority of languages. In Lat. *Deus*; Fr. *Dieu*; Gk. *Theos*; Ger. *Gott*; Scand. *Gott*.

tinually,^a daily remembrance and acknowledgment of sin. (39) *one . . morning*, acknowledging the possibility of sinning. *other . . even*,^b acknowledgment of sin. (40) *tenth deal*, *i. e.*, an omer or tenth part of ephah, about three pounds. *hin*, an Egyptian word: the hin = one-sixth of ephah. The fourth of hin = therefore about a pint and a half. *beaten oil*, see xxvii. 20. (41) *even*,^c *lit.* between the two evenings: so the Lamb of God was offered. *shalt . . morning*, see vs. 40. *sweet savour*, see vs. 18.

The atonement the gist of the gospel. — The late Thomas, Earl of Kinnoul, a short time before his death, in a long and serious conversation with the Rev. Dr. Kemp, of Edinburgh, thus expressed himself: "I have always considered the atonement the character of the gospel: as a system of religion, strip it of that doctrine, and you reduce it to a scheme of morality, excellent, indeed, and such as the world never saw; but, to man, in the present state of his faculty, absolutely impracticable. The atonement of Christ, and the truths immediately connected with that fundamental principle, provide a remedy for all the wants and weaknesses of our nature. Those who strive to remove those precious doctrines from the Word of God do an irreparable injury to the grand and beautiful system of religion which it contains, as well as to the comforts and hopes of man. For my own part, I am now an old man, and have experienced the infirmities of advanced years. Of late, in the course of a severe and dangerous illness, I have been repeatedly brought to the gates of death. My time in this world cannot now be long, but with truth I can declare that, in the midst of all my past afflictions, my heart was supported and comforted by a firm reliance upon the merits and atonement of my Saviour; and now, in the prospect of entering upon an eternal world, this is the only foundation of my confidence and hope." Resting on the sure foundation God has laid in Zion, this venerable nobleman was released from a "body of sin and death," to be "forever with the Lord," Dec. 27. 1787. — *R. T. S.*

42-44. (42) *door*^d etc., entrance of tent. (43) *tabernacle*,^e not so much the tabernacle as the space between it and the altar. *my . . glory*, God's visible presence, the Shechinah. (44) *sanctify*, consecrate, make holy; Israel to be a holy nation.

Influence of the atonement. — Kazainak was a robber chieftain, inhabiting the mountains of Greenland. He came to a hut where a missionary was translating the Gospel of John. He wanted to know what he was doing; and when the missionary told him how the marks he was making were words, and how a book could speak, he wished to hear what it said. The missionary read the story of Christ's sufferings; when the chief immediately asked, "What has this man done? has he robbed anybody? has he murdered anybody?" "No," was the reply; "he has robbed no one, murdered no one; he has done nothing wrong." "Then why does he suffer? why does he die?" "Listen!" said the missionary. "This man has done no wrong; but Kazainak has done wrong. This man has not robbed anyone; but Kazainak has many. This man has murdered no one; but Kazainak has murdered his brother, Kazainak has murdered his child. This man suffered that Kazainak might not suffer; died, that Kazainak might not die." "Tell me that again," said the astonished chieftain; and the hard-hearted murderer was brought to the foot of the cross.

45, 46. (45) *dwell . . Israel*,^f a holy God among a consecrated people. will . . *God*,^g object of worship; source of blessing; sure protection; unerring guide, etc. (46) *know*, by the fruits of My presence, the manifestations of My glory, the communications of My will. *that . . Egypt*, I will be to them in the future the mighty deliverer that I have been in the past. *that . . them*,^h this knowledge resulting in obedience shall render possible My dwelling among them.

God's presence among His people. — Take this text as illustrating the following propositions: — I. That God *does* condescend to dwell amongst His people. II. That, in order to possess this presence among us, He must be acknowledged as our Lord and God: "will be their God." Note the positiveness of the expression. "That I may dwell among them." See the condition on which this depends. III. That if God's presence is really merited by us, and bestowed upon us, great and unthought-of blessings will be the result. — *A. G. Mitchell*.

The Divine presence. — "I shall never forget," said a young minister, "the

last words of my dear mother as I started from home to engage in business for myself. It was midnight. The family had remained up to make the last evening at home as pleasant as possible for the boy who was to go from them. The time for parting arrived. My mother came to me, and putting her arms around my neck, gave me a sweet kiss, and said in tones so full of sweetness, 'My dear boy, live near to God.' I shall never forget the sadness of that parting, the paleness of that dear face, the tenderness of that farewell embrace, but I remember them all, through the depth and force of that parting sentence, 'My dear boy live near to God.'"

CHAPTER THE THIRTIETH.

1—5. (1) altar . . upon,* *lit.* an incense-altar of incense. (2) cubit, *etc.*, 1 ft. 6 in. long and broad, and 3 ft. high. Its material was to be like that of the ark of the testimony, but its dimensions very small. — *J., F. and B.* (3) overlay, gold or plate. crown, molding. (4) two . . rings, one on each side. corners, *marg.* ribs, prob. in the centre of the side under the molding. (5) staves . . gold, *see* xxv. 28.

The altar of incense. — The altar and incense were symbolic—I. Of the prayers of God's people. 1. In prayer we speak to God and tell Him the thoughts of our minds, the feelings of our hearts, the desires of our spirits. The incense smoke ascended, arrow-like, in a straight and most direct column to heaven. Our prayers ascend immediately and in the directest way to the heart and ear of God. 2. In prayer we stand very near God. The altar of incense was placed "before the mercy-seat." 3. The pleasant odor of the incense is symbolic of the acceptableness of prayer. II. Of intelligent, unceasing, and reverent prayer. 1. The burning of incense is intelligent prayer. It took place in the light; and our prayers should be presented to God intelligently. 2. Unceasing prayer. It was a perpetual incense before the Lord. 3. Reverent prayer (*vs.* 9). III. Of prayer offered in Christ's name. Aaron sprinkled the golden horns with the blood of atonement. This act is typical of the offering of prayer in the name of Christ. IV. Of the power of prayer. The horns of the altar symbolize power. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." — *D. R. Jenkins.*

The altar of incense. — At the west end of the outer apartment, in front of the curtain which separated it from the holy of holies, stood the altar of incense, three feet high, with four equal sides, each one foot and six inches in horizontal measure. It consisted of a frame of acacia wood, with horns of the same material at the four upper corners, plated over all the external surface with gold. It was not left open at the top, like the great altar of burnt-offering, but covered with a board of acacia wood, overlaid with gold like the four vertical sides; and this cover is designated by the word which signifies the roof of a house. Like the ark and the table, it had rings for convenience in transporting it, and a pair of gilded staves, which, however, did not remain in the rings when the altar was in place. Just above the rings was a crown, or cincture, of the kind affixed to the ark and the table. The incense was probably burned in a censer placed on the top of the altar; the ashes remaining in, and being carried away with, the censer. — *E. E. Atwater.*

6—10. (6) before,^b *i. e.* "outside," not within the "holy of holies." (7) burn . . morning, incense of perfumes, emblem of prayer, thanksgiving. he . . lamps,^c light of truth needful to teach us to pray aright. (8) perpetual . . generations,^d repeated mercies call for constant praise. (9) strange . . incense,^e *i. e.* of humanly-devised ingredients: our prayers must be of God's dictating. (10) atonement,^f *etc.*, *i. e.* on the tenth day of the seventh month, the great day of atonement.

The altar of incense. — I gather, first, that prayer should be attended with knowledge. It is ill when men worship they know not what. God is light, and He will not have His people worship Him in the dark. When they burn the incense they must also light the lamp. 2. But now turn the thought round the other way — knowledge should always be accompanied by prayer. Revealed truth is as a church-bell summoning us to come into the presence of the Lord, and bow and kneel before Him. — *Spurgeon.*

No one prays for me. — A young lawyer, who scoffed at religion, was made the subject of special prayer and effort by a pious young man. Not long after

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Odin; Swed. Codd; Heb. Aden; Syr. Adad; Pers. Syra; Tartar. Idgy; Span. Dios; E. Ind. Egst or Zevi; Turk. Ad di; Egypt. Amun or Zent; Japan. Zain; Peruvian. Lian; Wallachian. Zene; Etrurian. Chur; Irish. Deih; Arab. Alla.

the altar of incense

its pattern, etc.

a Ps. cxli. 2; He. vii. 25; Re. vii. 3.

"O, when the heart is full, when bitter thoughts come crowding quickly up for utterance, and the poor common words of courtesy are such a very mockery, how much the bursting heart may pour itself in prayer." — *Willis.*

"Prayer is the wing wherewith the soul flies to heaven, and meditation the eye wherewith we see God." — *Ambrose.*

its place and use

b He. ix. 24.

c Lu. i. 9.

d Ex. xxvii. 20-21.

e Le. x. 1, 2.

f Le. xvi. 28.

"Perfect prayers without a spot or blemish, though not one word be spoken, and no phrases known to

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mankind be tampered with, always pluck the heart out of the earth and move it softly, like a censor, to and fro beneath the face of heaven."
—*J. Weiss.*

"No man can hinder our private addresses to God; every man can build a chapel in his breast, himself the priest, his heart the sacrifice, and the earth he treads on the altar." — *J. Taylor.*

atonement money

a Ex. xxxviii. 25; 1 Ti. ii. 6; 1 Pe. i. 18, 19.

b "Used as the name of a small weight, as our word *grain* came into use from a grain of wheat." — *Spk. Com.*

c Ex. xxxviii. 26; No. x. 32; Ma. xvil. 24.

d Job xxxiv. 19; Pr. xxii. 2; Eph. vi. 9; Jas. ii. 1.

"Man is by nature weak; he is born in and to a state of dependence. He therefore naturally seeks and looks about for help; and where he observes the greatest power, it is there that he applies and prays for protection." — *H. Brooke.*

the brazen laver

e Ex. xxxviii. 8
f Ps. xxvi. 6; Is. lii. 11; Jo. xlii. 8-10; Jas. iv. 8; He. x. 22

he was found at the prayer-meeting, but even the pastor hesitated to speak to him, supposing he had come merely for amusement. The young man continued faithful to his friend, and soon rejoiced in seeing him a humble believer in Jesus. The lawyer was riding with another companion of his own, not long after. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" so the conversation quite naturally turned to the subject of personal salvation. The new convert spoke freely, and told of the faithfulness of his kind friend K—, but for whom he might have been left to perish. "I had friends once who prayed for me," said the other, thoughtfully, "but I have been so careless they have all given me up. I don't suppose there is one person on earth who prays for me now." "You are mistaken," said the other. "K— prays for you, very earnestly." "Is it possible?" said the youth, pausing in great astonishment. It was like a lightning flash to his soul—and not long after he, too, was rejoicing in Jesus. Are we offering such "effectual, fervent prayer," for any soul? Should the Christian ever suffer himself to be without the burden of some immortal spirit upon his heart? Such prayer does avail much. God's Word declares it, and the experience of ten thousand souls verifies the declaration. Whom will you take this week of all your impatient acquaintances as a subject of earnest prayer and labor? — *D. C.*

11—16. (11) Lord . . Moses, concerning the contributions of the people. (12) *sum*, census. *ransom*,^a an assessment, or poll-tax, of half a shekel each, for the support of the ritual. — *Bush.* A gift acknowledging that he was ransomed. This tax not levied on women, minors, old men and Levites, who were not numbered. See Numb. i. 42, 45, 47. — *J., F. and B.* (13) *passeth*, they passed before the tellers, who counted them one by one. *half a shekel*, present value about 31 cents. *shekel . . sanctuary*, *i. e.* shekel of full weight. *gerahs*, *gerah*,^b *lit.* bean, prob. of the carob tree. *half . . Lord*, God no respecter of persons: rich and poor equal in His sight: the small sum not a measure of the blessing, but an acknowledgment of it. (14) *twenty . . above*,^c the others exempted not bec. they had not been ransomed, but bec. they were without means. (15) *rich . . more*,^d fr. a proud estimate of personal worth. *poor . . less*, on the plea of poverty or little value. *souls*, *i. e.* lives. (16) *take . . money*, so the ransom was called.

The atonement money. — Let us notice—*I.* The tax levied. Being a "ransom, and an atonement for their souls," it evidently had a spiritual import; and, from the same being levied upon all, we observe—*1.* That the souls of men are of equal value in the sight of God; *2.* That all equally need reconciliation with God; *3.* That all must seek it on the same terms. *II.* Its use and application. It was intended—*1.* To obtain acceptance for the offerers; *2.* To convey instruction to the rising generation; *3.* To give honor unto God. — *C. Simeon.*

Equality. — There are four moments in our life when we are all reduced to this naked simplicity, to this fundamental similarity. At the moment of our baptism. The minister receives into his arms, literally following the example of our Lord—"this child," not this prince or this peasant. Again, at the moment of our marriage. I remember that many years ago, when the Prince of Wales was married, and I was a mere boy, I was struck by the fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury turned to the Prince of Wales and said, "Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" not "this Princess of Denmark." And then to the woman he said in effect, we know nothing of the heir to the British throne in the house of God,—wilt thou have "this man" to be thy wedded husband? I was struck even then at the way in which the most exalted were reduced to their simple humanity. Then, again, at the holy communion, all men are absolutely equal. One table for rich and poor. There is one other moment when we are all equal—at the moment of death. If any mighty monarch is fortunate enough to be a Christian, the utmost the Christian minister will say at his burial is this, "We commit the body of our dear brother to the dust." Our brother, nothing more. — *Hugh Price Hughes.*

17—21. (17, 18) *laver*,^e large vessel or basin. *brass*, bronze. (19) *wash . . hands . . feet*,^f sym. the need of purity of action and life. (20) *that . . not*, through forgetfulness or contempt of the Divine law. (21) *even to him, etc.*, cp. ch. xxvii. 21; xxviii. 43; xxix. 9.

The laver. — Let us consider what we are taught by the laver with its supply of cleansing water. The laver, with its abundant supply of pure

cleansing water, points to the Spirit of God, and the truth through which that Spirit acts, as the great appointed instruments for carrying on the work of sanctification in the souls of believers. The Jew was required to come first to the brazen altar, with its propitiatory sacrifice, and then to the laver, with its cleansing water. Not the washing first, and then forgiveness, but forgiveness first, and then the washing. — *R. Newton.*

22—28. (22, 23) **myrrh**, gum of a thorny tree (*balsamodendron myrrha*) growing in Arabia, etc., see Gen. xxxvii. 25. **cinnamon**, the inner bark of a tree of the laurel kind (*cinnamomum zeylanicum*) growing in Ceylon, etc. **two . . shekels**, about 7 lb. 10 oz. **calamus**, Heb. *kaneh*, prob. the lemon-grass, a fragrant beard-grass (*andropogon aromaticus*; also called *calamus odoratus*)^a growing in India and Arabia. (31) **cassia**,^b Heb. *kiddah*, the bark^c of an Indian tree (*cinnamomum cassia*). **hin**, see xxix. 40. (25) **oil . . apothecary**, *R. V.*, "holy anointing oil, a perfume compounded after the art of the perfumers." **holy . . oil**, to be used for no other purpose than anointing the tabernacle and its furniture and the priests. — *J., F. and B.* (26-28) **anoint**,^d etc., consecrating the whole as one united and perfect whole to the service of God.

Sweet cinnamon. — A species of laurel, which grows in Ceylon and other parts of India. The leaves, when young, are red at the top. The fruit is about the size of a damson, and when ripe is of a black color. The shrub grows from about twenty to thirty feet in height, and is spread into numerous branches. Neither the leaves nor flowers give forth any smell; and it is not till the season for gathering the spice arrives, that a walk through the cinnamon gardens would yield delight in respect of fragrance. But when the Cingalese are engaged in their annual employment of peeling the twigs, the beauty of the gardens and the fragrance of the spice is delightful. The bark is stripped off with great rapidity by means of a sharp iron instrument, and then laid in the sun to dry, when it curls into the shape in which we see the cinnamon sticks, as sold in our shops. — *Bibl. Treas.*

29—33. (29) **whatsoever . . holy**, see xxix. 37. (30) **minister . . office**,^e being especially set apart for that work. (32) **man's . . poured**, *i. e.* men not in the priesthood. **neither, etc.**, to be employed for private purposes. **holy . . you**, specially in regard to nature and use. (33) **stranger**, here means any one not of the family of Aaron. See xxix. 33.

Diffusing holiness. — Holiness is the only means by which holiness can be diffused. It is like salt, its usefulness to others must begin with itself. The man who fails to persuade himself to be holy is sure to be unsuccessful with others. It is the wise man that can impart wisdom to others, it is the good man that can diffuse goodness, and it is only the holy man that can diffuse holiness. Every man can bring forth to others only out of the treasures deposited first in his own heart. He who undertakes to restore mankind to clear-sightedness must be of clear and accurate vision himself, for he who has a beam in his own eye is not likely to remove either beam or mote from the eye of the world. The physician, who is to restore health to others, must not himself be fretting with the leprosy. — *Jenky.*

34—38. (34) **stacte**, prob. the gum of the storax-tree (*styrax officinalis*), found in Syria, etc. **onycha**, prob. the crustaceous covering of the shells of certain species of shell-fish (*trochus* and *conus*). **galbanum**, the gum of a shrub, prob. *bubon galbanum*, or *galbanum officinale*, of Don. **frankincense**, gum of *boswellia serrata*, found in India. (35) **confection**, compound. **art**, etc., see vs. 25. **tempered**, salted, mixed, hence prob. the all of our Lord. (36) **beat . . congregation**, as if for special Divine inspection. (37, 38) **perfume**, this like the oil, *vs.* 32, specially made for an exclusive use.

Incense. — A perfume, the odor of which is evolved by burning, and the use of which, in public worship, prevailed in most of the ancient religions. Among the Jews the burning of incense was exclusively employed as an act of worship, and, indeed, would appear to have been in itself regarded in the light of the sacred offering. — *Chambers' Ency.*

Ointment and Incense. — Concerning both preparations the same law is given that nothing like them should be made for common use. This would tend to beget among the Israelites a reverence for whatever was of divine institution, and a sedulous care to guard against its profanation or abuse, and

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"Who has a breast so pure but some uncleanly apprehensions keep leels and lawdays, and in session sit with meditations lawful?" — *Shakespeare*.

the holy anointing oil its ingredients

^a The root, the stem, and the leaves, when bruised, are very fragrant

^b Ps. xlv. 8.

^c "It bears a strong resemblance to cinnamon, but is more pungent and of coarser texture. It was prob. in ancient times, as it is at present, by far less costly than cinnamon." — *Spk. Com.* ^d Cant. i. 3; *He.* i. 9; 1 Jo. ii. 20; *Is.* lxi. 1; 3; 2 Co. i. 21, 22; *Le.* viii. 10.

its use

^e *Le.* viii. 12, 30

"Man, being not only a religious but also a social being, requires for the promotion of his rational happiness religious institutions which, while they give a proper direction to devotion, at the same time make a wise and profitable improvement of his social feelings." — *H. Ballou.*

the materials

of the incense ^f "It is found in the waters of India and Arabia, and is frequently used as an ingredient for incense; for although it is, in itself, by no means of fragrant smell, it enhances it if it is intermixed with other perfumes." — *Kalisch.* ^g *Mk.* ix. 49.

"In the reformed churches the use of incense was abandoned at the same time with the other practices

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which have been laid aside by them as without 'warrant of Scripture.'—*Chambers' Ency.*

as to use, who are privileged to look deeper into the spiritual drift of the Mosaic economy, it may well admonish us to beware of any "counterfeit presentment," or any unhallowed prostitution of those ordinances, gifts, or graces which emanate from the Spirit of God and in which his honor is especially concerned.—*Bush.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

Bezaleel

a Ezek. xxxvi. 1.

b Is. liv. 16; Jas. i. 17; Ac. ii. 4; 1 Co. xii. 11.

Be sure that God ne'er dooms to waste the strength He deigns in part.—*Robt. Browning.*

"Genius is not a single power, but a combination of great powers. It reasons, but it is not reasoning; judges, but it is not judgment; it imagines, but it is not imagination; it feels deeply and fiercely, but it is not passion. It is neither because it is all."—*Whipple.*

1—5. (1, 2) **Bezaleel**,^a Bezaleel is traced to Judah in Chronicles through five ancestors—Uri, Hur, Caleb, Herzon, and Pharez, Judah's son by Tamar. He appears to have been the general superintendent of the whole work, while he had special skill in working in metals, and in carving in wood and stone. (3) **filled**,^b etc., special gifts bestowed for a special work; all human skill, art, science, invention from God. Bezaleel was possessed of power to invent, ability to apply knowledge, skill of experience, manual dexterity and art of execution.—*Pulp. Com.* (4) **devise . . works**, *lit.* to think thoughts, ponder devices. (5) **work . . workmanship**, required in the construction of the tabernacle and its vessels.

Spiritual gifts (vs. 3).—I. Prize them inestimably. II. Covet them earnestly. III. Seek for them diligently. IV. Ponder them frequently. V. Wait for them patiently. VI. Expect them hopefully. VII. Receive them joyfully. VIII. Enjoy them thankfully. IX. Improve them carefully. X. Retain them watchfully. XI. Plead for them manfully. XII. Hold them dependently. XIII. Grasp them eternally.

Art and prayer.—Fra Giovanni da Fiesoli, known as Beato Angelico, never commenced any work—whether an elaborate fresco or an illumination for a missal—without praying; and he always, we are assured, carried out the first impression, "believing it to be an inspiration;" he never retouched or altered anything left as finished. Mr. Ruskin affirms that when once we begin at all to understand the handling of any great executor, such as that of the three great Venetian painters, of Correggio, or Turner, the awe of it is something greater than can be felt from the most stupendous natural scenery. "For the creation of such a system as a high human intelligence, endowed with its ineffably perfect instruments of eye and hand, is a far more appalling manifestation of infinite power than the making either of seas or mountains." In his *Modern Painters*, the professor with deliberate emphasis, applies the word "inspired" to Turner: "Be it irreverent or not," he says, "this word I must always use; and the rest of what work I have before me is simply to prove the truth of it with respect to" the great artist just named.—*L. Jacob.*

Aholiab

6—11. (6) **Aholiab**, whose special department was to engrave and embroider. **Ahisamach**, many fathers would have remained unknown had it not been for the fame of their sons. **tribe of Dan**, Horam, the chief artist of the temple in Solomon's time, was of the same tribe, altho. the Danites as a tribe were warlike and rude.—*Pulp. Com.* **wisehearted**, see xxviii. 3. **make . . thee**, acc. to the Divine pattern.

"Art needs solitude, or misery, or passion. Lukewarm zephyrs wither it. It is a rock-flower flourishing by stormy blasts and in stony soil."—*A. Dumas.*

The wise-hearted ones.—Who are the wise-hearted ones? 1. They are those who prove themselves as having ability to do useful work. Work done, and well done, though it be in itself of trifling value, is the determination of wisdom. 2. The wise-hearted are they who reach beyond present ability to perform. No true workman is satisfied to simply repeat his last job. 3. The wise-hearted are they who, at Christ's call, enter His kingdom, there to labor under the influence of the purest, strongest motives.—*C. R. Seymour.*

Genius and industry.—A friend of Charles Dickens, a man who had given promise of a noble career as an author, but who, through indolence, had failed in doing any permanent work, called upon him one morning, and, after bemoaning his ill-success, ended by sighing, "Ah, if I only were gifted with your genius!" Dickens, who had listened patiently to the complaint, exclaimed at once in answer, "Genius, sir! I do not know what you mean. I have no genius save the genius for hard work!" However his enthusiastic admirers may dispute this, certain it is that Dickens trusted to no such uncertain light as the fire of genius. Day in and day out, by hard work, he elaborated the plot, characters and dialogue of his imperishable stories. Whole days he would spend to discover suitable localities, and then be able to give vividness to his description of them, while, sentence by sentence, his work,

"The highest art is always the most religious; and the greatest artist is always a devout man. A scoffing Raphael or Michael Angelo is not conceivable."—*Blackie.*

after apparent completion, was retouched and revised. The great law of labor makes no exception of the gifted or ignorant. Whatever the work may be, there can be no success in it without diligent, unceasing, persevering labor.—*Bib. III.*

12-14. (12, 13) verily . . keep,^a see xx. 8. sign . . generations, true Sabbath-keeping, a sign by wh. the true Israel is known. know . . you, fr. the experience of Sabbath mercies, and observance of Sabbath service. (14) defleth it, *R. V.*, "profaneth it." for . . therein,^b see xx. 9-11. soul . . people, a threat afterwards executed.^c

A poor man's argument for the Sabbath.—"I now beg permission," says a missionary, "to relate the simple argument of a pious poor man with a Sabbath-breaker. I had it from the poor old man a few weeks since, in the course of a conversation with him, which very much interested me; he is a member of our church at Mattishall. In reasoning with the Sabbath-breaker, he said, 'Suppose now, I had been at work hard all the week, and earned seven shillings; suppose now I met a man and gave six shillings out of the seven, what should you say to that?' 'Why, I should say that you were very kind, and that the man ought to be thankful.' 'Well, suppose he was to knock me down, and rob me of the other shilling; what then?' 'Why, then he would deserve hanging.' 'Well, now, this is your case; thou art the man: God has freely given you six days to work in, and earn your bread, and the seventh He has kept to Himself, and commands us to keep it holy; but you, not satisfied with the six days God has given, rob Him of the seventh; what then do you deserve?' The man was silenced." *Thoughtful regard for the Sabbath.*—It is said of the pious and learned Mr. Gouge, that as he forebore providing suppers on the evening before the Sabbath, that servants might not be kept up too late, so he would never suffer any person to tarry at home to dress any meat on the Lord's day for any friends, whether they were mean or great, few or many.

15-17. (15) six . . done, *etc.*, see xx. 9. (16) wherefore, bec. God commands it and man needs it. (17) sign, see vs. 13. for . . days,^d see xx. 11. refreshed, *lit.* took breath, anthropomorphic expression.

The Sabbath.—Now there is a grand reason for changing of the Jewish Sabbath to the Lord's Day, because this puts us in mind of the "mystery of our redemption by Christ." Great was the work of creation, but greater was the work of redemption. As it was said, "the glory of the second temple was greater than the glory of the first temple;" so the glory of the redemption was greater than the glory of the creation. Great wisdom was seen in curiously making us, but more miraculous wisdom in saving us. Great power was seen in bringing us out of nothing, but greater power in helping us when we were worse than nothing. It cost more to redeem us than to create us. In the creation there was but "speaking a word;" in the redeeming us, there was shedding of blood. In the creation God gave us ourselves; in the redemption He gave us Himself. By creation, we have a life in Adam; by redemption, we have a life in Christ. By creation, we had a right to an earthly paradise; by redemption, we have a title to an heavenly kingdom. So that well Christ might change the seventh day of the week into the first, because this day puts us in mind of our redemption, which is a more glorious work than the creation.—*T. Watson.*

18. when . . him, concerning the preceding civil and ecclesiastical matters. testimony, so called bec. they testified God's will, and the people by receiving them testified their willingness to obey. stone,^e a durable material sym. the durability of the law. written . . God, *i. e.* supernaturally inscribed, not cut by any human hand.

Testimony-tables.—The learned author of "Earth's Lessons" says, it was on tables of stone that God's finger traced the unerring and unchanging moral law. The same handwriting may be recognized in the masses of rock from which these very tables were constructed. We can trace the universality of Divine law throughout all the successive creations of the earth—throughout all the time worlds, as throughout all the space worlds, in geology as in astronomy. That divinely universal law is unity of force amidst diversity of phenomena—unity of plan amidst diversity of expression. And thus, amid all the varying operations of His hands and dispensations of His Providence, we find Him to be without variableness or shadow of turning.—*Adamson.*

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the law of the Sabbath

^a Le. xix. 30; Ezek. xxx. 10, 12; xxxvii. 28.

^b De. v. 12; Ex. xxxv. 2; Is. lviii. 13, 14; Jer. xvii. 21, 22.

^c Nu. xv. 32-35.

"We would begin this week with Thy solemn worship, thus acknowledging Thy hand in the bounties of Thy Providence, and professing our gratitude and obedience unto Thee."

^d Ge. ii. 1, 2.

"On the sides of an English coal-mine, limestone is in constant process of formation. When the miners are at work, the dust of the coal colors the formation black; when they rest, it is white. For each Sabbath, the stone has a white line; hence it is called "the Sunday stone." There is also a record of the Sundays of all people."

the two tables of testimony in the handwriting of God

^e Ex. xxiv. 12; Jo. i. 17; Jer. xxxi. 33.

"Laws were made to restrain and punish the wicked; the wise and good do not need them as a guide, but only as a shield against rapine and oppression."—*Watson.*

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CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

the golden calf

a Ex. xxiv. 18; Ac. vii. 39, 40; Ma. xxiv. 48-51; 2 Pe. iii. 3, 4.

b Ex. xii. 35.

c Ex. xx. 23; Ps. cvi. 19, 20.

d Josh. xxiv. 14; Ezek. xx. 8; xxiii. 3, 8.

e 1 Co. x. 7.

"The many-headed multitude, whom inconstancy only doth by accident guide to well-doing! Who can set confidence there, where company takes away shame, and each may lay the fault upon his fellow?" — *Sir P. Sidney.*

"It has been very truly said that the mob has many heads, but no brains." — *Rivarol.*

Moses sent down to the camp

f De. ix. 12.

g Ex. xxiv. 3.

h Ne. ix. 16, 17; Is. xlviii. 4; Ac. vii. 5.

i Jer. xiv. 11, xv. 1.

j "God is fain to bespeak His own freedom; as if Moses' devotion were stronger than God's indignation. Great is the power of prayer." — *Trapp.*

l Ma. iii. 9.

Moses intercedes for the people

m De. ix. 18, 26-29;

Ps. cvi. 23.

n De. xxxii. 26, 27.

o Ps. lxxix. 8-10.

p Ge. xxii. 15-17;

De. vi. 13, 14; De. ix. 27.

q Ps. cvi. 45; Jer. xviii. 8; xxvi. 13;

Joe. ii. 13; Jon. iv. 2.

1-6. (1) when . . delayed.^a gathered, tumultuously. Aaron, chief authority in absence of Moses. up . . us, they wished some visible symbol of God's presence. for . . Moses, spoken contemptuously. man . . Egypt, yet they are forced to admit the deliverance effected by him. (2) break . . earrings,^b perh. he thought he should evade their request by demanding what they were unwilling to give. (4) and . . tool, finished it. after . . calf,^c wh. appears to have been cast in a mold. which . . Egypt, the form of the idol seems to identify it with Egyptian idolatry.^d Their sin a breach, not of the first, but of the second commandment. (5) when . . it, i. e. saw how the people regarded it. (6) sat . . drink, feast of the remainder of the sacrifices. rose . . play,^e singing, dancing, merry-making.

The impatient multitude (vss. 1, 2). — What was the matter with this giddy multitude? They were weary of waiting for — I. The promised land. They thought themselves detained too long at Mt. Sinai. We must first wait for God's laws before we catch at His promises. II. The return of Moses. Observe — 1. How slightly they speak of him; 2. How suspiciously they speak of his delay. III. A Divine institution of religious worship among them. — *M. Henry.*

The golden calf. — It has been questioned whether the reading a "graving tool" is correct, since it is said that the calf was made in a furnace. But the tool, possibly either a file or a chisel, was employed to give a finishing touch to anything cast in a mold. Most of the large idols of antiquity had a wooden centre, the metal being, by way of preparation, cast into a flat sheet, which the goldsmith hammered and spread out. This was evidently the nature of Aaron's calf, by the account given of its destruction. First of all it was burnt, and the interior being thus converted into charcoal, the coating was beaten or crushed to pieces. *We must not be persuaded to sin.* — Then there was John Bunyan, who, under the despotic and profligate reign of Charles II., was sent to the Bedford gaol. True, they offered to release him, and allow him to go back to his wife and four children (one of them blind), but it was at the sacrifice of his convictions, and he scorned that. He was a man every inch of him, and in reply to the offer he said, "Before I will do that, I will stay in the gaol until the moss has grown around my eyebrows." Brave John Bunyan! — *Bib. III.*

7-10. (7) go . . down, quickly.^f (8) turned . . them, so soon after their solemn promise.^g then . . thee, or "this is thy God which has brought thee." (9) stiff-necked,^h proud, resisting the yoke. (10) now . . alone,ⁱ do not interpose prayer.^k that . . them, sugg.^l of God's intense anger. and . . nation,^l to try Moses, as if to see whether the prospect of becoming great himself would outweigh his regard for the interests of his people. — *Bush.*

Divine omniscience. — Israel lost sight of the fact that though Moses could not see, God could. Creeping down stairs at night towards the orchard, the little boy forgot that while his father's eyes were locked in slumbers deep, yet there was One whose eye neither slumbers nor sleeps. But when he stood beneath the favorite apple-tree — when he stretched forth his hand to the branch — when he lifted up his eye to the tempting, coveted, rosy-cheeked fruit; lo! a star twinkled its ray upon him, and seemed to say, "God sees." And the little fellow shrank back — retreated from the garden — betook himself up stairs, repeating to himself the Scripture words, "Thou God seest." Ah! had Israel only remembered this, the sin had not been committed, and the dire mischief had not been wrought. — *Adamson.*

11-14. (11) why, etc.,^m not so much inquiring as earnestly seeking to dissuade. which, etc., he refers to what had been done as an argument for continuance. (12) Egyptians,ⁿ etc., why should Thy enemies have strengthened their false conceptions of Thy character? repent . . people,^o i. e. spare them fr. punishment. (13) remember,^p etc., Moses pleads the covenant. (14) Lord . . people,^q as he communicated to Moses, first, his anger, and then, his intention to spare, he is said to have "repented." — *Pulp. Com.*

Moses' intercession (vss. 11-13). — Observe — I. His prayer: "Turn from Thy fierce wrath." II. His pleas. He urges — 1. God's interest in them, and

the great things He had already done for them; 2. The concern of God's glory; 3. The promises to the patriarchs. God's promises our pleas in prayer. — *M Henry.*

The doctrine of mediation. — How vain, then, are the objections of the infidel against the doctrine of mediation, whose actions are observable everywhere around us, as well as forming one of the very foundations of the Christian revelation. The principle follows us into the minutest details of private life. What is he, who, in the hour of danger, interposes with his strong arm for the protection of the weak, or, with his maturer wisdom, for the rescue of the thoughtless and inexperienced, but a mediator between them and peril? What is she, who, with noiseless step, paces the sick room where the once stalwart man is laid prostrate with weakness, watching his eyes to catch their language, that the lips may be saved the necessity of speaking, anticipating his every want and desire, smoothing his pillow so softly that his aching head is eased, and his heart is reconciled to affliction by the thought of the loving attention it awakens — what is she but a mediator between him and the fell disease with which he is grappling? What is that mother, who, with simple and eloquent words, and tears more eloquent, pleads with a sterner father for the hopeless boy whose early sins have nearly caused his expulsion from under the parent roof — what but a mediator between him and the unknown evils that impended? What is she, who, by uncomplaining sighs and tears, and far more by patient, and therefore eloquent and silent, endurance, has weaned a degraded and besotted husband from the poison cup of intoxication or the maddening influence of the gaming house to a love of his own hearth and home, and the society of those who are bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh — what is she but a mediator between him and ruin? — *Ragg.*

15-18. (15) testimony,^a see xxv. 16. the two tables . . his hand, one was in each hand probably. written . . sides, this is the case generally with Assyrian and Babylonian tablets, but not with Egyptian ones — *Pulp.* Com. (16) writing . . God, see xxxi. 18. (17) Joshua, who had patiently waited for Moses on the outside of the cloud, see xxiv. 13, 15. there . . camp, so his warlike nature interpreted it. (18) not . . mastery, shout of victory. neither . . overcome, the cry of distress. noise . . sing, sound of revelry.

Joshua. — The ignorance of Joshua respecting the real nature of the uproar in the camp evinces that he had not, after ascending the mount with Moses. ch. xxiv. 13, as yet returned thither again; so that the inference is obvious that Joshua, as well as Moses, was forty days in the mount, though not in the same part of it. How he was sustained or employed we are not informed. He was now probably waiting for Moses at some distance from the top of the mountain, at the point whither Moses "went down," vs. 15, and upon his re-appearance addressed him in the words that follow. His calm and quiet waiting during all the time of Moses' absence stands in very strong and, to him, creditable contrast with the rash, impatient, and unbelieving temper of the people during the same period. — *Bush.*

19-21. (19) Moses . . hot,^b and yet M. was the meekest of men. (20) burnt . . fire,^c some think it was a wooden calf overlaid with plates of gold. made . . it,^d he had cast it into the water that had flown from the rock. Israelites, if they drank at all, were compelled to swallow parts of their "god." (21) said . . Aaron, whom he had left in charge. what . . thee, naturally supposing they had used strong coercion. that . . them, by permitting them to do this evil thing. The scope of the question is what were the influences brought to bear upon him by the people, which could prevail to gain his consent to such an abominable measure. — *Bush.*

Moses' indignation against the worshipers of the golden calf. — Consider — I. The grounds of his indignation. The worshiping of the golden calf was a sin of most extraordinary enormity. II. His expressions of it. 1. He broke before their eyes the tablets of the Law, which God had committed to him; 2. He ground the calf to powder, and constrained the people to swallow it with their drink. — *C. Simeon.*

Dust-drink. — She was his idol, his only daughter! A fairy, sylphlike form was hers; and fondly his eye watched her flitting hither and thither. In his love, the proud peer and father forgot the suffering world around — its

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But the greatest privilege which Moses had at Sinai — confidential intercourse with God — is granted to each one of us who know Him in His Son. — *Van Oosterzee.*

"Let us pity the wicked man; for it is very sad to seek happiness where it does not exist. Let our compassion express itself in efforts to bring him gently back to sacred principle, and if he persist, let us pity him the more for a blindness so fatal to himself." — *De Charnage.*

Moses and Joshua hear the people

a De. ix 15.

"The strongest minds are often those of whom the noisy world hears least." — *Wordsworth.*

"I will not choose what many men desire, because I will not jump with common spirits and rank me with the barbarous multitude." — *Shakespeare.*

Moses breaks the tables of the Law

b Mk. iii. 5.

c De. ix. 21.

d Pr. xiv. 14; Ps. cix. 18.

"The powder mixed with their drink signified to them that the curse they had thereby brought upon themselves would mingle itself with all their enjoyments, and embitter them; that it would enter into their bowels like water, and like oil into their bones" — *Henry.*

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"A mob is a society of bodies voluntary be-reaving themselves of reason and traversing its work."
— Emerson.

Aaron's excuse

a Ex. xvii. 4; De. ix. 20; Re. iii. 10.

Often the very way to help ourselves most to a result which we have set before ourselves is just to put ourselves into a current which is sweeping on that way, and then lie still, and let the current do the rest, and in all such cases it is so easy to ignore or to forget the first step, and so to say that is only the drift of the current which is to blame for the dreary shore on which at last our lives are cast up by the stream. — *Phillips Brooks*.

"An excuse is worse and more terrible than a lie; for it is a lie guarded." — *Pope*.

the Levites slay the rebels

b 2 Ch. xxviii. 19.

c Nu. xxv. 5.

"I know not how to tell thee! Shame rises in my face, and interrupts the story of my tongue." — *Otway*.

d Nu. xxv. 11-13; De. xiii. 6-9; Ma. x. 37.

Moses' intercession

e 1 Sa. xii. 20-23; Ps. xxv. 11; f De. ix. 18; Ex. xx. 23.

sorrows and its woes. In his idol-worship, he lost sight of God, who had given him that living soul. He placed the human form, overlaid with the gold of sweetness and fairy charms, upon the throne in his being, which rightly was Jehovah's only. One day the pony shied, and the idol fell — fell on a rude stone by the pathway. She lived, but became a decrepit form, with distorted face. He had to drink of the bitter water with the dust of his idol, as from day to day he saw her nerveless form, and marked her twitching, pinched features. — *Adamson*.

22-24. (22) **let . . hot**, language of respect, fear, conscious guilt. **thou . . people,** etc., he shifts the blame to the people. (23) **make . . us**, or "make us a god," a shuffling excuse. (24) **whosoever . . off**, see vs. 2. **cast . . fire**, and afterwards into a mold. **and . . calf**, so he glosses over his part in the manufacture of a god. Having no defense to make, he is driven to the weakest of subterfuges.

Aaron's excuse. — I. He deprecates the anger of Moses only, whereas he should have deprecated God's anger in the first place. II. He attempts to lay all the fault upon the people. Sin is a brat that nobody is willing to own. III. He casts a reflection upon Moses for staying on the mount so long. IV. He extenuates and conceals his own share in the sin: "I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf." — *M. Henry*.

Aaron's apology. — Aaron's excuse is the standing excuse of at least one large class among us. Servants use it every day. Who has not heard them plead? "Please, ma'am, I couldn't help it, it broke in my hands." As if it were not they, but the wilful jug or dish which was responsible for the fracture, or some malign fate which mocks at human endeavor and care. Do you not also hear it from the lips of every child? "I didn't do it" — they are all quite sure of that; though, if they did not do it, it would be hard indeed to say who did. Most of you will remember that inimitable scene in "Adam Bede" in which Mrs. Poyser, while rating the clumsy Molly for her broken jug of beer, herself drops a still more precious jug from her angry fingers, and exclaims: "Did anybody ever see the like? The jugs are bewitched, I think." You will remember how she proceeds to argue that "there's times when the crockery seems alive, an' flies out o' your hand like a bird," and concludes, philosophically enough, that "what is to be broke will be broke." And what bankrupt tradesman, or broken merchant, or fraudulent banker is there who dares not plead the same, or a similar, excuse? It is hardly ever their fault that they cannot pay twenty shillings in the pound; it is their misfortune. "Things have gone against them." "Circumstances over which they have no control have been their ruin" — not their own rashness, or dishonest discounts, or risky speculations. They put their capital into that shop, that firm, that bank, and, lo, there came out this ugly calf of bankruptcy! But you must not blame them; it is the furnace that was in fault. — *S. Cox*.

25-29. (25) **naked**,^b *R. V.*, "broken loose." **Aaron . . enemies**, **Aaron . . naked**, *R. V.*, "Aaron had let them loose." Aaron is said to have done that to which his actions had led. (26) **gate**, principal entrance. **who . . side**, *lit.* "Who for Jehovah? To me." (27) **put . . side**, etc., those slain were prob. in open spaces, bold in their transgressions, the rest in their tents, perhaps bewailing their guilt. (28) **fell . . men**, being unarmed and helpless. (29) **even . . brother**,^d jealous regard for God's law superior to natural instincts and affections. **that . . day**, when he sees you regard God more than man.

Are we on the Lord's side? — "We trust the Lord is on our side, Mr. Lincoln," said the speaker of a delegation of Christian people to that good man during one of the darkest days of the American Civil War. "I do not regard that as so essential as something else," replied Mr. Lincoln. The worthy visitors looked horror-struck, until the President added: "I am most concerned to know that we are on the Lord's side." The right side is not my side or your side. The Lord's side is the place to which every one of us should rally. His banner has right, truth, love, and holiness written on it. Be sure you stand up for God's banner, even if you stand alone. — *C. H. Spurgeon*.

30-32. (30) **ye . . sin**,^e one which combined ingratitude with impiety, atonement, reconciliation. (31) **have . . gold**,^f or, "a god of gold." (32)

if not, *etc.*^a he would rather die than witness the destruction of his people. Ps. lxxix. 28; Isa. iv. 3.

Moses intercedes for Israel (vss. 31-33). — Notice — I. The sin of Israel. This was a dreadful compound of ingratitude, folly, and impiety. Its greatness will be easily imagined from the indignation which both God and Moses expressed against it. II. The intercession of Moses. 1. He reminds God of His relation to them; 2. He reminds Him also of His promise to their fathers; 3. He expresses his concern respecting God's honor among the heathen; 4. He humbly confesses the greatness of their sin; 5. He wishes to be punished in their stead. — *C. Simeon*.

An example of intercession. — Said a servant to President Bacchus, "The physician said, sir, that you cannot live to exceed half an hour." "It is so? Then take me out of my bed, and place me upon my knees; let me spend that time in calling upon God for the salvation of the world." It was done. He died upon his knees, praying for the salvation of sinners.

33-35. (33). him . . book,^b vicarious punishment not accepted, only him. not the whole people. (34) lead . . thee,^c the people shall be spared, and Moses' name not blotted out. angel,^d see xxiii. 20. nevertheless,^e "He chastised the individuals but did not take His blessing fr. the nation." (35) plagued,^f R. V., "smote," prob. ref. to future scourges and calamities suffered during their wanderings.

God's answer to Moses (vss. 33, 34). — Note that — I. God's administration is based on justice. II. Sin may be followed by endless results. Notice the sin of Adam — of Jeroboam. III. Pardon of gross sins is hypothetical, restraining alike from rashness and despair. IV. Prevailing prayer is offered from the altar of sacrifice. — *Fowler*.

Self-sacrificing devotion. — An extraordinary act of devotion is described in the "Spirit of Missions," as it was related by Bishop Boone, while on a visit to this country. He said: "I had a very valuable Chinese servant in my employ, upon whom I leaned with implicit confidence, and one day he came to me and said: 'I shall be obliged to ask you to find some one to take my place, as in the course of a few weeks I am to be executed in place of a rich gentleman, who is to pay me very liberally for becoming his substitute,' — such a mode of exchange, as the reader may know, being in accordance with the law of the empire. I then inquired what possible inducement there could be for him to forfeit his life for any amount of money, when he replied: 'I have an aged father and mother, who are very poor, and unable to work, and the money that I am to receive will make them comfortable as long as they live. I think, therefore, it is my duty to give up my life for the sake of accomplishing this.' " — *Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

1-3. (1) said, prob. during the first sojourn on top of mount. saying, see Ge. xvii. 8; xxviii. 13. (2) drive out,^g *etc.*, see Ge. xv. 18, 21. (3) land . . honey, see iii. 8. will . . thee.^h

Palestine promised. — Bannister says that all that can delight the eye, and feed the imagination, is lavished over the surface. The lovers of scenery can find there every form and variety of landscape. Its snowy heights and mountains, its valleys and its waters, are as beautiful as when David sang their praises, and far more interesting by the accumulation of reminiscences. The land, unbroken by the toils of the husbandman, awaits but the hour appointed, when it will sustain and fructify its millions of products, and flow, as of old with milk and honey, reasserting its rightful title, "the garden of the Lord" — "the glory of all lands!" — *Adamson*.

4-7. (4) heard . . tidings, the worst news people can hear is the threatened withdrawal of God. mourned, gave some evidence of true repentance. (5) that . . thee, when I see thee obedient and truly penitent. (6) stripped . . Horeb, the scene of their sin the place of their repentance. (7) pitched . . camp, sign of Divine alienation. sought . . camp,ⁱ hence the fact of Divine alienation was vividly impressed.

Repentance of the Israelites. — I. God is not able to exercise mercy towards an impenitent transgressor. He cannot do this, because it would — 1. Be

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a De. ix. 12-14; Phil. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 5; xx. 12, 15; xxii. 19; Jo. x. 27, 28; De. xii. 1.

God pardons the people

b Ezek. xviii. 4.

c Ex. xxxiii. 14-17.

d Nu. xx. 16.

e Jer. v. 9; Ro. ii. 5, 6.

f Jer. ii. 19.

"The book here spoken of is the book of life. It was even then the custom of every city in a literary community to keep a list of the burgesses. The Israelites were familiar with the custom of keeping a register of families (Ge. v. 1). Hence Moses uses a familiar figure in speaking of God's book (Ps. lxxix. 28; Da. xii. 1).

the promise renewed

g Josh. xxiv. 1, 11. h Ex. xxiii. 21; xxxiv. 9; Hab. i. 13.

"Such declarations rather express what God justly might do, what it would become Him to do, and what He would do were it not for some intervening consideration, than His irreversible purpose." — *Scott*.

the tabernacle pitched outside the camp

i Ex. xxvii. 21; xxix. 42.

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"The slightest sorrow for sin is sufficient, if it produce amendment; and the greatest is insufficient if it do not." *Colton.*

"Repentance without amendment is like continually pumping without mending the leak."—*Dilwyn.*

Moses enters the tabernacle

a Ex. xxv. 22; Ps. xcix. 7.

b Nu. xii. 8; De. xxxiv. 10.

c It might read, "he turned again into the camp (he), and his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man: but He (*i. e.* the Lord, as appearing in the cloud) departed not out of the tabernacle." Thus *Poole, Patrick, Scott, etc.*

"Sorrow is Mt. Sinai. If one will go up and talk with God, face to face." — *Beecher.*

Moses again intercedes

d Ex. xxxii. 34.

e Ps. lxxxvi. 11, ciii. 7.

f De. ix. 26; Joel ii. 17.

g Ex. xiii. 21; xl. 34.

h Josh. xxi. 44.

i Nu. xiv. 14; De. iv. 7; 2 Sa. vii. 23; 1 Ki. viii. 53.

k Ge. xix. 21; Jas v. 16.

He who feels little need of God has a low sense of personal responsibility. But he who faces all responsibility and tries to see his life as he will see it when the end of all things has come, has great need of God — *W. G. Sperry.*

inconsistent with His own perfections: 2. Be ineffectual for the happiness of the persons themselves; 3. Introduce disorder into the whole universe. II. Where humiliation is manifested, mercy may be expected. This appears from — 1. The very mode in which repentance is here enjoined; 2. The experience of penitents in all ages. Application: — (1) Consider what obstructions you have laid in the way of your own happiness; (2) Endeavor instantly to remove them. — *Simeon.*

The delight of repentance. — "Which is the most delightful emotion?" said an instructor of the deaf and dumb to his pupils, after teaching them the names of our various feelings. The pupils turned to their slates: one wrote "joy;" another, "hope;" another, "gratitude;" another, "love." One turned back with a countenance full of peace; and the teacher was surprised to find on her slate the word "repentance." He turned to her and asked why it was the most delightful emotion. "Oh!" said she in the expressive language of looks and gestures, "it is so delightful to be humbled before God!"

8-11. (8) went out, Moses went out at set times each day, and the people watched for his going. all . . up, *etc.*, personal respect and reverence mingled with religious faith, fear, hope. (9) Moses . . descended, a sign to the people that their intercessor was not rejected. (10) people . . worshipped, each praying for himself while Moses pleaded for all. (11) face . . friend, *i. e.* familiarly, plainly. departed . . tabernacle, *perh.* this rendering is defective.

Moses and God (vs. 11). — See in these words a picture of — I. Man's privilege: to speak with God. Moses spake with God — 1. Not as an enemy; 2. Not as a mere stranger; 3. But as a friend, face to face. Prayer the medium by which we may speak to God. II. God's favor. God condescended to speak to Moses, not as a king speaks to a subject, but as a man to his friend. Our prayers He will — 1. Hear; 2. Answer; 3. Answer for our best good. — *J. S. Lindsay.*

Communion with God — There was each morning during his first sojourn in the Soudan one-half hour during which there lay outside Charles George Gordon's tent a handkerchief, and the whole camp knew the full significance of that small token, and most religiously was it respected by all there, whatever was their color, creed or business. No foot dared to enter the tent so guarded. No message, however pressing, was carried in. Whatever it was, of life or death, it had to wait until the guardian signal was removed. Every one knew that God and Gordon were alone in there together. — *Bib. Ill.*

12-17. (12) thou . . me, (13) shew . . way, not only road to Canaan, but plans, purposes. consider . . people, however unworthy and sinful, still *Thine*. (14) presence . . rest, "My presence shall go up" — not that of an angel. That for which Moses had been pleading is granted. God will go up. I will give thee rest, — *i. e.* "bring thee to Canaan." (Compare Deut. iii. 20; Heb. iv. 8). — *Pulp. Com.* (15) If, *etc.*, God's presence the only guarantee for safety, success, happiness. (16) wherein . . us? Divine presence the only proof of Divine favor: not wealth nor power. separated . . earth, the presence and worship of the true God the distinguishing characteristic of Israel. (17) will . . spoken, the prayer answered to the full. for . . sight, desiring not wisdom, wealth, or power, but the presence of God.

God's presence. — 1. It tends to give rest from the terror incident to a state of condemnation. 2. It gives rest from the anguish which springs from a discordant nature. 3. It gives rest from the cravings of an unsatisfied spirit. 4. It gives rest from the distraction felt amidst uncongenial scenes and associations. 5. It gives rest from the disquietude which results from want of human sympathy. 6. It gives rest from apprehensions regarding the future. 7. The presence of God with us now is the pledge of perfect rest in the next life. — *C. Stanford.*

The Divine presence. — Captain Richardson, of the Sailors' Home, was recently speaking of a pious sailor, one of their boarders, who spends much time in trying to do good to his brother seamen, in their boarding-houses, and other places. One morning he noticed him coming out of his room, and going forth into the streets. Shortly after he returned to his chamber, and after remaining there some time, he again came down to go out. Captain Richardson having observed something peculiar in his manner, inquired after the reason of his movements. He replied, "After I got out, I found Jesus

was not with me. I could not go without Jesus; so I went back to my closet to find Him. Now he is with me, and I can go."

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18-20. (18) shew . . glory,^a manifest Thyself to me. What he had seen made him desire to behold the yet unseen. (19) goodness,^b this goodness is the glory of God. The record of the facts shows conclusively the true import of the declaration. gracious . . mercy,^c God's will is final; God will be gracious and merciful to the humble, obedient, and penitent mind. (20) canst . . face,^d fully, completely. there . . live, the unveiled glory of the Infinite more than the finite could endure.

he prays to
see the
Divine glory

The answer returned. — 1. The literal request was mercifully refused. 2. The spirit of the prayer was graciously answered. Application: 1. Learn the lofty eminence to which true piety exalts a man. Intercourse with heaven. 2. The true breathing of the devout soul. "Show me Thy glory." Everything else is tinsel. 3. A perfect acquaintance with God's goodness is offered us in the gospel. "Oh, taste and see," etc. — J. Burns.

History informs us that, in the time of the great South Sea speculation in England, many, overjoyed by their success, became insane. At the restoration of Charles II., a number of the nobility were so affected by the recovery of their titles and estates that they became diseased, and in a short time died. Leo X., one of the most renowned occupants of the Papal chair, was so rejoiced by a victory somewhat unexpectedly gained over his enemies, that he sank beneath the excitement. The heir of Leibnitz, the celebrated mathematician, on finding that a chest, filled as he supposed with paper, contained a large quantity of gold, became so excited by the discovery that he was seized with a fatal disease of the heart. If such, then, be the influence of joyful emotions, when arising from temporal subjects, will the effect be diminished by adding the revelation of the unseen and eternal? Can emotions excited by the view of the majesty, holiness, wisdom, and compassion of the eternal Jehovah be less strong than those excited by considering a small portion of the work of His hands? — M. Simpson.

a Ex. xxiv. 16, 17; 2 Co. iv. 6; 1 Jo. iii. 2.

b Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7.

c Ro. ix. 15, 16.

d 1 Ti. vi. 16; De. v. 24; Ge. xxxii. 30; Is. vi. 5; Jud. xiii. 22.

e 1 Co. xiii. 12; 1 Jo. iii. 2; He. i. 3.

It was a daring prayer offered by Augustine, when he said, "Lord, hast Thou declared that no man shall see Thy face and live? — then let me die, that I may see Thee." — Bib. iii.

21-23. (21) thou . . rock, only on the Rock, Christ, can we see the glory of the goodness of God. (22) cleft . . rock,^f "Rock of ages, cleft for me," etc. while . . by, prob. the cloud illuminated to its full extent passed by the place where Moses stood. thou . . parts, after the Divine Presence had passed by, Moses was to look out, and would see so much of Divine glory as he would be able to bear. — Bush. The skirts of the cloud, the fringe of the streaming radiance. but . seen,^g by mortal man, a merciful regard for human weakness.

God prom-
ises to par-
tially reveal
Himself

f Is. li. 21; Ps. xci. 1, 4.

g Jo. i. 18.

The place by God, or the right standpoint. — The guide-books name the time when rainbows may be seen on some of the many waterfalls which abound in Switzerland. One day, when I was at Lauterbrunnen, I went to the famous Staubbach Fall (980 feet), and sat down by the flagstaff, and waited and watched. Others did the same, and we all went away disappointed. Next day one of my friends said he would show us how to find the rainbow. So I went again, and saw a most lovely one, and stood almost in the centre of it. Then I found that not only were sunshine and spray necessary to produce a rainbow, but also that those who would see it must stand between it and the sun, i. e., it could be seen only at a given point. Then I perceived that those who would see the glory of God could see it only in the face of Jesus Christ, and that the reason why so many fail in this respect is because they do not take the right standpoint. — Gavin Kirkham.

"One of the most ancient hieroglyphic representations of God was the figure of an eye upon a sceptre, to denote that God sees and rules all things. The Egyptian hieroglyph was a winged globe and a serpent coming out of it, the globe to signify God's eternity, the wings His active power, and the serpent His wisdom." — Bowes.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

1-3. (1) two . . first,^h which were the work of God exclusively. write . . tables, the ten words of His law. (2) ready . . morning, see xxiv. 4. (3) man . . thee, etc. see xix. 11-13, 20-24. Not even Joshua, the orders are more stringent than before.

Moses com-
manded to
prepare two
tables of stone

Be ready in the morning (vs. 2). — We may take this narrative as typical of the approach of a soul to God. Moses was — I. To go alone: "no man shall come with thee." God's communications to the soul are personal. II. To go "in the morning." 1. When his mind was most vigorous; we should not leave our praying until our body is too weary to enjoy or rightly perform the

h De. x. 1, 2; Ex. xxxii. 16; 2 Co. iii. 3.

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"The God of mere-ly traditional be-lievers is the great Absence of the universe."—*W. R. Alger.*

Morning prayer.—Let the day have a blessed baptism by giving your first waking thoughts into the bosom of God. The first hour of the morn-ing is the ruler of the day.—*Beecher.*

"Spill not the morning (the quintessence of the day) in recrea-tion, for sleep itself is a recrea-tion. Add not therefore, sauce to sauces."—*Fuller.*

God passes before Moses

a Ex. xxxiii. 19.

b 2 Ch. xxx. 9; Ne. ix. 17; Ps. lxxxvi. 15; ciii. 8; cxli. 4; cxvi. 5; Joel ii. 13.

c Ro. ii. 4.

d De. v. 10.

"Even the most enlightened na-tions put the thun-der into the right hand of their Jupi-ter; they placed the eagle at his feet; they repre-sented him as rul-ing the world by terror; but it was reserved for reve-lation to emblazon the Divine charac-ter in the full circle of His perfec-tions."—*Waugh.*

Moses asks for the pres-ence of God

e Ps. xxxiii. 12, xciv. 14; De. xxxii. 9; Jer. x. 16; Zech. ii. 12.

"As the human mind is finite, it is evident that we can never be capable of con-ceiving God ade-quately as He is, or of defining His being."—*Hodge.*

exercise; 2. When the works of God appeared most glorious. III. To go up the mount: "in the top of the mount." 1. Perhaps it was a steep and difficult ascent; but he who would have communion with God must "go up;" self-sacrifice and exertions are consequent upon seeking Him; 2. We know it was a solitary place: retirement is another necessity to devotion; 3. He was to ascend to the very top of the mountain. He was to have no commerce with man while he had communion with God. IV. To prepare: "Be ready." We need preparation before we enter the presence of God.—*R. A. Griffin.*

Early prayer.—We have a saying among us, that "the morning is a friend to the muses;" that is, the morning is a good studying time. I am sure it is as true that the morning is a great friend to the graces; the morning is the best praying time.—*J. Caryl.* *Rising early for devotional exercises.*—It is told in Sir Henry Havelock's "Life" how he always secured two hours for devotion before the business of the day began, even in his busiest time, by rising at five or four, as required. . . . Colonel Gardiner had the same habit. Early rising for the objects of this world is usual enough, and much to be com-mended; but the same industry that will advance a man's temporal interests will make him spiritually rich, and give him great treasure in heaven, if it be used towards God. . . . On the contrary, late rising in the morning, rapid dressing, curtailing even the few moments allotted to thanksgiving and prayer, before the plunge into the world's affairs, deafens our ears and hearts to things spiritual; we exchange an interview with our God, who can give us all good, for the miserable gratification of our indolence.—*Bib. III.*

4-7. (4) took . . stone, to receive the Divine writing. (5) name,^a cha-racter, perfection, see xxxiii. 19. (6) merciful,^b pitiful, compassionate. gracious, treating with unmerited favor. long-suffering, holding back anger. abundant . . truth,^c i. e. in manifestations and gifts of, etc. (7) keeping, treasuring, preserving. thousands, mercy inexhaustible. visit-ing,^d etc., see xx. 5, 6.

God revealed (vss. 5-7).—We learn from the text that God is a Being—I. Full of mercy and condescension. II. Patient in the endurance of man's in-iquity. III. Who is the very essence of all truth and virtue. IV. Forgiving towards real penitents. V. Strictly just in His judgments. VI. Terrible in His wrath against the wicked.—*T. F. Laurence.*

God's forgiveness.—I once visited the ruins of a noble city that had been built on a desert oasis. Mighty columns of roofless temples still stood in unbroken file. Halls in which kings and satraps had feasted two thousand years ago were represented by solitary walls. Gateways of richly carven stone led to a paradise of bats and owls. All was ruin! But past the dis-mantled city, brooks, which had once flowed through gorgeous flower-gar-dens, and at the foot of marble halls, still swept on in undying music and unwasted freshness. The waters were just as sweet as when queens quaffed them two thousand years ago. A few hours before they had been melted from the snows of the distant mountains. And so God's forgiving love flows in ever-renewed form through the wreck of the past. Past vows and past covenants and noble purposes may be represented by solitary columns and broken arches and scattered foundations that are crumbling into dust, yet through the scene of ruin fresh grace is ever flowing from His great heart on high.—*T. G. Selby.*

8, 9. (8) haste, eagerness of religious feeling, desire, etc. bowed, etc., worshipping the glory that had passed by, and accepting the gracious words addressed to him, see iv. 31. (9) if, etc., he intercedes anew for his people, see xxxiii. 13, 17. inheritance,^e possession, a property to be cultivated.

Grace-memories.—Moses could never forget those moments spent in the clefts of the rock, while he beheld the grace of God's glory, after the insuffer-able glories of the law on Sinai. What Christian, who has felt the terrors of the law producing deep conviction in his conscience, and who has found peace, ever forgets that blissful moment when, hiding in the cleft side of Jesus, he beheld the glory of God's grace, and heard His voice, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." As the rebellious subject, who has stood before his offended monarch, marked the dread frown gathered on his royal brow, and listened to the solemn proclamation of the laws of the state, is filled with deep, unutter-able joy as he sees the radiant smile of love glowing on that face, and as he hears the forgiving declaration, "Thy offense is blotted out by a merciful

sovereign." the pardoned and restored subject can never lose sight of that scene — of the radiant smile. The proclamation would be written on the tablets of his memory in ineffaceable characters. — *Adamson.*

10—17. (10) **covenant**, mutual agreement, *i. e.* I lay down afresh the terms of the covenant between Me and Israel. **marvels**, wonders, miracles. **people . . art,** *a i. e.* Israel. **with thee**, as My instrument. (11) **drive out, etc.,** see iii. 8. (12) **take heed,** *b etc.,* see xxiii. 32, 33. (13) **but ye, etc.,** see xxiii. 24. (14) **jealous,** *a* see xx. 5. (15) **lest, etc.,** see vss. 10, 12, and ref. **one . . thee,** *c* invitations and inducements to sin are never wanting. (16) **take . . gods,** *f etc.,* influence of ungodly wives (Ahab—*Jezebel*; Solomon—*Egyptian princess*). (17) **thou . . gods,** see xx. 4.

The names of God designate His attributes. This is mentioned here with peculiar propriety. The covenant made with Israel was virtually a marriage-covenant, and consequently idolatry was adultery. Every approach to this sin, therefore, would be sure to provoke Him to jealousy, just as the infidelity of a wife stirs up the same passion in the bosom of the injured husband. We are not indeed to transfer in our minds human passions to the bosom of the Deity; but the Scriptures, as we have before remarked, are constructed on the plan of ascribing the attributes of humanity to God, because He often *acts* in His dealings with men as *they act* when under the influence of certain passions. To convey, therefore, an intelligible idea, the passions themselves are affirmed of God when His conduct resembles the effect of those impulses in men. — *Bush.*

18—20. (18) **feast . . bread,** *a* see xii. 15, 20. (19) **all,** *b* etc., see xiii. 2, 12; xxii. 29. (20) **but, etc.,** see xiii. 13. **none . . empty,** each worshiper to bring an offering, see ch. xxiii. 15; we are all empty of goodness: may the Lord fill our hearts with His grace!

The overruling Providence of God. — Many persons live, and feel, and act as if God had nothing to do with the government of the world. They seem to shut Him out altogether. He comes to His own in the daily blessings of His providence and grace; but His own receive Him not. I do not mean that they deny the general superintendence of His providence over the greater affairs of the world, as, for instance, the succession of the seasons, the rise and fall of empires and kingdoms; but I mean that they forget that God overrules all the little concerns of every individual of His creatures; that every worm that creeps upon the ground, and every flower that blooms on earth, does so by His special interference, that every hair of our heads is numbered, and not a sparrow falleth to the ground without His special permission. These are the points which the Christian ever bears in mind, but which others, if they do not deny, at least forget: these are the points in which he acknowledges God. He knows that every pulse that beats within his veins, and, above all, every pulse of spiritual life of which he is sensible, beats at His command; so that there is not a single event of all his life, whether as regards his body or his soul, in which a Christian does not in this way acknowledge God. Every mercy and every comfort which he enjoys, he traces up to this source; and to see the hand of Omnipotence and Love in all these things is his delight and his privilege. — *Sankey.*

21—26. (21) **six days,** *i* etc. this is repeated from the "Book of the Covenant" (ch. xxiii. 12), but with a remarkable addition "in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest." "Earing time" is "ploughing time"—to "ear" being to "plough" in old English; and the command to rest both then and at harvest time is a command not to break the Sabbath rest at the seasons when it might seem most necessary so to do.—*Pulp. Com.* See xx. 9–11. **earring,** see Ge. xlv. 6. (22) **observe . . weeks,** *k* or harvest, see xxiii. 16. (23) **thrice . . year,** *l* etc., see xxiii. 14, 17. (24) **for . . out,** *m* etc., see xxiii. 27–30. **borders,** limits of country, see xxiii. 31. **neither . . land,** suggestion of perfect safety; thy strength so great that such desires shall be useless. (25) **neither . . morning,** see xii. 10. (26) **first fruits,** *o* etc., see xxiii. 19.

The three yearly feasts at Jerusalem (vss. 23, 24).—We will—I. Draw your attention to the institution recorded in the text. Consider—1. Of what nature this appointment was: partly political and partly religious; 2. What care God took to guard against the objections to which it was liable. II. Suggest some observations founded upon it. 1. The service of God is of para-

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God renews the covenant

a 2 Sa. vii. 23; Ps. cxlvii. 20; De. x. 21; Ps. lxxv. 5.
b Josh. xxiii. 12, 13; Ps. cvi. 36.
c De. xii. 3.
d Jas. iv. 4.
e Pr. i. 10; xvi. 29; Jas. i. 14.
f Nu. xxv. 1, 2; Ezra ix. 2; 2 Co. vi. 14–16.
Simonides, being requested to describe God, asked a week to think of it; and after that a month, and then a year; then declared th. he was unable to describe Him.

the feast of unleavened bread

g Ex. xiii. 4–7; xxiii. 15.
h Lu. ii. 23.
"The Hebrew life was a camp-life, and as such is the picture of ours. For a while we rest beneath the shadow of Elim's palm-trees, or lie down beside the green pastures; but ere long the bugle-note of our great Leader's voice is heard calling us to the onward march."—*W M Statham.*

the Sabbath, the feast of weeks, etc.

i Ex. xxii. 12, xxxv. 2; De. v. 12, 13.
k Le. xxiii. 15; De. xvi. 10, 13.
l De. xvi. 18.
m Ps. lxxviii. 55; lxxx. 8.
n Pr. xvi. 7.
o De. xxvi. 2, 10; Pr. iii. 9, 10.

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"The sun shines by his own nature, the air only by participation of light from the sun. So whatever good the creatures have, is by derivation from Jehovah, the fountain of being." —*Dr. Arrowsmith.*

Moses fasted forty days and nights

α Ex. xxxi. 18; xxxii. 16.

"Moderation, which consists in an indifference about little things, and in a prudent and well-proportioned zeal about things of importance, can proceed from nothing but true knowledge." —*Lord Chatham.*

Moses descends from Sinai: his face shines

β 2 Co. iii. 7, 9, 11-17.

If you cannot do anything else for God, you can exhibit a shining face. —*J. L. El-derdice.*

"To thy soul's inmost shrine repair and there with God converse and dwell." —*Tholuck.*

"If you wish your neighbors to see what God is like, let them see what he can make you like." —*Charles Kingsley.*

"Light houses don't ring bells and fire cannons to call attention to their shining; they just shine."

Moses places a veil over his face

c 2 Co. iii. 18.

mount obligation; 2. They who serve the Lord shall be saved by Him. —*C. Simeon.*

Sabbath rest in harvest. — "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest;" that is, you shall not violate the Sabbath-day because it is harvest. I have heard persons say—it has been six days very wet; the corn is standing, and Sunday happens to be a bright sunny day; and they say, "We ought to go and cut down the corn on the Sabbath-day." Here is a provision for this very possibility. God says, Even in harvest and earing time you shall still keep the Sabbath sacred to God. —*J. Cumming.*

27—28. (27) write . . words, prob. preceding as well as following precepts. Moses wrote the ceremonial and judicial injunctions, while the re-writing of the ten commandments was done by God Himself. — *Jamieson, F. and B. tenor*, substance, meaning. (28) *forty . . nights*, see xxiv. 18. *neither . . water*, being miraculously sustained. *he . . wrote*,^a the Lord wrote, see vs. 1.

The law, if written on stone, was written by a hand of love; if set forth in letters that seem to burn in the intensity of their purity, yet do those very letters light us into inner meanings, into the very hidden sanctuary of God. The Christian position is that the whole scheme of righteousness is revealed; whatever is right, true, pure, good, lovely, honest, and of heavenly savor has been given by God. One who knows the universe because He made it, and all eternity because He inhabits it, has condescended to tell us what is good, what is true, what is pure, what is right. Let us ask that we may have eyes to see the innermost meaning of the law, and hearts trained, disciplined, and sanctified to accept and obey it, and express it in noble behavior. —*J. Parker.*

29—32. (29) *Moses . . shone*,^b etc., intercourse with God makes the whole character and life luminous with holiness. *while he talked*, *R. V.*, "by reason of his speaking." (30) *saw . . shone*, holiness imparted is holiness visible. *they . . him*, afraid of this human reflection of Divine holiness. They shrank from Moses, as if he were more than man (Compare Ezek. i. 28; Rev. i. 17). (31) *Moses . . them*, telling them what he had seen and heard in the holy mount. (32) *afterward . . nigh*, summoned to a solemn convocation.

Moses and Stephen; the Old Testament and the New (vs. 30; also see Ac. vi. 15). — Compare these men, not in their own lives, but in the periods to which they belong in God's revelation. We may compare—I. That view of God which is reflected from the face of each of them. II. The effect of the view on the immediate witnesses. III. The crisis of life in which each of these transfigurations occurred. IV. The effects on the surrounding spectators. V. The permanence of the transfigurations in the subjects of them. —*J. Ker.*

The absence of self-consciousness. — Near the close of the summer season, in a pleasant summer retreat, a newcomer found the entire company of a little hotel preparing to give a fête in honor of a young lady who was about to leave them. The young men had hired a band, marquees were erected on the lawn, the house was wreathed with flowers; everybody had some little farewell gift ready for "Miss Betty." The stranger was curious. "This Miss Betty is very beautiful?" he asked. "No, I think not; it never occurred to me before, but I believe she is homely." "A great heiress, then?" "On the contrary, a poor artist." "Brilliant? Witty? Highly intellectual?" "No, indeed; she never said a fine thing in her life. But she is the best listener I ever knew. Neither is she learned or clever or fascinating; but she is the most lovable girl in the world." "What is the charm, then?" Betty's friend looked perplexed. "I do not know," he hesitated, "unless it is that she never thinks of herself." The charm of this woman was an absolute absence of all self-consciousness. She was neither vain nor modest. She simply forgot that there was such a person as Betty Gordon, and with her warm heart and quick sympathies threw herself into the lives of others. It was a peculiar, powerful attraction, and brought the little world about her to her feet. —*Bib. iii.*

33—35. (33) *put . . face*, *R. V.*, "when Moses had done speaking with them he put a veil on his face." (34) *he . . out*, the Source of glory could behold its reflection. (35) *and . . again*,^c whence it appears that the radiance was not a passing gleam, but continued some time. He removed the veil

when in communion with God and when giving God's message to the people, and at other times his face was veiled.

The influence of prayer on the face. — Gambold, in a letter written while Wesley was in Georgia, tells us that Wesley at Oxford was always cheerful, but never arrogant. By strict watchfulness he beat down the impetuosity of his nature into a childlike simplicity. His piety was nourished by continual communion with God, for he thought prayer to be his greatest duty; and often did Gambold see him come out of his closet of devotion with a serenity of countenance that was next to shining. — *Pressensé. Light reflected from the cross.* — With much pathos Mr. Varley once told the story of Sybil, a negress slave, whose mistress said to her: "When I heard you singing on the house-top I thought you fanatical, but when I saw your beaming face I could not help feeling how different you were to me." Sybil answered, "Ah, missus, the light you saw in my face was not from me; it all came 'flected from de cross, and there is heaps more for every poor sinner who will come near enough to catch de rays." — *Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH.

1-3. (1) gathered, etc., see xxxiv. 32. (2) six days,^a see xx. 9, 10. who-soever . . . death,^b violation of the Sabbath a capital crime. (3) kindle . . . day,^c the Sabbath to be observed even at the cost of self-denial. Strict Jews to-day do not cooking on the Sabbath day.

The unkindled fire (vs. 3). — In the old time it was a law that each night, at a prescribed hour, a bell should be rung, on hearing which the people were to put out their fires (the curfew-bell, fr. *couvre-feu*, cover the fire). This a law not about putting fires out each day, but against lighting a fire on one particular day. Why this law? I. To show that on the Sabbath, especially, men should attend to the interests of the soul rather than the comforts of the body. II. To remove frivolous excuses for non-attendance on religious worship. III. To guard the time of females or servants from unrighteous invasion; and teach men that women had religious rights and duties equally with themselves. IV. To inculcate, in all, the duty of self-sacrifice in matters relating to the soul and God.

Sabbath breaking condemned. — Dr. Lyman Beecher was seen one Monday morning leaving his house with a basket in his hand which he was carrying to the fish-market, and in which he intended to carry home a fish for the family table. Unknown to him, a young man of undecided religious principles was following and watching him. The minister soon came to the fish-market. Here Dr. Beecher picked up a fine-looking fish, and asked the fisherman if it was fresh and sweet. "Certainly," replied the man, "for I caught it myself yesterday," which was the Sabbath. Dr. Beecher at once dropped the fish, saying, "Then I don't want it," and went on without another word. We are not informed whether the preacher obtained his fish, but when the young man who was following him that morning related his experience some time afterwards on his admission to the Christian church, he stated that Dr. Beecher's consistency evinced in the fish-market had been the turning-point in his career. It convinced him of the power of religion in life, had induced him to attend the ministry of the man who had won his respect, and he was converted. — *Bib. Ill.*

4-9. this . . . thing, etc., see xxv. 1-7.

Willing-hearted (vs. 5). — I. Describe the willing offerer. He is one who gives — 1. As much as he can; 2. Of the best he has; 3. Cheerfully, as to the Lord. II. Offer some reasons for willingness in the service of God. 1. The Lord loves a cheerful giver; 2. The value of what is given is enhanced by the manner of the bestowment; 3. The willingness of one stirs the liberality of others; 4. Good works are often delayed fatally, by the slowness of giving; 5. We are not our own, and all we have is God's; 6. God gave "this unspeakable gift" willingly.

I must give before I can pray. — The venerable Dr. Sewall, of Maine, once entered a meeting in behalf of foreign missions just as the collectors of the contributions were resuming their seats. The chairman of the meeting requested him to lead in prayer. The old gentleman stood hesitatingly, as if he had not heard the request. It was repeated in a louder voice, but there

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Marvel not at thy life; Patience shall see The perfect work of wisdom to her given: Hold fast thy soul through this high mystery, And it shall lead thee to the gates of heaven. — *Kemble.*

Moses rehearses the law, etc.

the Sabbath

^a Le. xxiii. 3.

^b Nu. xv. 32, 35; Lu. xiii. 14, 15.

^c Ex. xvi. 23.

"Sunday is the golden clasp that binds together the volume of the week." — *Longfellow.*

"I am thoroughly convinced that the six days are the really true, fit, and adequate measure of time for work, whether as regards the physical strength of man or his perseverance in a uniform occupation." — *Humboldt.*

he exhorts

Israel to offer material for the tabernacle

And daily, hourly, loving and giving, In the poorest life makes heavenly living. —

Rose Terry Choate. Good wishes and approving words bring down no scales which turn with deeds. "Most

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men," said Sidney Smith, "are ready to act the good Samaritan *without* the oil and the two pence." — *De Witt S. Smith.*

the wise-hearted are to do the work

a Ex. xxxvi. 1, 2; 1 Pe. iv. 10.

b Le. xxiv. 5, 6.

"The effusions of genius are entitled to admiration rather than applause, as they are chiefly the effect of natural endowment, and sometimes appear to be almost involuntary." — *W. B. Chulow.*

the contributions of the people

"Posthumous charities are the very essence of selfishness when bequeathed by those who, when alive, would part with nothing." — *Colton.*

Dole not thy duties out to God,
But let thy hand be free;
Look long at Jesus; His sweet blood
How was it dealt to thee?
— *Faber.*

"That which is given with pride and ostentation is rather an ambition than a bounty." — *Seneca.*

the labor of the women and the gifts of the rulers

c1 Ch. xxix. 9, 14.

"True generosity is a duty as indispensably necessary as those imposed upon us by

was no response. It was observed, however, that Dr. Sewall was fumbling in his pockets, and presently he produced a piece of money, which he deposited in the contribution box. The chairman, thinking he had not been understood, said loudly, "I didn't ask you to give, Dr. Sewall, I asked you to pray." "Oh, yes," he replied, "I heard you, but I can't pray till I have given something." — *Bib. Ill.*

10—19. (10) wise-hearted,^a see xxxi. 6. (11) tabernacle, etc., see xxvi. (12) ark, see xxv. 10. (13) table,^b etc., see xxv. 23, ff. (14) candlestick, see xxv. 31. oil, see xxvii. 20. (15) incense altar, see xxx. (16) altar . . offering, see xxvii. 1, ff. (17) court, etc., Ex. xxvii. 9. (18) pins, see xxvii. 19. (19) garments, see xxviii. 2, ff.

Wise-hearted work (vs. 10). — The work of the wise-hearted : i. e. of those to whom God has given heavenly wisdom, will be — I. Promptly executed. II. Cheerfully undertaken. III. Perseveringly performed. IV. Graciously accepted.

Personal labor is more valuable often than money in the Lord's service, for it more surely carries the heart with it. There is an exquisite little story told us in the classics, of one Cressinus, whom the Romans arrested for witchcraft because he grew opulent on so small a farm. But he came to the judgment producing his tools, and displaying his hardened hands : "These are my sorceries," he exclaimed ; "these implements of honest toil are all the witcheries I know of !" And they freed him on the plea. The eight fingers and two thumbs of Christians are the best ten friends that any congregation in difficulties ever has found under God. — *Bib. Ill.*

20—24. (20) departed . . Moses, to fulfill his command. (21) stirred, lifted, willing, see xxv. 2. (22) brought . . gold, all kinds of precious things : nothing too good for the service of God : bracelets = brooches, earrings, signet rings, tablets, ornaments, as lockets. (23, 24) with . . found, etc., they gave according to their possessions.

Willing workers (vss. 20—22). — I. The service of God must be as hearty as the service of Satan has been. They gave their earrings for the golden calf, now they give them to God. Saul passed from a persecutor to an apostle. Let grace succeed sin. II. The spirit in which an offering is made fixes its value. The widow's mite : Ananias and Sapphira. Not burnt offerings, but obedience. III. God invites, but does not compel. 1. The human will is incapable of compulsion ; 2. Every sin is in spite of God ; 3. The sense of guilt involves choice. IV. Everyone is to do what little he can. 1. Each brought what he had ; 2. Each man built over against his own house ; 3. All the littles make the whole. V. Christ's kingdom rests on the affections. 1. Its motive is love : 2. Its object is the perfection of love. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver. — *Fowler.*

The beauty of hands. — Two charming women were discussing one day what it is constitutes beauty in the hand. They differed in opinion as much as the shape of the beautiful member whose merits they were discussing. A gentleman friend presented himself, and by common consent the question was referred to him. It was a delicate matter. He thought of Paris and the three goddesses. Glancing from one to the other of the beautiful white hands presented for his examination, he replied at last, "I will give it up. The question is too hard for me. But ask the poor, and they will tell you the most beautiful hand in the world is the hand that gives."

25—29. (25) women . . hands, peculiar skill required for spinning goat's hair. (26) wisdom, skill, ingenuity, persevering toil. (27, 28) rulers, etc. Their gifts proportioned to their position and wealth. (29) brought . . Lord,^c a willing spirit enhanced the value of each contribution.

Women's work. — And then we read that the women did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun — namely, the same things as have been already catalogued, the blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. That looks as if the richer gave the raw material, and the women gave the labor. Poor women, they could not give, but they could spin. They had no stores, but they had ten fingers and a distaff ; and if some neighbor found the stuff, the ten fingers joyfully set the distaff twirling, and spun the yarn for the weavers. Then there were others who willingly undertook the rougher work of spinning, not dainty thread for the

rich soft stuffs whose colors were to glow in the sanctuary, but the coarse black goats' hair which was to be made into the heavy covering of the roof of the tabernacle. No doubt it was less pleasant labor than the other, but it got done by willing hands. And then, at the end of the whole enumeration, there comes — "And the rulers brought precious stones, and spices and oil," and all the expensive things that were needed. The big subscriptions are at the bottom of the list, and the smaller ones are in the place of honor. All this just teaches us this — what a host of things of all degrees of preciousness in men's eyes go to make God's great building! All the things that are given, and the works that are done from the same motive, because of the willing heart, stand upon the same level of acceptance and preciousness in His eyes, whatever may be their value in the market-place. — *A. Maclaren.*

30—35. See xxxi 2-6. The methods of working here spoken of were well known in Egypt at the time, and it would have been quite natural that some of the Israelites had learned them. We are not to suppose that God supernaturally communicated to Bezaleel and Aholiab the technical knowledge required, but only that he gave them genius and artistic skill, so that both their designs and the execution of them were of unusual excellence.

Men for the time. — I. There have been times in the world's history when special work needed to be done. II. this from the history of nations and of the church. II. At such times the Lord of Providence has raised up special men to do the work needed. Columbus discovers a continent, to be presently a place of refuge for the persecuted. Gutenberg invents printing and diffuses the Word of Life. Luther starts the Reformation, and an age of light succeeds the dark ages. Cromwell arises at a time when the liberties of England were threatened. Wesley is summoned to quicken a dead and formal religiousness. III. Learn not only to read the signs, and mourn over the necessities of the times; but also to trust in God, in whose hands are the hearts of all men and the issues of life.

Wisdom a Divine gift. — A touching story is related of Thomas Telford, the Scottish mason who became one of the greatest of British engineers. His great scheme of a suspension bridge over the Menai Strait, connecting Carnarvonshire with the Isle of Anglesea, had passed through many stages of difficulty and doubt. Will and genius had battled with and overcome the obstacles, and the bridge was a fact. An experiment had been made, and all went well. Enthusiastic friends missed the designer. They went to seek him, and to tell him how thoroughly his plans appeared to be justified, and how reward had come for labor and anxiety. Telford was found on his knees, lifting up his heart to God in adoration and prayer. He recognized that all wisdom and all power was a Divine trust, and that God was the Giver of all his good. This is the right way to take success. Such men do not lose in soul-stature through their prosperity. — *Bib. III.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH.

1—7. (1) Bezaleel,^a always named first, seems to have been the prime director. This vs. is introductory to the entire subsection, which extends to the end of ch. xxxix. It means — "Then under the direction of Bezaleel and Aholiab, began the work of constructing that place of meeting for which commandment had been given to Moses in the mount." The master-craftsmen, and those under them, "wrought," and took care that all was done according to all that the Lord had commanded. It is to mark the exactitude of the obedience that chs. xxxvi.-xxxix. follow so closely, and with such minuteness, the wording of chs. xxvi.-xxviii. (5) people . . enough, we are hampered in our work by too great abundance. (6) let . . sanctuary, the first and last time such a proclamation was made. (7) for . . sufficient, etc., there are always means for accomplishing great works when hearts are willing.

The offerings for the tabernacle (vss. 5-7). — It will be proper to notice — I. The object of the people's zeal. II. The operation. Note — 1. Their liberality; 2. Their diligence. III. The effect: abundance of gifts: indeed, more than enough. Improvement: — (1) Let the cause of God be dear unto our souls; (2) Let us cordially and universally co-operate for its advancement. — *C. Simeon.*

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the law. It is a rule imposed upon us by reason, which should be the sovereign law of a rational being." — *Goldsmith.*

Bezaleel and Aholiab chosen for the work

"The whole difference between a man of genius and other men, that the first remains in great part a child, seeing with the large eyes of children, in perpetual wonder, not conscious of much knowledge, — conscious, rather, of infinite ignorance, and yet infinite power; a fountain of eternal admiration, delight, and creative force within him meeting the ocean of visible and governable things around him." — *Ruskin.*

more than enough is offered

a 1 Co. iii. 10.

"He that gives all, though but little, gives much, because God looks not to the quantity of the gift, but to the quality of the giver; he that desires to give more than he can hath equalled his gift to his desire, and hath given more than he hath." — *Quarles*

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"There is no brilliancy in silver when hidden in the earth, if it does not throw lustre around by moderate use." —

Horace

they make
the curtains

"O, it is the saddest of all things that even one human soul should fail to perceive the beauty that is ever around us, a 'perpetual benediction.' Nature, that great missionary of the Most High, preaches to us forever in all tones of love and writes truth in all colors, on manuscripts illumined with stars and flowers." — Mrs L M Child.

they make
the covering

"Work, according to my feeling, is as much of a necessity to man as eating and sleeping. Even those who do nothing which to a sensible man can be called work, still imagine that they are doing something." — Humboldt.

they make
the boards

"Work is of a religious nature, — work is of a brave nature, which it is the aim of all religion to be. 'All work of man is as the swimmer's.' A waste ocean threatens to devour him; if he front it not bravely, it will keep its

Giving heartily— Andrew Fuller, when on a begging tour for the cause of missions, called on a wealthy nobleman to whom he was unknown, but who had heard much of Fuller's talents and piety. After he had stated to him the object of his visit, his lordship observed that he thought he should make him no donation. Dr. Fuller was preparing to return, when the nobleman remarked that there was *one man* to whom, if he could see him, he thought he would give something for the mission, and that man was Andrew Fuller. Mr. Fuller immediately replied, "My name, sir, is Andrew Fuller." On this, the nobleman, with some hesitation, gave him a guinea. Observing the indifference of the donor, Mr. Fuller looked him in the face with much gravity, and said, "Does this donation, sir, come from *your heart*? If it does not, I wish not to receive it." The nobleman was melted and overcome with this honest frankness, and taking from his purse ten guineas more, said, "These, sir, these come from *my heart*."

8—13. See xxvi. 1-6.

The beautiful to be wedded to the good in all work for God.—The old Spartans asked their gods to grant them the beautiful with the good. I. When God made a house for man. He made the world not only useful but beautiful—illumined it with the lamps of heaven, threaded it with silver streams, embroidered it with rainbow-tinted flowers, perfumed it with incense from ten thousand painted chalices, and appointed it a band of feathered choristers in every grove. II. When God gave man a commission to build a house for Him, He modeled the plan upon His own principle by uniting the beautiful with the good. This, that it might be pleasant to the eye, as well as good for use; that it might be worthy of Him who was to be worshipped. III. If God willed thus in the case of a wandering people, whose resources were small, how much more in our case! All the treasures of our coffers, all our intelligence, are not too great to raise a temple for Him whom the heavens cannot contain. IV. If God was pleased to dwell in such a house how beautiful and good should be that heart in which it is hoped that God will dwell: "with that man will I dwell," etc.

14—19. See xxxvi. 7-14.

Right things in right places.—By the distribution of gold, silver, brass, goats' hair, rams' skins, and badgers' skins, etc., in the tabernacle, we are reminded of the fitness of things and the Divine order—right things in right places. I. We see this in the order of nature. II. We mark it in the distribution of offices and gifts in the church. III. We are reminded of the application of this order to our own lives; 1. Not to employ our highest powers upon trivial matters; 2. Not to appoint our best men to small offices; 3. Not to give the best of each day, or of our life, to unworthy pursuits. Let the gold, silver, brass, be rightly bestowed and distributed.

A covering of badgers' skins.—Ruppel, an African traveler, is of opinion that the material referred to in the text is the skin of a species of *Dugong*, an animal of the whale order. It "is the only animal yet known that grazes at the bottom of the sea, usually in shallow inlets, which it is enabled to accomplish by its power of suspending itself steadily in the water, and by having its jaws bent down at an angle in such a manner as to bring the mouth into nearly a vertical direction, so that it can feed upon the sea-weeds much in the same manner as a cow does upon the herbage." — Kirby's *Bridgewater Treatise*.

20—23. See xxvi. 15-18.

Common material made useful by the highest art.—Note how this applies in the familiar manufactures, and illustrate by facts in the life of man. I. Wood, a common material, applied by art to honorable uses: men—common men—adapted by Providence and grace to useful service (give examples). II. Wood, fashioned by art, had to be hacked, sawn, chiseled, planed, and polished before rendered fit for service: men have to undergo pruning and planing to qualify them for place and duty. III. Wood, common material, as much thought of by the Divine architect and His inspired servants, as rare gems and precious metals: men, however humble, are not overlooked by God, not to be undervalued by men.

Work honorable.—Nor can I honor too highly the faithful and industrious mechanic, the faithful man who fills up his chink in the great economy by

patiently using his hammer or his wheel; for he does something. If he only sews a welt, or planes a knot, he helps to build up the solid pyramid of this world's welfare; while there are those who, exhibiting but little use while living, might, if embalmed, serve the same purpose as those forms of ape and ibis *inside* the Egyptian caverns.—serve to illustrate the shapes and idolatries of human conceit. At any rate, there is no doubt of the essential nobility of that man who pours into life the honest vigor of his toil over those who compose the feathery foam of fashion that sweeps along Broadway; who consider the insignia of honor to consist in wealth and indolence; and who, ignoring the family history, paint coats of arms to cover up the leather aprons of their grandfathers.—*Chapin.*

24—30. See xxvi. 19—25.

Wooden planks and silver sockets.—This reminds us how, in the ways of God, the useful is adorned, strengthened, and preserved by the ornamental and precious. This may be true of—I. A man. He may be lowly, poor, etc., yet God takes care of him, provides him with protection. II. A life. It may be spent among the lowly. Its memory, like a silver socket, may save it from decay. III. An action. A lowly deed, perhaps; but enriched by the adornment of the Spirit. Grace gilds the cup in which the cold water is passed to the thirsty. IV. A prayer. Of homely material, yet the silver socket of faith fixes it secure in the promise and favor of God.

Example of giving to God.—When Deacon Safford's property (Boston, U. S.) was worth \$45,000, he resolved it should never be any more. Though he had given largely for years before, he then resolved that all his income should be devoted to benevolent objects. This was literally and faithfully carried out. During the remainder of his life he gave over \$70,000 to benevolent objects. It was not done indiscriminately, but as the result of personal examination, giving his time and his earnest Christian labor and sympathy, as well as his money. He was a very busy man, and a very happy man, because his hands were more and more full of work for Christ, till he died at the age of sixty-three.

31—34. See xxvi. 26—29.

Union is strength.—The coupling bars by which the boards of the tabernacle were held together may well remind us of some of the advantages of union. I. By it weak things become strong. II. Plain things beautiful. III. Useless things of the highest service. IV. Detached things a compact whole.

Past and present.—The tomb of Moses is unknown; but the traveler slakes his thirst at the well of Jacob. The gorgeous palace of the wisest and wealthiest of monarchs, with cedar, and the gold, and ivory, and even the great temple of Jerusalem, hallowed by the visible glory of the Deity Himself, are gone; but Solomon's reservoirs are as perfect as ever. Of the ancient architecture of the Holy City not one stone is left upon another, but the pool of Bethesda commands the pilgrim's reverence at the present day. The columns of Persepolis are moldering into dust, but its cistern and aqueducts remain to challenge our admiration. The golden house of Nero is a mass of ruins, but the Aqua-Claudia still pours into Rome its limpid stream. The Temple of the Sun at Tadmor, in the wilderness, has fallen; but its fountain still sparkles in its rays. It may be that London will share the fate of Babylon, and nothing be left to mark it save mounds of crumbling brickwork. The Thames will continue to flow as it does now. And if any work of art should rise over the deep ocean, in time, we may well believe that it will neither be a palace nor a temple, but some vast aqueduct or reservoir; and if any name should flash through the mist of antiquity it would probably be that of the man who, in his day, sought the happiness of his fellow-men, rather than glory, and linked his memory to some great work of national utility or benevolence. This is the true glory, which outlives all others, and shines with undying lustre from generation to generation, imparting to works some of its own immortality, and in some degree rescuing them from the ruin which overtakes the ordinary monument of historical tradition or mere magnificence.

35—38. (35, 36) see xxvi. 31, 32. (37) see xxvi. 37. (38) chapiters, capitals, heads of the pillars. fillets, connecting-rods.

The veil in the tabernacle.—I. Its similitudes.—1. Like nature between

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word. By incessant wise defiance of it, lusty rebuke and buffet of it, behold how it loyally supports him,—bears him as its conqueror along.” —*Carlyle.*

they make the silver sockets

“Beauty is an all-pervading presence. It unfolds in the numberless flowers of the spring; it waves in the branches of the trees; it haunts the depths of the earth and the sea, and gleams out in the hues of the shell and the precious stone. The ocean, the mountains, the clouds, the heavens, the stars, the rising and setting sun, all overflow with beauty.” —*Channing.*

they make the coupling bars

“I know that there is one God in heaven, the father of all humanity, and heaven is therefore one. I know that there is one sun in the sky, which gives light to all the world. As there is unity in God, and unity in the light, so is there unity in the principles of freedom. Wherever it is broken, wherever a shadow is cast upon the bright rays of the sun of liberty, there is always danger to free principles everywhere in the world.” —*Kosuth.* “Union does everything when it is perfect; it satisfies desires, it simplifies needs, it foresees the wishes of the imagination.” —*De Sénan-cour.*

they make the veil

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"Excellence in art is to be attained only by the manly overcoming of difficulties, by patient struggle against adverse circumstances, by the thrifty use of moderate opportunities. The great artists were not rocked and dandled into eminence, but they attained to it by labor and discipline."—*Hillard*.

man and God; 2. Like forms and ceremonies between the worshipers and objects of worship; 3. Like parabolic teaching between carnal thought and Divine truth. II. Its beauty. Gorgeous colors, quaint devices, skilful making, hanging, etc. III. Its use. — 1. Important: to conceal the ark, etc., and yet by devices, etc., to reveal. To stimulate inquiry, and yet to check unhal- lowed curiosity; 2. Temporal: the veil is abolished; so nature, forms, parables, etc., will pass away: and we shall see face to face, know as we are known, be led into all truth.

Tribute-offerings. — A slave in the Southern plantations was aided by a Canadian to escape from the horrible oppression of a slave-driver. He was enabled to procure employment in Canada, and, being a skilled mechanican by natural talent he was able to command a liberal income. Every half year a mysterious gift reached the home of the Canadian liberator — "Gratitude's tribute for my freedom." Freed from the bondage of Egyptian taskmasters, Israel had ample occasion to testify their gratitude to the Divine deliverer. — *Adamson*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

they make
the ark

1-5. See xxv. 10-14.

Precious things for holy uses. — The ark was simply a chest or coffer to contain certain sacred articles. I. It was made of durable material, to teach that the contents were to be carefully preserved. II. It was skilfully and artistically wrought, to teach that the intelligence and strength of men were to be employed in the guarding of the law, etc., of God. III. It was constructed for easy transport, to teach that man should make provision for the accompaniment of religion and its services through the journey of life.

"It is to labor, and to labor only, that man owes everything possessed of exchangeable value. Labor is the talisman that has raised him from the condition of the savage; that has changed the desert and the forest into cultivated fields; that has covered the earth with cities, and the ocean with ships; that has given us plenty, comfort, and elegance, instead of want, misery, and barbarism." — *M'Culloch*.

Sacred chests. — Perhaps the most curious analogy (to the ark) is that discovered by Captain Cook at the island of Huaheine, in the South Sea. In Hawkesworth's account it is described as "a kind of chest, or ark, the lid of which was nicely sewed on, and thatched very neatly with palm-nut leaves. It was fixed upon two poles, and supported upon little arches of wood, very neatly covered: the use of the poles seemed to be to remove it from place to place in the manner of our sedan-chair. In one end of it was a square hole, in the middle of which was a ring touching the sides and leaving the angles open, so as to form a round hole within, a square one without. The first time Mr. (afterwards Sir Joseph) Banks saw this coffer, the aperture at the end was stopped with a piece of cloth, which, lest he should give offense, he left untouched. Probably there was then something within; but now the cloth was taken away, and, on looking into it, it was found empty. The general resemblance between this repository and the ark of the Lord among the Jews is remarkable; but it is still more remarkable that, upon inquiring of the boy what it was called, he said *Ewharre no Etau*, the 'house of God;' he could, however, give no account of its signification or use." — *Kitto*.

they make
the mercy
seat

6-9. See xxv. 17-20.

The cherubic symbol. — Teaches — I. That the place of a true worshiper should be near the mercy seat. II. That the aspect of the true worshiper should be towards the mercy seat. III. That the spirit of the true worshiper should be God-ward. (The cherubs were at each end of the mercy seat: their faces towards it, and their wings spread out on high.)

"There are no principles but those of religion to be depended on in cases of real distress; and these are able to encounter the worst emergencies, and to bear us up under all the changes and chances to which our life is subject." — *Sterne*.

"The guardian angel of life some times flies so high that man cannot see him; but he always is looking

Place of worship. — It was formerly, and for hundreds of years, only in one place where God would be worshiped. Salvation was then confined to the Jews; and where the ark of the covenant, and the high priest, and the altar, and all the symbols of salvation were, there, and there only, would God be worshiped. Thither "the tribes of the Lord went up;" and, when banished from that place, they worshiped "towards it." So Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple. So Daniel, in captivity in Babylon, threw open his window, "and prayed toward Jerusalem." "I will worship toward Thy holy temple." There the great God actually dwelt in the Holy of Holies; and only there would He be worshiped. But our Lord teaches the woman of Samaria that this whole system of local worship was passing away. "The hour was coming," nay, "was come, when the mountain of Samaria would be as holy as Mount Zion, the steppes of Russia and the prairies of America as sacred as the land of Canaan; when neither in one place more than in another

would God be worshiped, but anywhere and everywhere. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst." That is My church. My temple, My holy mountain, in the midst of the hearts of My praying people. "To all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." — *Dean Close.*

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down upon us, and will soon hover nearer to us." — *Richter.*

10-16. See xxv. 23-29.

Working to order. — It is often difficult to get an order well executed. He who gives the order should know what he wants. He who executes it should not assume that he knows better than his employer. In the making of the tabernacle we have an example of working to order. I. Who gave the order? God, who also gave full directions. II. Who executed the order? Bezaleel, etc. Men divinely inspired for the work. III. How was their work done? 1. With fidelity to the plan; 2. With docility; they asked no questions, made no suggestions; 3. With dispatch, as to time.

The dignity of labor. — An American President, when asked what was his coat of arms, replied, "A pair of shirt-sleeves." Lord Tenterden was proud to point out to his son the shop in which his father had shaved for a penny. A French doctor once taunted Flechier, Bishop of Nismes, who had been a tallow-chandler in his youth, with the meanness of his origin; to which he replied, "If you had been born in the same condition that I was, you would still have been but a maker of candles."

they make the table for the shew-bread

"It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Work is healthy; you can hardly put more upon a man than he can bear. Worry is rust upon the blade. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction." — *Beecher.*

17-24. See xxv. 31-30.

The beautiful light-holder. — For the purpose of suspending the lamps, a more simple form and more common materials would have served the purpose. The candlestick was to be not only of pure gold, but richly ornamented. It illustrates — I. The light-giving Word: the Bible. Its truths "more precious than gold; yea, than much fine gold." Its beauty equal to its preciousness. It is richly adorned with flowers of poetry, biography, etc. II. Light-giving men: ministers and teachers who hold forth the word of life, and light — for "the entrance of Thy Word giveth light" — should be adorned with the true beauty of zeal, faith and love.

Candlestick-symbolism. — The figure of this light-giver is represented on the famous arch of Titus at Rome. The light-giver with seven branches stood in the inner sanctuary — not the holy of holies. Its rays thus threw light upon the incense altar and table of shew-bread. Its jets of light bore witness for centuries, says Plumptre, that God was Light, and that that Light revealed itself in manifold variety, growing out of a central unity. The form of this Light-giver appears in Zech. iv. 2, where the symbol is completed by a vision of two olive-trees feeding from their branches, through two golden pipes, the bowl through which the lamps were kept burning. The prophet learnt that the trees were the two anointed ones — *i. e.* Joshua and Zerubbabel, types of priestly and civil authority. This typical symbolism may, however, be capable of large expansion. The Patmos seer beholds seven distinct lamps — showing that the lamp was the emblem not merely of uncreated light, but of the church — as the channel through which that light was to be diffused through the world. — *Adamson.*

they make the candlestick

"Art does not imitate nature, but it finds itself on the study of nature, — takes from nature the selections which best accord with its own intention, and then bestows on them that which nature does not possess, *viz.*, the mind and the soul of man." — *Lytton.*

"All men are in some degree impressed by the face of the world. This love of beauty is taste. Others have the same love in such excess that, not content with admiring, they seek to embody it in new forms. The creation of beauty is art." — *Emerson.*

25-29. (25-28) see xxx. 1-5. (29) anointing oil, see xxx. 23-25. incense, see xxx. 34-37.

The preparation of the heart for prayer. — The incense-altar to be of a given form, and size, and material, and no other, may teach — I. That the praying heart should be equally balanced, having its sides of affection, sympathy, faith, earnestness, lying towards all quarters of truth. II. That the praying heart should be pure in thought, desire, etc., and be framed by the direction of the Spirit of God. III. That the praying heart should accompany the believer in all his wanderings, etc.

Liberality. — As the articles in the holy of holies were made of the most costly materials, the finest wood, and the purest gold, so were those in the holy place, which may remind us that in all matters connected with the Christian church the utmost liberality should be displayed. In fact, no part of the church's service should be anything but the absolute best, *i. e.* in the circumstances. The spiritual food which she dispenses should be the richest possible, the intellectual and religious light which she diffuses the clearest

they make the incense altar

"Never believe to be right those who, having but a piece of metal in their chests, would persuade you that to be cold is to be wise. Warmth is the vivifying influence of the universe, and the heart is the source of noble deeds." — *Kossuth.*

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"There are many people the brilliancy of whose minds only depends upon the heart."—*Desmahis.*

and the sweetest possible, the sacrifice of prayer and praise which she presents the purest and the noblest possible. All her undertakings and schemes should be supported with the most bountiful munificence. Nothing mean, shabby, illiberal, ungenerous, should have a place within the house of God. This principle too, however, has a qualification which must be noted. — *Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-EIGHTH.

they make the altar of burnt-offering

1-7. See xxvii. 1-8.

"Religion is the fear of God, and its demonstration good works; and faith is the root of both: 'For without faith we cannot please God; nor can we fear what we do not believe.'—*Wm. Penn.*

The altar of burnt-offering.—It is thought that both this altar and the larger one made by Solomon, by which it was superseded, had the lower part of the hollow filled up, either with earth or stones, in compliance with the injunction in xx. 24, 25. Josephus says, that the altar used in his time at the temple was of unhewn stone, and that no iron tool had been employed in its construction. None of the altars which the Scripture assigns to either the tabernacle or temple were of this construction, but that erected at Mt. Ebal by Joshua was so (Josh. viii. 31), and apparently others which were set up in different parts of the land of promise. It seems to us that the commands in chap. xx. about altars applies as a general instruction respecting those which the Israelites might wish to erect in the provinces or elsewhere, and which were not in constant use, without excluding for the chief place of worship such particular variations as its peculiar circumstances, and the frequent sacrifices which were offered there, rendered necessary. — *Kitto.*

they make the brazen laver and the court

8-15. (8) laver, see xxx. 18. looking-glasses, bronze mirrors, Heb., *maroth*, fr. *raah*, to see, reflectors or mirrors of any kind. (9-15) see xxvii. 9-15.

Sceptics ridicule the statement that looking glasses were used in such early times (Ex. xxxviii. 8), glass not having been discovered. But Moses says that they were of "brass." Brazen mirrors, or reflectors, for the same purpose as the mirrors we now make from glass, were used by the Egyptians and Israelites in those times.

The bronze mirrors and the brazen laver (vs. 8).—When Carthage was besieged, the women gave their long hair to make the strings of bows and catapults; here was vanity sacrificing at the shrine of patriotism. The warriors of Carthage would think the hair looked better in the bow than on the head. Here the women give up their mirrors to provide a laver—the instruments by which the perfections of their own face or form were studied, to provide the means for the perfection of the priest. I. Vanity sacrificing at the shrine of humility. II. The instruments of pride become a visible confession of uncleanness. III. The women of Israel looked lovelier in the sight of God than they had to themselves in their own mirrors. IV. The mirror reflected physical and transient beauty; the laver revealed moral and abiding grace.

The great men, by heroic strength, by dauntless valor, will carry on their sublime occupation; the patient women—gentle souls, having the genius of sympathy and the faculty of interpreting by suffering—will contribute their important, their ineffably valuable share; and little children will make up the sum total of the consecration. — *J. Parker.*

they make the hangings for the court

16-20. See xxvii. 15-19.

"Greatness can only be rightly estimated when minuteness is justly revered. Greatness is the aggregation of minuteness; nor can its sublimity be felt truthfully by any mind unaccustomed to the affectionate watching of what is least."—*Ruskin.*

The uses of little things.—Only the pins, *i. e.* the tent-pegs of the tabernacle: yet I. Having an important use. By them the whole structure fastened. II. Teaching important truths; 1. The character made up of little graces; 2. The life made up of little actions; 3. Time made up of small moments. III. As carefully made and preserved as the rest. Take care of little things; the great will then take care of themselves.

Influence of small things.—In walking across Alpine glaciers, travelers often come upon narrow and apparently insignificant fissures, that seem to be merely superficial cracks; while the guides know that, if one but sounds them, they shall be found sinking down, fathom after fathom, to the very bottom; and sometimes, though small to the eye externally, they are cavernous, and at the bottom torrents rush and roar in silence; for so far down are they, and so ice-covered, that their angriest noises are smothered. It is just so in human life. The depths of the heart often have the smallest openings out to the surface. The least important things have the most power in this world of expressing themselves. The most wonderful histories sink down in life, unuttered and unrecorded. Grievs, longings, loves, and fears, flow hidden and voiceless as if the heart were a glacier. — *H. W. Beecher.*

21-23. (21) **sum**,^a reckoning, inventory. (22, 23) see xxxi. 2, 6.

Copartnerships in labor. — (vss. 22, 23). — I. A great building firm: Bezaleel and Aholiab. 1. Bezaleel, *i. e.* under the protection of God. Happy for the toilers of earth when they labor under the Divine care; 2. Aholiab, *i. e.* the tent of his father. His name may suggest the happiness of those who bring honor to their father's house; or of those who provide a home for their father. II. A union of great talents for a great work. The administrative talent of the one, the skill and taste of the other. One grasps the whole, the other works it out in all the details.

Good works. — Good works may exist without saving principles, and therefore cannot contain in themselves the principles of salvation; but saving principles never did, never can, exist without good works. Men often talk against faith, and make strange monsters, in their imagination, of those who profess to abide by the words of the Apostle interpreted literally, and yet in their ordinary feelings they themselves judge and act by a similar principle. For what is love without kind offices whenever they are possible, (and they are always possible, if not by actions, commonly so called, yet by kind words, by kind looks, and where these are out of our power, by kind thoughts and fervent prayers!) yet what noble mind would not be offended, if he were supposed to value the serviceable offices equally with the love that produced them; or if he were thought to value the love for the sake of the services, and not the services for the sake of the love? — Coleridge.

24-31. (24) **gold**, reckoning 3,000 shekels to the talent of 125 pounds, and this at \$20 per ounce, the gold would be worth about \$875,000. (25) **silver**, about \$200,000, *i. e.* at \$14 per ounce (26) **bekah**, *lit.* a half. **six . . men**, see xii. 37. (27, 28) **chapters**, *etc.*, see xxxvi. 38. (29) **brass**, *i. e.* bronze, value uncertain. (30, 31) **sockets**, see xxvi. 37, also xxvii. 10, 17.

The cost of a great undertaking. — The cost of the tabernacle reminds us — I. That however great the cost, it may be defrayed by the many. II. That however small each contribution, it helps to make up the great whole. A child's handful of goat's hair not to be despised. III. That nothing is impossible to diligent minds, industrious hands, and earnest hearts.

Cunning workman. — But let us claim all true workers as inspired men. We know that there is an inspired art. The world knows it; instinctively, unconsciously, the world uncovers before it. There is an inspired poetry, make it of what measure you will. The great common heart knows it, says, "That is the true verse; how it rises, falls, plashes like a fountain, flows like a stream, breathes like a summer wind, speaks the thoughts we have long understood, but could never articulate!" The great human heart says, "That is the voice Divine; that is he appeal of heaven." Why should we say that inspiration is not given to all true workers, whether in gold or in thought, whether in song or in prayer, whether in the type or in the magic eloquence of the burning tongue? Let us enlarge life, and enlarge Providence, rather than contract it, and not, whilst praying to a God in the heavens, have no God in the heart. You would work better if you realized that God is the Teacher of the fingers, and the Guide of the hand. Labor is church and glorified. Art turns its chiseled and flushed features toward its native heaven. — J. Parker.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-NINTH.

1-5. (1, 2) **cloths**, see xxxi. 10. **garments**, *etc.*, see xxviii. 4, 6. (3) **beat . . plates**, the malleability of gold long known. **wires**, wh. appear to have been cut into threads and not drawn, as now. (4, 5) See xxviii. 7, 8.

The ephod. — In each shoulder-piece was a precious stone set in gold — an onyx stone, a beautiful white and half-transparent stone. In these precious stones the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were engraven. Aaron carried the names of his people upon his shoulders. He presented them thus before the Lord, and when God looked down upon Aaron, He saw the names of His people indelibly engraven in white stones. The shoulder is the place of strength. The omnipotent strength of Christ is ours. He carries His people's burdens and themselves too (Isa. lxiii. 9, xl. 11, xlv. 4; Ps. lv. 22). The government is upon His shoulder, and the crown is upon his head. — G. Rodgers.

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the sum
of the taber-
nacle

the chief
workmen

1. He. viii. 2; ix. 12. "Clay and rock are given us, not brick and squared stone. God gives us no raiment; He gives us flax and sheep. If we would have coats on our backs, we must take them off our flocks and spin them and weave them. If we would have anything of benefit, we must earn it, and earning it, must become shrewd, inventive, ingenious, active, enterprising." — Beecher.

the gold, the
silver, and
the brass

"Accustom yourself to master and overcome things of difficulty." — Pliny.

"What is difficulty? Only a word indicating the degree of strength requisite for accomplishing particular objects; a mere notice of the necessity for exertion; a bug-bear to children and fools; only a mere stimulus to men." — S. Warren.

the cloths of
service and
the ephod
are made

"Gold, like the sun, which melts wax and hardens clay, expands great souls and contracts bad hearts." — Rivarol.

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they make the breastplate

"I cannot but take notice of the wonderful love of God to mankind, who has so interwoven our duty and happiness together, that while we are discharging our obligations to the one, we are, at the same time, making the best provision for the other."—*Melmoth*.

"I do not want the walls of separation between different orders of Christians to be destroyed, but only lowered, that we may shake hands a little easier over them."—*Rowland Hill*.

they make the fastenings of the breastplates

"As the smallest birds of the earth are not taken without the will of our heavenly Father, so nothing good or evil happens to God's children without His provident will."—*Cavendish*.

they make the robe of the ephod

"Lord Bacon had music often played in the room adjoining his study. Milton listened to his solemn inspirations; and music was ever necessary to Warburton. The symphonies which awake in the poet sublime emotions might have composed the inventive mind of the great critic in the visions of his theoretical mysteries."—*D'Israeli*.

6—14. (6, 7) See xxviii. 9—12. (8—14) See xxviii. 15—21.

The jeweled breastplate.—Precious stones always counted among the earth's most precious things: these of the breastplate were—I. Various: ill. diff. qualities and characteristics of the tribes. II. Costly: the gifts of the rulers, Ex. xxxv. 27; prob. the rulers of each tribe presented the stone for their tribe. III. Durable: a lasting memorial. Names engraven would not be obliterated. IV. United in one breastplate: twelve tribes, one nation; many individuals, one people. V. Worn near the heart: significance of this applied to our Great High Priest.

The breastplate.—The meaning of the Heb. word *choshen*, rendered *breastplate*, appears to be simply *ornament*. The names given to it in nearly all versions must therefore be regarded as glosses. The LXX., Philo, Josephus, and the son of Sirach (Ecclus. xlv. 10) call it *λογέιον*, or *λόγιον*, and the Vulgate *rationale*, in ref. to its use as an oracle in making known the judgments of the Lord. It was from this use that it was designated the *Choshen of Judgment*. Symmachus renders the word as a receptacle, or bag (*δόχιον*), from what appears to have been its form. The names given to it by most modern translators (like our own *breastplate*) relate merely to its place in the dress. It was to be made of a piece of cunning work (the work of the skilled weaver, see xxxv. 35), the same in texture and materials as the ephod. This piece was a cubit (two spans) in length, and half a cubit (a span) in width, and it was to be folded together so as to form a square of half a cubit. Whether it was doubled with no other purpose than to give it stability (*Rosenmüller, Knobel, Kalisch*), or in order to form what was used as a bag (*Gesenius, Bähr, Fürst*), has been questioned; but the latter appears to be by far the more likely alternative. On the mode in which it was attached to the ephod, see vs. 22, ff. — *Spk. Com.*

15—21. See xxviii. 22—28.

The ephod.—This appears to have been a sort of close robe or vest reaching from the shoulders to the loins. It was made of a rich cloth of fine linen, embroidered with blue, purple, scarlet, and gold. The inferior priests also wore ephods, but they were of plain linen. It does not appear that even these were worn at first by the common priests. But we afterwards read of common priests wearing ephods; and indeed Samuel, who was only a Levite, wore one; and David, who was not even a Levite, did the same when he danced before the ark. On one occasion Saul consulted the Lord by Urim, and consequently used the ephod of the high priest (1 Sa. xxviii. 6); and on another occasion David did the same (1 Sa. xxx. 7). It is thought by some, however, that Saul and David did not themselves use the ephod, but directed the priest to use it, and this seems the most probable interpretation. It is, however, an opinion entertained by some, that the kings had a right to wear the ephod, and to consult the Lord by Urim and Thummim without the intervention of the priest. — *Kitto*.

22—26. See xxviii. 31—34.

Bells and pomegranates (vs. 26). — I. Let us listen to the bells. The sweetest music in the camp, not Miriam's timbrel, but the priest's bells, an harmonious prelude to—1. Priestly benedictions; 2. Priestly expositions of law; 3. Priestly exhortations to holiness. II. Let us taste the pomegranates. They were emblems of—1. Fruitfulness; 2. Refreshment; 3. Healthfulness; 4. Cheerfulness.

Bells.—Who invented bells we know not. Probably they were devised, at a very early period of the world's history, by the musical genius of Jubal, who is called in Gen. iv. the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. But this and Zechariah are the only two books in which we have direct reference to bells. Maurice mentions that one indispensable ceremony in the Indian Poojah is the ringing of a small bell by the officiating Brahminic priest. Calmet calls attention to the fact that the ancient kings of Persia, who in fact united in their own persons the regal and sacerdotal office, were accustomed to have the fringes of their robes adorned with pomegranates and golden bells. The Arabian princesses wore rings, to which tiny golden bells were suspended. But no bells ever sounded so sweet and melodious as those on the Great High Priest's robes. The ministers of Christ, when preaching the glad tidings of salvation, are those bells; and it is Jesus who enables them to send forth sweet strains. — *Adamson*.

27-29. (27) coats, etc.,^a see xxviii. 40. (28) mitre, see xxviii. 4, 39. (29) girdle,^b see xxviii. 39. breeches, see xxviii. 42.

The priests' garments. — There is good evidence that pure white linen garments were anciently used by all nations in the service of God. This usage the Most High was pleased to retain in His worship. The Jewish priests, however, wore this raiment only while officiating in the sanctuary; whereas in Egypt, for instance, the priests of Isis went everywhere clothed in white. — *Bush.*

30-31. See xxviii. 36, 37.

Holiness to the Lord. — Some are searching God's decretals to find their names written in the Book of Life, when they should be studying to find God's name written upon their hearts, "Holiness to the Lord" engraven upon their souls. Some are busily examining themselves by notes and marks about them, when they should labor to find the marks and prints of God written in the tables of the heart. Some glory in the bulk of their duties, and in the multitude of their pompous performances and religious achievements, crying with Jehu, "Come, see here my zeal for the Lord;" whereas it were much more excellent if one could see their likeness to the Lord, and the characters of Divine beauty and holiness drawn upon their hearts and lives. But we, if we should judge rightly of our religious state, must view ourselves in God, who is the fountain of all goodness and holiness, and the rule of all perfection. — *Shaw.*

32-37. (32) thus, etc., acc. to the plan and in the manner prescribed. (33-37) See xxxv. 11-14.

Lessons. — 1. The dignity of Christian work as presented to Christ. 2. The duty of fidelity in Christian work, considering it must be inspected by Christ. 3. The grand aim in Christian work, to be accepted by Christ. Cf. 2 Cor. v. 9. 4. The high stimulus in Christian work, the certainty of being rewarded by Christ. — *J. S. Exell.*

The Jewish tabernacle. — 1. It was a school of object-lessons, designed to teach the ignorant and sensual Israelites the truths of the invisible and eternal kingdom of God. It was a small model of heavenly realities — a pattern of sight in the heavens (Heb. ix. 23). It was, in the realm of religious truth, something like the planetarium used in a recitation room in teaching astronomy. 2. The principal lessons it taught were — (1) The holiness of God; (2) The sinfulness of man; (3) The distance between God and man; (4) The fact that God will abide with man; (5) The Divine plan for bringing God and man into union.

33-43. (33-40) See xxxv. 15-18. (41) cloths, etc., see xxxix. 1, 2. (42) Lord, . . . Moses . . . work, hence Moses faithfully repeated the command. (43) Moses . . . work, careful inspection of plan, size, material. and . . . them, invoked the Divine blessing.

The inspection of the work. — I. The examination. 1. By whom conducted: Moses; 2. How pursued, — nothing omitted, all that they had done, pins, and cords, and all. II. The verdict. It was acc. to plan, the Divine plan. III. The blessing. 1. God afterwards blessed the work; Moses now blessed the workers. IV. So, at last, will all our work be inspected. If we are blessed it will be through Him who has done all things well.

Christian work. — The builder builds for a century; we for eternity. The painter paints for a generation; we for ever. The statuary cuts out the marble that soon perishes; let us try to cut out the likeness of Christ to endure forever. A hundred thousand men were employed in Egypt to construct a pyramidal tomb for a dead king; let us feel that we are engaged in a far nobler work in constructing temples for the living God. In my humble judgment, the poorest parish-school in our land, with no other ornament than the dew-drops of the morning to gild it and the sunbeams to shine upon it, is a nobler spectacle than the loftiest European cathedral, with its spires glistening in the setting and rising suns of a thousand years. — *Cumming.*

B. C. 1491.

they make the linen coats, the mitre, and the girdle

a Re. xix. 8; Is. lxi. 10.
b Is. xl. 5.

they make the golden plate for the mitre

"A well-cultivated mind is, so to speak, made up of all the minds of preceding ages; it is only one single mind which has been educated during all this time." — *Fontenelle.*

the work is finished as commanded

"Venerable to me is the hard hand, — crooked, coarse, — wherein, notwithstanding, lies a cunning virtue indefeasibly royal. Venerable, too is the rugged face, all weather tanned, besotted with its rude intelligence; for it is the face of a man living man-like." — *Carlyle.*

Moses inspects the work

c Nu. vi. 22-26.

"Thou wilt never be better pleased than when thou hast much to do of such things as thou knowest thyself able to go through with; for business by its motion addeth heat, and a delightful vigor to the spirits; while the unemployed, like standing waters, corrupt with their own idleness." — *Fuller.*

B. C. 1491.

the taber-
nacle is
ordered to be
set up

Be sure no
earnest work
Of any honest
creature, how-
beit weak, how-
imperfect, ill
adapted, fails
so much.
It is not gathered,
as a grain of
sand.
For carrying out
God's end. —
E. B. Browning.

To live is to do
What must be
done;
To work and be
true;
For work is soon
done.

the taber-
nacle is
ordered to be
anointed

"See, then, how
powerful religion
is; it commands
the heart, it com-
mands the vitals.
Morality — that
comes with a prun-
ing knife, and cuts
off all sproutings,
all wild luxuri-
ances; but religion
lays the axe to the
root of the tree.
Mortality looks
that the skin of
the apple be fair;
but religion
searcheth to the
very core." — N.
Culverwell.

the priests
are ordered
to be purified

α Nu. xxv. 13; Ps.
cx. 4.
"Religion finds
the love of happi-
ness and the prin-
ciples of duty
separated in us;
and its mission is
to reunite them."
— Vmet.

the tabernacle
is set up as
commanded

CHAPTER THE FORTIETH.

1—8. (1, 2) first . . month, the first of Abib or Nisan, corresponding nearly to our April. The work has occupied them about six months. thou . . congregation, thus was the first New Year's Day in the wilderness kept. (3) vail, see xxvi. 31. (4) table, see xxv. 23. candlestick, see xxv. 31. (5) altar . . incense, see xxx. 1. hanging, etc., see xxvi. 36. (6) altar . . offering, see xxvii. 1. (7) laver, see xxx. 17. (8) court, etc., see xxvii. 9, ff.

The tabernacle. — The fact that the sanctuary was originally portable — a tent-temple — is an actual testimony to the truth of the Pentateuch narrative, that the original institution of the religion of Israel took place during the time of their wandering life. The Hebrew literally is the "tent of assembling;" that is, as we may interpret it, the place where God and His people come together, and also the symbol of the kingdom of God under the old covenant. The relation was essentially a spiritual one. The holy of holies was God's special dwelling-place. There were subdivisions in the part of the building accessible to the Israelites, owing to the circumstance that the nation required mediation of priests and their representatives. The "holy place" was therefore only the ideal dwelling-place of the people, entered by them through their mediators; the fore-court, their actual dwelling-place. But it is evident that God receives His people as guests in the tabernacle; the two parties to the covenant do not abide there with equal rights.

9—11. See xxx. 26—28.

The solemn consecration. — Before the anointing. The altar, etc., mere human productions; evidences of human taste, and skill, and enterprise. II. After the anointing. The tabernacle, and contents, pass out of the hands of men into the exclusive service of God. It is now not only the tent of the congregation, but the House of the Lord.

Tabernacle foreshadowings. — The tabernacle, as a whole, is a finger-post directing me to that mystic Person in whom "God in very deed dwelt with man upon the earth." Its white-robed priest is the shadow of Him who was "holy, harmless, undefiled," and whom I recognize as my true High Priest. Its bleeding lamb laid upon the altar is the likeness of that Lamb of God by whose precious blood I have been redeemed from all iniquity: its innermost sanctuary is the type of that heaven into which He has entered to make atone-ment for my sins; and its outer apartment is the analogue of the present world, in which we are to serve Him with the incense of our devotions, the light of our characters, and the fruit of our lives. The incarnation in the person of Christ, the mediation and expiation of His priestly work, and the consequent obligation under which His redeemed people lie to honor Him with unceasing service and shining holiness — or, putting it all into four words, incarnation, mediation, expiation, consecration — these are the things of which the tabernacle, with its furniture, services, and attendants, were the special types; and as thus we condense its teachings into their essence, we come to a larger and more comprehensive view of the doctrine of the gospel itself, and discover that we have been studying the same truths, only under a different form. — W. M. Taylor.

12—16. (12) bring, etc., see xxix. 4. (13, 14) See xxviii. 41. (15) their . . priesthood, *i. e.* the common priests were anointed now once for all; but each successive high priest had his individual anointing. (16) according . . he, not subtracting from the Lord's commands, nor adding his own inventions.

The priestly office. — I. The priests of old were of divine selection and appointment. II. They and the offerings they made are typical of the Great High Priest and the sacrifice He made for sin. III. Only one High Priest then, only *One* now, He. vii. IV. All true believers are now a holy priest-hood, 1 Peter ii. 5.

17—21. (17) first . . month, *i. e.* month Nisan: a year save fourteen days after the Exodus. reared up, in the fashion of a tent the tabernacle could be put up or taken down in a short time.

New Year's Day in the wilderness. — I. It was inaugurated by solemn religious services. II. It marked a new epoch in the natural life. III. It influenced all their future. IV. It may supply us with an example of the

thoughts, feelings, purposes and services with which we should enter on each new year.

Beginnings. — There is some new work now for God to be done, or some old work for God to be done in a new spirit. For instance, responsibility of time to be more felt, and its management and use arranged with an increased Christian consciousness. The dedication of self to the Saviour has to be renewed, and everywhere and always remembered. Does not our work for Him who died for us want to be done secretly in the heart, openly in the family, and in the church, and in the world, with a new love, a new spirit, a new resoluteness, and a new will? Ah! a new year summons a Christian in a new manner of spirit unto obedience to his Divine Master. Let us, on such an occasion, listen to our Father's voice, and on the first day of the first month set up our tabernacle, and then be assured that through all the journeyings of the year, as upon the tabernacle of Israel, shall the tokens of the Divine presence rest upon us. — *C. P. Eyre.*

22-33. (22, 23) **table**,^a see xxv. 30. (24, 25) **candlestick**,^b see xxv. 31. (26, 27) **golden altar**, see xxx. 1. (28) **hanging**, see xxvii. 16. (29) **altar**, see xxvii. 1. (30) **laver**, see xxv. 18. (31, 32) see xxx. 19 20. (33) **so** . . work,^c acc. to the pattern shown him in the holy mount.

So Moses finished the work (vs. 33). — Better is the end of a thing than the beginning. The beginning six months before amid storm, tempest, etc.; the finishing on a bright New Year's Day. I. Explain the force of the words. Moses is said to have finished the work because — 1. He was the instrument in giving the plan; 2. He authorized the workmen and collected the material; 3. He inspected the work; 4. He blessed the people. II. Enforce the lessons — 1. He who begins a great work should persevere to the end; 2. In the finishing of a great work there is reward for all toil and anxiety; 3. Happy is he who, at the finish, can feel he has done as God commanded, and not simply as his own heart has impelled.

The work done. — "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." Vinet repeated this, without being aware that his course was run, when he gave his last theological lecture upon these same words of our Lord. Anticipation overleaps Kedron, passes through Gethsemane, and, looking down upon Calvary, cries, "It is finished!" So collected is our Lord in His own purpose, so at home amidst the certainties of the future, that without the slightest assumption He affirms, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." Only eighteen hours more, and in literal act and moment is it to become true." — *A. C. Thompson.*

34-38. (34) **cloud** . . tent, *i. e.* the cloud so often spoken of, the symbol of the Divine presence; a sign to the people that their labor was accepted. **glory** . . tabernacle,^d the consecration of the sanctuary. (35) **because** . . thereon,^e the glory of the Lord more brightly revealed than even on the mount. (36) **when** . . up,^f *i. e.* "whenever." The last three verses describe the manner in which the cloud henceforth served the Israelites as guide — not only directing their course, but determining when they were to move, and how long they were to rest at each encampment. For a further account of the same, see Num. ix. 15-23. (37) **they** . . up,^g however short or long the time it rested, so long did they rest. (38) **cloud** . . fire . . night, the same cloud became luminous by night: manifestations of God adapted to circumstances and seasons. **sight** . . Israel, it was visible to all the camp. **throughout** . . journeys,^h through the wilderness to the promised land, Israel was under the protection and guidance of God.

The cloud of glory. — God enters every open door: the tabernacle was finished, then the cloud descended upon it. When our hearts are opened, He comes in. The cloud of glory was a token of — I. Divine presence; God spake out of it. We have Christ, God manifest in the flesh. II. Divine protection. — 1. Against enemies, at the passage of the sea; 2. Against the sun in the wilderness (Ps. cv. 39; lxxxiv. 11). We have Christ as a shield. III. Divine guidance: it led them. We have Christ and the Bible. IV. Divine glory. Consider — 1. His brightness in the tabernacle; 2. His glory in the temple; 3. John's visions; 4. Paul's vision of heaven (2 Cor. xii. 1-4). V. Christ's future dwelling among men. Conclusion — "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." — *Fowler.*

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"Time is like a ship which never anchors; while I am on board, I had better do those things that may profit me at my landing, than practice such as shall cause my commitment when I come ashore." — *Pelham.*

so Moses finished the work

a Jo. vi. 56.

b Jo. i. 9; Ps. cxix. 105.

c Jo. xvii. 4; He. iii. 1-6; Jo. iv. 34.

"God is a worker. He has thickly strewn infinity with grandeur. God is love; He yet shall wipe away creation's tears, and all the world shall summer in His smile. Why work I not? The veriest mote that sports its one-day life within the sunny beam has its stern duties." — *A. Smith.*

the Divine acceptance of the work

d Le. xvi. 2; Nu. ix. 15; 1 Kl. viii. 10, 11; Hag. ii. 7-9; Zech. ii. 5; Re. xv. 8.

e 2 Ch. v. 14; Is. ii. 10; He. ix. 24; Jo. i. 14; Col. ii. 9; Eph. ii. 21, 22.

f Nu. x. 11, 12.

g Ps. xxxi. 15; Pr. iii. 5, 6.

h Ex. xlii. 21; Ne. ix. 19; Ps. lxxviii. 14; 1 Jo. i. 5; He. xii. 29.

"Be not sudden; take God's work together, and do not judge of it by parcels. It is, indeed, all wisdom and righteousness; but we shall best

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discern the beauty of it when we look on it in the frame when it shall be fully finished, and our eyes enlightened to take a clearer view of it than we can have here. What endless wondering will it then command!"—*Leighton*.

Cloud-canopy. — As Rooke remarks, it was really a pillar of fire, *i. e.* a lofty column of fiery light surrounded by a fleecy cloud, which in the day time prevented the cloud being seen, just as any artificial light of our own can easily be hidden when the sun is shining, *if we cover it round with a screen of muslin or of gauze-like paper.* So in the day time Israel saw the symbol of Jehovah's presence in the semblance of a white cloud, and nothing more. But at night, when darkness had succeeded to the glare of sunlight, the fiery core of the pillar shone out through the mist-like veil, and shed a moony radiance over all the wilderness, — a clear, yet soft and mellowed light, which did not, like the moon, wax and wane, but continued always the same. Image of Him in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead, softened and subdued by the veil of His stainless humanity. — *Adamson.*

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS.



Introduction.

I. Title. Acc. to usual cust., the Hebs. call this, the 3d bk. of the Pentateuch, *va-yikra* (and he called) fr. its first word. In the LXX. it is named *Λευιτικον* (*Levitikon*), whence the Latinized form. *Leviticus* is the title in the Vulgate, and the title retained in the A. V. The Gk. *Levitikon* means "The Levitical Bk., or that wh. contains the laws by wh. the ministrations of the sacerdotal tribe of Levi were to be regulated." (*Blunt*). **II. Author.** Tradition ascribes Leviticus to Moses as the author. This is not claimed by the book itself. What the book claims is that the substance of this book was revealed to Moses by the Lord. See i.1; iv. 1; vi. 1, etc. The words "Jehovah spake unto Moses," or their equivalent, occur more than fifty times in Leviticus. **III. Period** included in the history. ONE MONTH, *i. e.*, "fr. the erection of the Tab. to the numbering of the people who were fit for war; *i. e.*, fr. the begin. of the 2nd yr. aft. Israel's depart. fr. Egypt to begin. of the 2nd. mo. of the same yr. (*Horne*.) **IV. Scope, etc.** Containing a few historical matters, its chief purpose is "to record the laws concerning the sacrifices, ordinances, and institutions of that remarkable economy fr. wh. it derives its name. The established worship of the Hebs. was offering—not prayer, said or chanted, nor instrumental music, nor any like form of devotion—but the presenting to the Deity of certain articles of food and drink. This system of worship is not to be understood as having originated at the time to wh. the bk. refers." . . . Sacrifices "constituted the prevailing form in wh. the spirit of devotion was taught to express itself fr. the very infancy of the race. But as they were ordained to enter largely into the dispensation now about to be established, they are in this book instituted, as it were, anew, placed upon their true foundation, and commanded with circumstances wh. gave them greater importance, and served to illustrate their typical meaning with more effect." (*Bush*). "The Bk. of Lev. is of inestimable value as exhibiting, under an elaborate system of symbolism, the fundamental ideas on wh. the atoning work of Christ rests. The best commentary upon it is an inspired one, viz., the Ep. to the Hebs., fr. wh. we learn that this part of the law 'was a shadow of good things to come;' and especially that the ceremonies of the great day of atonement were, all of them, prefigurative of corresponding realities under the Gospel." (*Litton*)



Synopsis.

(According to Bush and Horne)

PART I.—Laws concerning sacrifices.

1. Of the burnt-offerings. . i. *cf.* Heb. ix, 26 x. 14; 1 Jo. i. 7
2. Of the meat-offerings. ii.
3. Of the peace-offerings. . . . iii. *cf.* Ep. ii. 14-16; Ac. xiii. 47; Heb. v. 9, ix. 28.
4. Of the sin-offerings. . iv., v. *cf.* Heb. xiii. 11-13
5. Of the trespass-offerings. . vi. vii. *cf.* Is. liii. 10; 2 Co. v. 21

PART II.—Institution of the Priesthood.

1. Consecration of Aaron and his sons. viii.
2. Offerings at consecration of priests. .ix.
3. Death of Nadab and Abihu. x.

PART III.—Clean and unclean Animals.

1. Specifications of clean and unclean. .xi.

PART IV.—Laws concerning Purification.

1. Of women after child-birth. xii.

2. Of persons infected with leprosy. . xiii., xiv.

3. Of persons having bad issues. xv.

PART V.—Various Regulations.

1. The great day of atonement. . . xvi. *cf.* Heb. ix. 7-12, 12-27
2. The place of offering sacrifices. . . xvii.
3. Things prohibited to be eaten. . . . xvii.
4. Incestuous connections. xviii.
5. Idolatry and other crimes. . . xix.-xxii.

PART VI.—Laws concerning Festivals, Vows, and Tithes.

1. The Sabbath, Passover, Pentecost, etc. xxiii.
2. Rites relative to sacred festivals. . xxiv.
3. Sabbatic year, year of Jubilee, etc. . xxv. *cf.* Is. lxi. 1-3; Lu. iv. 19
4. Prohibition of idolatry, etc. xxvi.
5. Vows, things devoted, etc. xxvii.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

1-6. (1) **And**, continuation of former Book. **Lord called**, called to Moses^a so that he would hear; summoned attention and spoke. **out. . . tabernacle^b**, fulfilling promise^c. (3) **without blemish**, deformity, defects, disease. **own . . . will**, voluntarily and "that he may be accepted before the Lord." (4) **make atonement**, to cover^d, protect by bringing into right relation; the perfect animal representing the gift of the spirit and life of man before God or the true being and life of man in the keeping of God. (6) **flay^e** the hide the perquisite of the priest.

The burnt-offering. — Notice — I. The offering itself. It was the most ancient and dignified of all the sacrifices. II. The manner in which it was presented. Notice the directions concerning — 1. The offerer: "he shall offer it of his own voluntary will," etc.; 2. The offering: this was to be slain, and its blood "round about upon the altar." III. The benefits resulting from it. It cleansed — 1. From ceremonial defilement really; 2. From real defilement ceremonially. — *Simeon.*

Sacrificial animals.—Five animals are named in the Law as suitable for sacrifice; the ox, the sheep, the goat, the dove and the pigeon. It is worthy of notice that these were all offered by Abraham in the great sacrifice of the Covenant (see Gen. xv. 9). It would appear that three conditions met in the sacrificial quadrupeds: (1) they were clean according to the Law; (2) they were commonly used as food, and being domesticated, (3) they formed part of the home wealth of the sacrificers.—*Spk. Com.*

7-9. (7) **fire**, fr. heaven; never went out; common fire added by the priest at every sacrifice. **lay . . . fire**, all things to be done acc. to prescribed rule. (8) **shall lay, etc.**, a hint that the preaching and teaching of Christ, the great Sacrifice, should be pursued in an orderly and thoughtful manner. (9) **inwards . . . water**, our heart and actions need purification.^a **a . . . fire**, or, "an offering sent upwards, a sacrifice made by fire." **of . . . savour^b**, lit. an odor of rest.

A sacrifice a sweet savor unto the Lord. — Consider why the burnt-offering was said to be "of a sweet savor unto the Lord." It was so — 1. As a proof of the obedience of His people unto Him. They voluntarily gave the offering at His command. II. As a manifestation of their affection and reverence for Him. III. As a symbol of "Christ representing this people in perfect consecration and entire self-surrender unto God; in a word, in perfect obedience." — *Exp. Bib.*

Genuine consecration.—A personal friend asked Wendell Phillips not long before his death, "Mr. Phillips, did you ever consecrate yourself to God?" "Yes," he answered, "when I was a boy, fourteen years of age, in the old church at the north end, I heard Lyman Beecher preach on the theme, 'You belong to God,' and I went home after that service, threw myself on the floor in my room, with locked doors, and prayed, 'O God, I belong to Thee; take what is Thine own. I ask this, that whenever a thing be wrong it may have no power of temptation over me; whenever a thing be right it may take no courage to do it.' From that day to this it has been so. Whenever I have known a thing to be wrong it has held no temptation. Whenever I have known a thing to be right it has taken no courage to do it."—*Bib. Ill.*

10-13. (10) **if . . . flocks**, if of the kinds of animals of less value. "Bullocks of course could only be offered by the wealthy. Hence the law now provides for those who could not afford so costly a sacrifice. They are to bring a lamb of the first year, which was the ordinary burnt-offering in the time of Christ, and not a goat. The directions given with regard to the burnt offering from bullocks equally apply to the burnt offering from the flock (vss. 10-13). They are therefore not repeated." But in all cases whatever is brought must be without blemish^c or the very best of its kind. (12, 13) see vss. 8, 9.

The offering without blemish (v. 10).—I. To teach self-denial in matters of religion; the best reserved for holy uses. II. To produce feelings of profound reverence for the holiness of God. If the offering, how much more the offerer to be without blemish. III. To lead the thoughts onward to the Perfect Sacrifice.

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animals for sacrifice

^a Nu. xii. 7, 8; He. iii. 5.
^b He. ix. 11; 2 Pe. i. 17.
^c Ex. xxv. 22.

^d In this word "atonement" we are introduced to one of the key-words of Leviticus, as indeed of the whole Scripture. Commonly, as here, it means "to cover" in a spiritual sense, that is, to cover the sinful person from the sight of the Holy God, who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil."—*Exp. Bib.*
^e 2 Ch. xxix. 34.
The priest shall kill it: for it was death for any man to offer his own sacrifice. So it is still for any to come to God otherwise than in and by Christ."

—*Trapp.*

preparing the sacrifice

^f Le. ix. 24.

^g Le. vi. 9-13.

^h Le. x. 22.

ⁱ Eph. v. 2; Phil.

iv. 18; Ge. viii. 21.

The first words from Sinai had been the holy law, forbidding sin with threatening of wrath: the first words from the tent of meeting are words of grace. A contrast this which is itself a Gospel!"—*Kellogg.*

place of killing the sacrifice

^j Is. lli. 7.

^k Mal. i. 14; Jo. vi. 37.

"The Hebrew expositors say that whatever sacrifice

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was killed to the southward of the altar was polluted (*Maimonides*), and they say that the north is the symbol of evil; as it is said in Jer. i. 14, 'out of the north an evil shall break forth,' and that because these sacrifices were offered to avert evil, therefore they were killed northward of the altar."
—*Wordsworth*.

birds for the sacrifice

a Ps. xxii. 3. cxlv. 17; 1 Pe. i. 15, 16.

"Out of the fruit of our several labors and occupations we are to set apart especially for God, not only that which is best in itself, the finest of the wheat, but that which has cost us the most labor."
—*Kellogg*.

the meat-offering

"The Lord says, If the offering is of the herd, let it be of the best. But man says, My cows are all Alderney or Durham stock. My sheep are South Down and Cotesworth. Some of my fowls and pigeons are of fancy breed: I don't see how I can let them go. But there is a sickly pigeon, and a chicken with the 'plop.' They'll do for an offering. And the closest believer goes up smiling to the sanctuary, and passes in his shabby offering, with a self-gratulatory likening of his gift to the 'widow's mites.'" — *Trumbull*.

Symbolic meaning of the north.—The north, in Scripture, seems connected with such of the governmental attributes of God as are especially adverse to the dark vapors and corruptions of earth. Of the north it is said: "And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them. Fair (golden) weather cometh out of the north: with God is excellent majesty" (Job xxxvii. 21, 22). And again, "The north wind driveth away rain" (Pr. xxv. 23). When Ezekiel was commissioned to testify against the dark corruptions of Israel, and beheld the glory of God in contrast therewith, "Behold, a whirlwind came out of the north" (Ez. i. 4). And when he was taught the manner in which Israel met the northward attributes of God, he was brought to the door of the inner gate of the temple that looketh toward the north, and there was the seat of the image of jealousy, that provoketh to jealousy, occupying the northward gate of the altar to the exclusion of their God (Ez. viii. 3-5). — *Newton*.

14-17. (14) And . . fowls: Divine condescension meets the case of the poorest. turtle-doves, prob. the common turtle (*turtur auritus*). pigeons, prob. the blue rock pigeon (*columba schimperi*): wild birds, yet selected. (15) wring . . head, rather, pinch it with his nail: not separate it fr. rest of body. (16) pluck . . crop, etc., to render the sacrifice clean. (17) wood . . fire, etc., see vss. 8, 9.

Symbolic meaning of the east.—The east is the quarter that is especially connected with the glory of the God of Israel. "Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: and behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east, and His voice was like a noise of many waters, and the earth shined with His glory" (Ezek. xliii. 1, 2). The east wind also is continually mentioned in the Scripture as that which withereth and drieth up the powers of nature. "An east wind shall come — the wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up" (Hos. xiii. 15). — *Newton*.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-6. (1) offers . . offering, *lit.* "make oblation of a meat (*i. e.* food) offering," fine flour, specification of quality, not quantity. (2) his . . thereof, as a portion of the gift to be offered. memorial, *i. e.*, the handful. (3) remnant . . sons, the meat-offering designed in part for the sustentation of the priesthood. (4) oven, prob. earthenware and portable. unleavened . . oil, usually baked on the outside of the oven. (5) pan, or flat plate. (6) part, break.

The meat-offering.—The word which in the original uniformly stands for the English "meal-offering" (A.V. "meat-offering," *i. e.*, "food-offering") primarily means simply "a present," and is often properly so translated in the Old Testament. Note.—I. As the burnt-offering represented the consecration of the life, the person, to God, so the meal-offering represented the consecration of the fruit of his labors. II. As in the case of the burnt-offering, the meal-offering also must be brought unto the Lord by the offerer himself. The consecration of our works, like the consecration of our persons, must be our own voluntary act. III. Not only must the meal-offering consist of the products of the soil, but of such alone as grow, not spontaneously, but by cultivation, and thus represent the result of man's labor.—*Exp. Bib.*

Eastern ovens.—Mr. Jackson, in his journey overland from India, gives an account of an Eastern oven. The oven is usually about fifteen inches wide at top, and gradually widening to the bottom. It is heated with wood, and when sufficiently hot, and perfectly clear from the smoke, having nothing but clear embers at the bottom, which continue to reflect great heat, they prepare the dough in a large bowl, and mould the cakes to the desired size on a board, or stone, placed near the oven. After they have kneaded the cake to a proper consistence, they pat it a little, then toss it about with great dexterity in one hand, till it is as thin as they choose to make it. They then wet one side of it with water, at the same time wetting the hand and arm with which they put it into the oven. The side of the cake adheres fast to the side of the oven, till it is sufficiently baked, when, if not paid proper attention to, it would fall down among the embers. If they were not exceedingly quick at this work, the heat of the oven would burn

their arms ; but they perform it with such amazing dexterity, that one woman will continue keeping three or four cakes in the oven at once, till she has done baking.—*Paxton*.

7-11. (7) **offering** . . **frying pan**^a : third kind of meat offering, that baked on a flat plate being the second. "The meat-offerings which were not commanded by the divine law, but were the *volutive* or *voluntary* oblations of individuals, were of five kinds, consisting of some preparation of flour ; as 1. Fine flour unbaked. 2. Flour baked in a pan or on a flat plate. 3. Flour baked in a frying pan. 4. Flour baked in an oven. 5. Flour made into a thin cake like a wafer."

(8) **he** . . **altar** to sig. that it is a sincere offering. (10) **that** . . **left** see 3. All the Lord's, but a liberal portion to be used as support for God's ministering servants. (11) **honey**^b : this like leaven, was used in olden times to produce fermentation and was often poisonous or intoxicating.

The priest's portion.—It was to be—I. The people's gift. In—1. Obedience to the Divine will : 2. Respect for the priest's office. II. The residue of the offering : "that which is left."

12-16. (12) **as first-fruits**^c : honey and leaven may be made useful as an oblation of first-fruits, but not with things which they are likely to corrupt or spoil. **but** . . **savour**, see v. 11. (13) **salt**,^d the opposite to leaven, as it preserves fr. putrefaction and corruption. **salt** . . **covenant**, so called bec. incorruptible. (14) **green** . . **fire**, to admit of their being ground. (15) **oil** . . **frankincense**, "sig. the graces of God in Christ and His members, and the sweet odor of His oblation for us."

Lessons to us from the meat-offering. 1. To give to God of the worldly goods which God has given to us (1) freely, (2) cheerfully, (3) loyally. Our motive must not be self-ostentation, nor the praise of men, nor our own gratification. By our offering to God we must recognize God's claims over us, and openly profess our loving submission to them. This throws a new light on the practice of almsgiving in the weekly offertory of th Church. 2. To give a hearty and loyal service to God in other respects besides almsgiving, such as obedience to his commandments, doing his will on earth.—*Pulp. Com.*

The sacrifice to be salted.—The contrast in which "salt" is here set with "honey" (v. 11) sufficiently indicates its meaning. If our characters have it, they savor of God, not of men. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." The Holy Ghost, whom Christ sent as fire ("He [Christ] shall baptise with the Holy Ghost and with fire", is the agent through whom all Christ's believing people are "salted,"—"Every one shall be salted with fire." Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, there have been implanted in us powers of apprehension and discrimination which are as the holy fire; and in virtue of this a Divine savor is communicated to us. When this "salt" is transfused into our deeds, then, through Christ, they can be accepted on God's altar, and are called "sacrifices." "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Thus we can understand our Lord's words, "Every one [i. e. every person] must be salted with fire—every sacrifice must be salted with salt." The person is salted first ; salt is found in his actions afterwards. In thus explaining these words (Mk. ix. 49) I confine them to believers only.—*Newton*.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-5. (1) **peace-offering**,^e indicating a desire to be at peace with God and men and so looking to what is called prosperity. (2) **shall** . . **hand**. "The imposition of hands in this case differed from the same ceremony in the sacrifice of the holocaust in this, that over the head of the peace-offering there was no confession of sins, but merely the uttering of praise and supplication to God."—*Bush*. (3) **fat** . . **inwards**,^f etc., by us called the suet ; the choicest and best part. (4) **kidneys**, supposed to be the seats of lust. (5) **burn** . . **sacrifice**, kidneys burnt prob. to enforce the duty of self-mortification.

The peace-offering.—Designed—I. "To express the conception of friendship, peace, and fellowship with God as secured by the shedding of atoning blood." II. To express a sincere and entire cessation of hostility to God.

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the baked meat-offering

a "There is in use among the Bedouins and others a shallow earthen vessel, somewhat resembling a frying pan, and which is used both for frying and for baking one sort of bread."—*Bush*.
b Gal. v. 9; Mk. viii. 15; Lu. xii. 1; 1 Co. v. 8.

v. 9. "Signifying the perpetual benefits of Christ's death to all believers."—*Trapp*.

the offering of first-fruits

c Ex. xxii. 29 ; Le. xxiii. 10; Pr. iii. 9, 10; Ma. vi. 33.

d Ac. ii. 27; Mk. ix. 49; Col. iv. 6.

Most instructive it is to observe that the meal offerings were not to be offered alone : a bloody sacrifice, a burnt-offering or sin-offering, must always precede. How vividly this brings before us the truth that it is only when first our persons have been cleansed by atoning blood, and thus and therefore consecrated unto God, that the consecration and acceptance of our works is possible.—*Exp. B.*

the peace-offering

e Is. ix. 6; Mic. v. 5; Jer. xxix. 11; Ro. v. 1; Lu. xix. 38.

f "Hearty thanks must be given to God : such as cometh not from the roof of the mouth, but the

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root of the heart. An airy 'God be thanked' profiteth not: 'Sing with grace in your hearts' is the best tune to any psalm. The voice which is made in the mouth is nothing so sweet as that which comes from the depth of the breast."—*Trapp*.

mode of sacrificing the peace-offering

a Is. xlii. 1; He. vii. 2, Is. xxxii. 17.
b Rev. v. 6.
c 1 Pet. i. 19

"The offerings were to be eaten, by the offerer, before Jehovah at the central sanctuary; he was to include in this sacrificial feast all the members of his family, and any Levite that might be stopping with him; and he was to make the feast an occasion of holy joy before the Lord."—*Exp. B.*

d Le. vii. 23-25, Ezek. xxxiv. 3; De. xii. 16; Ge. ix. 4; 1 Sa. xiv. 32, 33.

God is ever to be served first and with the best that we have. "All the fat is the Lord's."

sins of ignorance of the priest

e Job x. 6, xlii. 23; Ps. xix. 12, xxxii. 5; Ro. xiv. 23; 1 Jo. ii. 1, 2.

f He. vii. 22-23; Re. i. 5, 6.

A sacrifice of peace.—The "peace-offerings" to which this chapter relates, were, like the burnt-offerings and meat-offerings, the voluntary offerings of the people. They were either intended to testify thankfulness for blessings already received, in which view they are called "thank-offerings" in Coverdale's translation; or were else votive, being offered with prayer for future blessings. No doubt they were sometimes both in one. The offerings might be either of animals, or of flour, or dough. The distinction between this and the "burnt offerings" as to animals, was, that either males or females might be offered in this, but only males in the other; and that, in this the whole was not consumed on the altar, as in the burnt offering. Only the fat parts were so consumed. A small portion was appropriated to the priest, the rest being allowed to the offerer and his guests as an offering feast.—*Kitto*.

6—11. (6) he . . blemish,^a see i. 3. (7) lamb,^b a sheep in its prime. (8) lay . . hand, see i. 4. blood . . altar, this may sig. that "plenteous redemption" by "the blood of sprinkling." (9) the . . rump, better, the whole fat tail (so also Exod. xxix. 22; Lev. vii. 3; viii. 25; ix. 19). "The sheep of Syria and Palestine were, and still are, the broad-tailed species, the broad part often weighing fifteen pounds and upwards. In young animals, the substance of the tail, which consists of marrow and fat, tastes like marrow, and it is used by the Arabs for cooking instead of butter." (11) food . . Lord, that wh. would be choicest food for man yields most satisfaction as an offering to God.

Feeding upon Christ.—"It is true that the offerer, in the first instance, had brought the victim; but prior to the feasting he had already given the victim to God, to be offered in expiation for sin. From that time the victim was no longer, any part of it, his own property, but God's. God having received the offering, now directs what use shall be made of it; a part shall be burned upon the altar; another part He gives to the priests, His servants; with the remaining part He now feasts the worshipper. * * * Let us hold fast then to this deepest thought of the peace-offering, a truth too little understood even by many true believers. The very Christ who died for our sins, if we have by faith accepted his atonement and have been for His sake forgiven, is now given us by God for the sustenance of our purchased life. Let us make use of Him, daily feeding upon Him, that so we may live and grow unto the life eternal!"—*Kellogg*.

12—17. (12—16) if . . goat, same course pursued as in case of lamb, except as to the rump, see vv. 7—11. (17) perpetual statute,^d esp. in regard to the fat.

Why the peace-offerings were confined to these three kinds—oxen, sheep, goats.—1. All these were a figure of Christ, He indeed was that Peace-offering whereby God is reconciled to us: the ox resembles His fortitude; the sheep His innocence; the goat, because He took our flesh, like unto sinful flesh. 2. Some apply them to the divers qualities of the offerers; the ox signifying the workers and keepers of the law; the sheep, the simple; the goats, the penitent. 3. But the true reason why these beasts are prescribed only for peace-offerings, not turtle-doves or pigeons, as in the burnt-offerings, is because they could not rightly declare their gratitude to God in giving things of no value.—*Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

—6. (2) ignorance,^e R. V., "unwillingly." Ignorance may or may not be an excuse for sin. Some will to stay ignorant when they have the opportunity and have been commanded to know. Unintentional ignorance will not save from consequences. When a course of transgression is revealed we should begin to make amends and get right in character. (3) priest . . people, "the sins of teachers are the teachers of sins."—*Trapp*. young bullock, a little larger than a calf. (4) bring, etc.,^f see i. 3, 4. (5, 6) take . . blood, note diff. betw. use of the blood now and at other times; comp. vss. 25, 30, 34, with vss. 6, 7, 17, 18. sprinkle . . sanctuary, acc. to some on the floor in front of the vail, while others say on the vail itself.

The priest's sin of ignorance.—I. Priests not infallible. II. But when guilty of sin more culpable than others. III. Under special orders to be holy as bearing the vessels of the Lord. IV. Greatness of their sin suggested by the greatness of their atonement.

Salvation for sinners.—Mr. Moody Stuart somewhere tells us that he once talked with a woman who was in great trouble about her sins. He urged upon her very strongly that passage, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," and he noticed that she seemed to find a quiet relief in a gentle flow of tears. Meeting her the next day, and seeing her smiling face, and finding her full of rest in the Lord, he asked, "What was it wrought your deliverance?" "Oh," she said, "it was that text, 'Jesus came to save sinners.'" "Did you know that before?" said Mr. Stuart. Yes, she knew the words before, but she found that in her heart of hearts she had believed that Jesus came to save saints, and not sinners.—*Bib. Ill.*

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7-12. (7) *priest*, the priest was frail like the rest of the people. Though anointed to perform the functions of a high office he needed purification. upon . . . *horns*, each of the four horns of the golden altar. Great care was taken that even the altar should be kept pure and that the idea of purity should prevail in connection with everything. "According to the practice which obtained in the time of Christ, the priest began by putting the blood first on the north-east horn, then on the north-west, then on the south-west, and, lastly, on the south-east horn. He dipped his finger in the blood of the bowl at the sprinkling of each horn, and wiped his finger on the edge of the bowl between the separate sprinklings, as the blood which remained on his finger from one horn was not deemed fit to be put on the other." (8-10) *fat*, "the best part due to God." (11) *skin . . . bullock*, comp. i. 6, in this case he skin, etc., to be burned. (12) *carry . . . place*, a public burning would convey a deep impression of the greatness of the priest's sin.

The blood in its influence upon prayer.—"Horns signify power, and the explanation of the symbol is that there is no power in intercessory prayer apart from the blood of expiation. 1. Remember, first, that the intercession of Christ Himself is based upon His atonement. 2. You and I are to offer incense upon this golden altar by our daily intercession for others, but our plea must always be the atoning blood of Jesus. 3. And, as this must be the plea of our intercession, so it must be our impulse in making intercession. This smearing of the horns of the altar with blood is meant to give us very great encouragement and assurance whenever we come to God in prayer."—*Spurgeon*.

13-17. (13) *whole . . . ignorance*,^b heedlessly, thoughtlessly. and . . . *assembly*, i.e., the people themselves unconscious at the time that they have sinned. (14) *known*, by reflection or by consequences. (15) *elders*, the chiefs of the people, seventy in number. (16) *thee . . . anointed*, see v. 3. (17) *priest*,^c etc., see v. 6.

"A whole community may sin ignorantly when, 1. It unwittingly obeys unrighteous human laws. 2. When it misinterprets a righteous Divine law. 3. When it is misled by the incorrect interpretations of its leaders. 4. When it is unaware of the existence of the law."—*Preacher's Com.*

The fate of ignorance.—Now, while I was gazing upon all these things, I turned my head to look back, and saw Ignorance coming up to the river side; but he soon got over and that without half the difficulty which the other two men met with. When he was coming up to the gate, he looked up to the writing that was above, and then began to knock, supposing that entrance should have been quickly administered to him; but he was asked by the men that looked over the top of the gate, Whence come you and what would you have? He answered, I have eat and drank in the presence of the King, and He has taught in our streets." Then they asked for his certificate. that they might go in and show it to the King; so he fumbled in his bosom for one and found none. Then said they, You have none! but the man answered never a word. Then they took him up and carried him through the air to the door that I saw on the side of the hill, and put him in there. Then I saw that there was a way to hell even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the City of Destruction. —*Bunyan*.

18-21. Regulations same as those prescribed in the sin-offering for the high priest himself in vs. 5-12.

Ignorance of one's own heart.—"After all, I do not hate God. No, sir; you will not make me believe that. I am a sinner, I know, and do many wicked

a He. xiii. 11, 12; Zech. xiii. 1; Jo. xix. 16-18.

"Every detail of the ceremony speaks of God's hatred of sin, and the blessings which man thereby loses, and the need for entire devotion of the victim that is to atone for sin. Nothing must be left, lest it should defile." — *Pulpit Com.*

sins of ignorance of the people

b Le. xxii. 14; 1 Sa. xiv. 33; Ro. iii. 9-12.

c Ho. ix. 11-14; x. 10-12; De. ix. 24; 1 Jo. i. 7, ii. 2. "Thy ignorance in unrevealed mysteries is the mother of a saving faith, and thy understanding in revealed truths is the mother of a sacred knowledge; understand not, therefore, that thou mayest believe, but believe that thou mayest understand; understanding is the wages of a lively faith, and faith is the reward of a humble ignorance."—*Quarles*.

"The common people, in all lands, are the great majority of the population; but no one is to imagine that, because he is a single individual,

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of no importance, in a multitude, he shall therefore, if he sin, escape the Divine eye, as it were, in a crowd."—*Kellogg*.

sins of
ignorance

of the ruler

"Thus, the ruler was to bring a victim of less value than the high-priest or the collective congregation; but it must still be of more value than that of a private person, for his responsibility, if less than that of the officer of religion, is distinctly greater than that of a man in private life."—*Kellogg*.

sins of
ignorance

of a common
person

a Prov. xxi. 9. 1 Jo. iii. 4. i. 8-10. He. ix. 22.

"Ignorance lies at the bottom of all human knowledge, and the deeper we penetrate the nearer we arrive unto it. For what do we truly know, or what can we clearly affirm, of any one of those important things upon which all our reasonings must of necessity be built,—time and space, life and death, matter and mind?"—*Colton*.

the sin
offering

b Jo. i. 29: Gal. i. 4: He. ix. 26-28.

"It is impossible to make people understand their ignorance, for it requires knowledge to perceive it; and therefore he that can perceive it hath it not."—*J. Taylor*

things; but, after all, I have a good heart—I don't hate God." Such was the language of a prosperous worldling. He was sincere, but sadly deceived. A few months afterwards, that God, who had given him so many good things, crossed his path in an unexpected manner. A fearful torrent swept down the valley, and threatened destruction to this man's large flour mill. A crowd were watching it, in momentary expectation of seeing it fall, while the owner, standing in the midst of them, was cursing God to His face, and pouring out the most horrid oaths. He no longer doubted or denied that he hated God. But nothing in that hour of trial came out of his mouth which was not previously in his heart.—*Spurgeon*.

22-26. (22) ruler. ignorance, third instance considered. There were three kinds of offerings, all of which were probably known and practiced among the Israelites before the giving of the Law, the burnt-offering, the meat-offering, the peace-offering (i. 1-17; ii. 1-16; iii. 1-17) all of which also appear to have been left, in their observance, to the voluntary spirit; hence the sin-offering and the trespass-offering are introduced as something new and requisite. The three instances of sinning inadvertently or unwittingly are those, first, of the priest, second, of the congregation, third, of the ruler.

The ruler's sin of ignorance.—I. That he should sin from such a cause may well excite surprise, see Ac. iii. 17. II. That the relative guilt of his sin should be marked by corresponding atonement. Comp. the sacrifice in this case with that of v. 28.

The possibility of ignorance in the most constant hearers.—Samuel Wesley visited one of his parishioners as he was upon his dying bed—a man who had never missed going to church in forty years. "Thomas, where do you think your soul will go?" "Soul! Soul!" said Thomas. "Yes, sir," said Mr. Wesley. "Do you not know what your soul is?" "Ay, surely," said Thomas, "Why, it is a little bone in the back that lives longer than the body." "So much," says John Wesley, who related it on the authority of Dr. Lupton, who had it from his father, "had Thomas learned from hearing sermons, and exceedingly good sermons, for forty years."—*Wakeley*.

27-31. (27) And . . people,^a fourth "instance adduced is that of *any one of the people of the land*, as this phrase is rendered in Lev. xx. 2, 4: 2 Kings ix. 18, 19, xvi. 15. That is, any member of the congregation, whether he be a private Israelite, ordinary priest, or Levite, in contradistinction to the aforementioned high priest and ruler."

An essential act in the sacrifice.—Observe that in all four cases there was one thing which was never left out, "He shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin-offering." 1. That act signified confession. 2. The next thing meant by it was acceptance. 3. The next meaning of it was transference. 4. This was a personal act.—*Spurgeon*.

All can lean on Christ.—The Puritans speak of faith as a recumbency, a leaning. It needs no power to lean; it is a cessation from our own strength, and allowing our weakness to depend upon another's power. Let no man say, "I cannot lean;" it is not a question of what you can do, but a confession of what you cannot do, and a leaving of the whole matter with Jesus.

32-35. (32) lamb,^b better a sheep. (See chap. iii. 7.) "Those who were unable to bring a goat might offer a female sheep, as the less valuable animal, provided it was without blemish. Though the ritual is the same as with the goat (vss. 29-31), yet the sheep is treated separately, because of the fat tail, which had to be burned. (See chap. iii. 12.)"

Ignorance of religion.—Ignorance of the price of pearls makes the idiot slight them. Ignorance of the worth of diamonds makes the fool choose a pebble before them. Ignorance of the satisfaction learning affords—that makes the peasant despise and laugh at it; and we very ordinarily see how men tread and trample on those plants which are the greatest restoratives, because they know not the virtue of them; and the same may justly be affirmed of religion—the reason why men meddle no more with it is because they are not acquainted with the pleasantness of it.—*Hornest*.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

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1-6. (1) *And . . witness,* *R. V.*, "And if any one sin, in that he heareth the voice of adjuration, he being a witness." The lawgiver now proceeds to set forth the trespass-offering which every Israelite is to bring when he has violated certain precepts herein specified. The first instance adduced is that of failing to come forward as witness after the judicial adjuration has been uttered. It was the duty of every member of the community to aid the authorities in maintaining the integrity of the Divine law. Hence, when an offence was committed which the constituted tribunals were unable to bring home to the offender for want of evidence, a solemn adjuration was addressed by the judge to individual members, to a district, or to the whole community. If after such an adjuration, any one who was cognizant of the offence failed to come forward to testify what he knew, he was considered in the sight of God as participating in the transgression which he had thus concealed."

—*Handy Com.*

The sin and trespass offerings compared.—We will—I. Compare these two offerings together. They agree in many things; but they differ in—1. The occasions on which they were offered. The sin-offering was for something done amiss through ignorance or infirmity; the trespass-offering for sins committed through inadvertence or the power of temptation; 2. The circumstances attending their offering. II. State what they were both designed to teach us. 1. That sin, however venial it may appear to us, is no light evil; 2. That there may be much guilt attaching where there is but little suspicion of it; 3. That the moment we see that we have sinned, we should seek for mercy in God's appointed way; 4. That we never can be truly penitent for sin, if we are not desirous also to repair it to the utmost of our power.—*C. Simeon.*

Sin must be fully confessed.—Cover sin over as much as we may, and smother it down as carefully as we can, it will break out. Many years ago the packet ship *Poland* was bound for Havre, with a cargo of cotton on board. By some singular accident the cotton took fire clear down in the hold. The captain, finding that he could not reach the fire, undertook to smother it; but in vain. Then he caulked down the hatchways; but the deck grew so hot that neither passengers nor crew could stand on it. At length he fired a signal gun in distress, put all his people into the boats, and left the doomed ship to her fate. He watched her as she ploughed gallantly through the waves, with all her canvas on; but ere she sunk below the horizon, the fire burst forth in a shee of flame to the mast-head. That ill-fated packet, carrying the fatal fire in her own hold, is a vivid picture of the moral condition of thousands of men and women. They cover their sins by all manner of concealments; but the deadly thing remains underneath in the heart, and if it does not burst forth in this world, it will in the next.—*T. L. Cuyler.*

7-10. (7) *If . . able*, ability and circumstances of the transgressor always mercifully considered. Poverty has its compensations and so has helplessness. 8-10, *see i. 15.*

If God expects of us only what we can render—I. Then none are exempt from His service. Doves and pigeons were accepted where lambs could not be furnished. II. Then His service is perfect freedom. God expects voluntary cheerful gifts, not simply from a sense of duty but from impulses of a generous love.—*Preacher's Com.*

Pigeons in the East.—Pigeons were so plenteous in Palestine and the neighboring countries, that he must have been poor indeed who could not afford a pair. Adrichomius, the traveler, tells us that there was a single tower to the south of Jerusalem in which 5,000 doves nested. Maundrell also remarks of Kefteen, in Syria, that "the adjacent fields abounding with corn give the inhabitants great advantage for breeding pigeons, insomuch that you here find more dove-cotes than other houses."—*Bush.*

11-13 (11) *not . . being*, "The benign consideration for the poor, and the desire not to mulct them too heavily for their frailties, are here still more evinced in the statute before us. If anyone is so impoverished that the offering of two birds would press too heavily upon him, he might bring the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour, a little less than half a gallon."

duty of witnesses

a Ps. xc. 8, iv. 4; 1 Ki. viii. 31, 32; Pr. xxix. 24; Mic. vi. 8.

Bush continues, "The form of the confession was substantially this: 'I have sinned; I have done iniquity. I have trespassed, and have done thus and thus; and do return my repentance before thee; and with this I make atonement.' The animal was then considered to bear vicariously the sins of the person who brought it."

"Make no vows to forbear this or that; it shows no great strength, and makes thee ride behind thyself."—*Fuller.*

"If a poor man brought the oblation of the rich, he was accepted; but if the rich brought the oblation of the poor, he was not accepted."—*Maimonides.*

"Rashi observes that as there were three classes of men, the rich, the poor, and the very poor; so there are three kinds of offerings prescribed in this chapter, adapted to the circumstances of these several classes."—*Bush.*

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"God does not love us because atonement has been made, but atonement has been made because the father loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."—*Exp. B.*

the trespass-offering

a Le. xxvii. 25.

"God claims His tithe, His first-fruit, and the fulfillment of all vows. It was a lesson for that time; it is no less a lesson for our time."—*Exp. Bib.*

"Debt is debt by whomsoever owed. If a man have appropriated a hundred pounds of another man's money, the moral obligation of that debt cannot be abrogated by a bankrupt law, allowing him to compromise at ten shillings in the pound. The law of man may indeed release him from liability to prosecution, but no law can discharge such a man from the unalterable obligation to pay penny for penny, farthing for farthing. There is no bankrupt law in the kingdom of God."—*Kellogg.*

b Le. iv. 2; Ps. xix. 12; Lu. xii. 48; 1 Ti. i. 13.

c Ezra. x. 2; Ro. vii. 7.—12.

breach of trust

d Ac. v. 3, 4; Le. xix. 12; 1 Jo. iv. 20; Col. iii. 9.

"Take special care that thou never trust any friend or

Divine jealousy and consideration.—I. Without regard to human circumstances, confession of and atonement for sin shall be made. II. With a due regard to human circumstances, the atonement shall be within the means of the trespasser. III. Atonement for each needful and possible.

"God is none the less just, that He is love; and none the less holy, that He is merciful; and in His nature, as the Most Just and Holy One, lies this necessity of the shedding of blood in order to the forgiveness of sin, which is impressively symbolized in the unvarying ordinance of the Levitical law, that as a condition of the remission of sin, the blood of the sacrifice must be presented, not before the sinner but before Jehovah."—*Kellogg.*

14-16. (14, 15) holy . . Lord, defects in his religious life, as wrong offerings, or offerings with blemishes, etc. estimation, valuation. by . . sanctuary, a fine, a money compensation. (16) he . . amends, restitution. shall . . thereto, over and above the value to make the amends complete.

Restitution demanded as the condition of pardon.—Unlike the sin-offering, the "trespass-offering" must not be presented until reparation had been made. 1. Satisfaction was to precede sacrifice. God says, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice." 2. In Christ's obedient life satisfaction did precede sacrifice. Having perfectly satisfied the Divine requirements in His life, He bore man's merited punishment for long disobedience. 3. Divine forgiveness differs essentially from connivance at man's sin. He cannot sanction iniquity, but He can blot it out."—*Preacher's Com.*

A debtor to God.—Man a debtor to God! a debtor for service each day due, but no day ever fully and perfectly rendered! in gratitude for gifts, too often quite forgotten, oftener only paid in scanty part! Just as the servant who is set to do his master's work, if, instead, he takes that time to do his own work, is debtor to the full value of the service of which his master is thus defrauded, so stands the case between the sinner and God. Just as with the agent who fails to make due returns to his principal on the moneys committed to him for investment, using them instead for himself, so stands the case between God and the sinner who has used his talents, not for the Lord, but for himself, or has kept them laid up, unused, in a napkin. Thus, in the New Testament, as the correlate of this representation of Christ as a guilt-offering, we find sin again and again set forth as a debt which is owed from man to God. So, in the Lord's prayer we are taught to pray, "Forgive us our debts."—*Kellogg.*

17-19. (17) though . . not^s. This is sometimes called (Canonical Exposition of the Second Temple) "the doubtful offering" to distinguish it from the one enacted in vs. 14-16, or "the certain offering." This offering is to be brought when a man merely suspects that he has used things which belonged to the Lord, though he may not remember what they were. (19) certainly . . Lord, hence the sacrifice must be offered and the confession made to Him.

The Lord's mind and judgment.—I. By the Divine declaration that sins of ignorance are really sins the commandment of God is honored. II. By the teaching of the text the conscience is aroused. 1. Our ignorance is evidently very great. 2. The ignorance of very many persons is to a large degree wilful. III. By the grand and awful truth of the text the sacrifice is endeared.—*Spurgeon.*

"Ignorance may be culpable.—Some years ago through the mistake of a signalman an accident took place on a Metropolitan Railway, by which several persons lost their lives. At the inquiry it transpired that the signalman had in his possession a book of instructions which if they had been attended to the accident could not have occurred, but this book he confessed he had never read, hence the terrible accident. How many of the sins of professing Christians may be traced to similar culpable ignorance!"—*Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1-7. (1-2) commit . . Lord, violation of the rights of a neighbor's property is trespass against the Lord. fellowship, *lit.* something placed in the hand, deposit trust: may also mean partnership. (5) add . . fifth, shall make restitution and pay fine of fifth to person defrauded.

Breach of confidence.—I. Note some examples of this sin. 1. Injury to,

or loss of borrowed goods, *see* 2 Ki. vi. 5; 2. Retaining a found article, knowing, or not seeking, the owner; 3. Obtaining property under false pretences. II. Effects of this sin. 1. Diminishes the trust men should have in each other; 2. Lessens the stock of general kindness, *see* Ma. v. 42; 3. Fosters a spirit of dishonesty. III. The Divine view of this sin. 1. Reparation to be made to man; 2. Confession and atonement to be made to God.

Turkish honesty.—Keppel relates, in his *Journey across the Balcans*, that, in the winter of 1838, a Turkish postman was sent to some distant part with a considerable sum of money in specie. The money, in such cases, is carried in bags, which the merchants call "groupes." They are given to the postman, and without receiving any written document as proof of the receipt. This man, on returning from his journey, was applied to by a French house for fifteen thousand piastres; a sum, at that time, equal to fifteen thousand dollars. He made no attempt to evade the demand, but immediately said, "I have doubtless lost the bag, and must therefore pay you as soon as I can raise the money." After maturely thinking of the loss, he returned by the same road, quite confident that if any Mohammedan should find the money it would be returned to him. He had traveled nearly the whole distance, when he arrived, in a very melancholy mood, at a small, miserable, coffee-house, where he remembered to have stopped a few moments on his way. He was accosted at the door by the café-jee, who called out to him, "Hallo, sheriff! when you were last here you left a bag, which I suppose to contain gold. You will find it just where you placed it." The postman entered, and discovered the identical bag, evidently untouched, although it must have been left exposed to the grasp of the numerous chance customers of a Turkish café.

8-13. (8) **Lord . . saying**, fourth instance in which this formula is used in Leviticus. Intention to show that it was Divine law and not merely human: (10) **priest . . garment**; sacerdotal garments consisted of tunic, linen drawers, linen girdle, and mitre or turban. (11) **other garments**,^b prob. their common dress. (12) **burning**, kindled, *see* i. 7. (13) **fire . . altar**,^c so the atonement of Christ is always available for purging and taking away sin.

The fire of holy desires.—Consider.—I. The text as typifying holy desires and Divine love, by the emblem of fire. 1. Fire illuminates; 2. It warms and heats; 3. It separates true metal from dross; 4. It always ascends; 5. It melts and softens hard materials; 6. It has a comforting quality; 7. It assimilates materials to its own nature; 8. Without it we could not exist. II. How we may quench the fire of holy desires. By—1. Inconsideration or unwatchfulness; 2. A trifling spirit; 3. Not keeping our eye single either in eating or drinking; 4. Backbiting and railing; 5. Unnecessary disputations; 6. Conceit; 7. Non-obedience to the rules of God's Word.—*Stevens*.

Keeping the fire burning.—In Florence good housewives use cakes of vine-refuse to keep the fire in when they are away from home. These cakes cannot yield much heat or create a blaze, but they feed sufficient fire to save lighting it again. Do not many obscure, untalented, but quietly sincere believers answer just this purpose in our churches? In dull and dead times they preserve "the things which remain and are ready to die;" they detain the heavenly flame, which else would quite depart, and though the best they can do is but to smoulder in sorrow at the declension of the times, yet they are not to be despised. When, in happier days, the fire of piety shall burn with renewed energy, we shall be grateful to those who were as the ashes on the hearth, and kept the dying flame alive.—*Bib. III.*

14-18. (14) **law . . offering**, the *minchah*, or priest's portion, *see* ii. (15) **handful**, *see* ii. 2. (16) **remainder, etc.**,^d *see* ii. 3. (17) **it . . leaven, etc.**, *see* ii. 10, 11. (18) **every . . holy**,^e this may mean he who touches them shall first purify himself, or that the vessels employed shall first be sanctified.

Fulfillment of sacred functions. Christ was typified in "Aaron;" Christians in "his sons." 1. Consider the priestly ministrations of Jesus Christ within the sanctuary. (a) Within His church on earth, in maintaining the love, and devotion, and piety which there are offered to God. (b) Within the heavenly sanctuary, in gathering up the prayers of His saints, adding His own virtues to human offerings, and interceding in the presence of God for us. 2. The subsidiary ministries of the Christian priesthood. (a) In consecrated lives. (b) In loving gifts. (c) In prayerful fellowship. (d) In useful agencies.—*Teacher's Com.*

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servant with any matter that may endanger thine estate; forso shalt thou make thyself a bond slave to him that thou trustest and leave thyself always to his mercy."—*Sir W. Raleigh*.
"Trust not any man with thy life, credit or estate. For it is mere folly for a man to enthrall himself to his friend, as though, occasion being offered, he should not dare to become an enemy."—*Ld. Burleigh*.

the law of the burnt-offering

a Ex. xxviii. 42.

b Ezek. xlii. 19.

c Is. vi. 6, 7.

"It was one of the distinguishing marks of the chieftainship of one of the Samoan nobility, that his fire never went out. His attendants had a particular name from their special business of keeping his fire blazing all night long while he was asleep."—*Turner's Polynesia*.

"Many hypocrites are like comets, that appear for awhile with a mighty blaze, but are very unsteady and irregular in their motion; their blaze soon disappears, and they appear but once in a great while. But true saints are like fixed stars, which, though they rise and set, and are often clouded, yet are steadfast in their orb, and shine with a constant light."—*Pres. Edwards*.

the heave-offering

d Le xxiv. 9.

e 1 Co. v. 6-8.

f Ps. lxxxix. 7.

"The principle plainly covers the

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case of all such as give up secular callings to devote themselves to the ministry of the Word, whether to proclaim the Gospel in any of the great mission fields, or to exercise the pastorate of the local church."—*Kellogg*.

the priests' offering

a Ex xvi. 36.

"There are a good many pious people who are as careful of their religion as of their best china, only using it on holy occasions for fear it should get chipped or flawed in working-day wear."—*D. Jerrold*.

the law of the sin-offering

b Le. i. 11.

c *Bampton Lect.* iii.; *Hengstenberg* "Sacrifices of Holy Scripture," 379; *Kurtz*, "Sacrificial Worship," 239.

d Jo. vi. 52-57.

e Le. xi. 33-35.

f "So contagious a thing is sin that it defileth the very visible heaven and earth; which, therefore, must be likewise purged by the last fire as the earthen pot which held the sin-offering was broken, and the brazen scoured and rinsed in water."—*Trapp*.

g He. xiii. 11; Le. iv. 12; He. ix. 12, x. 3, 12-14.

"Whether religion be true or false, it must be necessarily granted to be the only wise principle and safe hypothesis for a man to live and die by."—*Tillotson*.

Holiness a crown of glory.—The highest honor which the Romans bestowed upon their greatest captains was to grant them a day of triumph, and, in that, permission to wear a crown of grass or leaves, which withered the day following; but the triumph of the just shall be eternal, and their never-fading crown is God Himself. O, most happy diadem! O, most precious garland of the saints, which is of as great worth and value as is God himself!—*Bp. Taylor*.

19-23. (19, 20) in the day, offering of initiation or consecration, at every time of consecration; tenth..ephah, i. e., an omer." (21) pan, see ii. 5. (22) it..burnt, *lit.* it shall ascend in fire as a whole burnt-offering. (23) it..eaten, save in case of peace-offerings the sacrificer could not eat of his own offering.

Ministerial Dedication: II. Consecration to the ministry: an act to be characterized by complete self-devotion. 1. Perpetuity is to mark the offering. "For a meat offering perpetual." 2. Continuity is to mark the offering. "Half of it in the morning, and half thereof at night;" i. e., it was to be a day by day dedication. 3. Entirety is to mark the offering. "It is a statute for ever; it shall be wholly burnt."—*Teacher's Com.*

The constancy of religion.—David Livingstone, who did so much toward opening up the dark continent of Africa, told the following story. When he was a boy, a faithful Christian man called him to his death-bed and said, "My son, make religion the everyday business of your life, and not a thing of fits and starts." Livingstone's life shows that he followed the advice to the day of his death, even to his last hour, which was spent on his knees in prayer to Him to whom he had so often gone for comfort.—*Bib. Ill.*

24-30. (24, 25) place..killed, i. e., on the N. of the altar.^b it..holy, the flesh of the victim was to be regarded as such.^c (26) priest..it.^d The sin-offering was given to be food for the priests. It was a part of their livelihood (Ezek. xlv. 28, 29). The officiating priest who received this perquisite could invite his family and other priests and their sons to partake. (27) when..blood, etc., "these ordinances shadowed the contagion of sin, and the care we should have to cleanse ourselves by repentance." (28) earthen..broken,^e since it might absorb some of the juices of the meat.^f (29) most holy, *lit.* holiness of holiness. (30) to..withal,^g to make atonement for.

The necessity of atonement.—1. As prescribed by God, coming forth from His infinite holiness. 2. As connected with mediation, not in atonement dependent upon the chance merit of man, but the gracious promise of God's free and sovereign mercy. 3. As set forth in the flesh and blood of the victim, clearly indicating a substitutionary merit.—*Pulpit Com.*

Culinary vessels in the East (on v. 28).—At this time the culinary vessels of the Hebrews seem to have been exclusively of earthenware or copper. Iron, though known to them, was at this time very little in use for any purpose, and even when they became better acquainted with that valuable metal, it is doubtful if their culinary or other vessels were ever made of it. At least, no pot, pan or other vessel is said in all the Scripture to be of iron. What is translated "iron pan," in Ezek. iv. 3, is properly an "iron plate," as the context alone sufficiently indicates. In point of fact, the culinary and other domestic vessels throughout the East remain, to this day, as we find them thus early in the Mosaic history, either of copper, earthenware, or wood, although, no doubt, the quality and manufacture have much improved. The present writer, in the course of journeys and residence in different parts of Western Asia, does not think that he ever met with an instance of a cooking vessel of any other metal than copper; and dishes and bowls of the same metal, tinned, are those which most usually make their appearance on the tables of kings and great men. When luxury desires something more rich and costly for the table than copper, it finds indulgence, not in silver and gold, but in china and fine earthenware.—*Kitto*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1-5. (1) law . . trespass-offering, as ch. vi. 24-30 gives additional regulations for the priest relating to the rites of the sin-offering, so ch. vii. 1-10 gives more precise instructions about the trespass-offering. (3-5) fat,^a etc. see iii. 4, 9.

Invariable laws regulating sacrificial worship.—"I. Methods of worship may vary, but holiness is inevitable in all. II. All propitiatory acts are secondary to the supreme fact—death for sin. III. Offerings to God must always be the choicest in our power to present. IV. Absolute consecration marked whatever was presented to the Lord."—*Preacher's Com.*

The power of law.—There are stronger things in the world than force. There are powers more difficult to overcome than strong or brazen gates. Suppose we found a prisoner condemned to die, and locked up in his cell, and we were to ask ourselves how he could be saved from execution. There would appear great difficulty in getting him out of prison. That iron door, with its great bolt; that high window, with its guard of strong bars; those thick, strong walls; those heavy gates outside; that watchful jailer,—how impossible it seems to overcome them all! Yet these are not the only difficulties, nor the greatest. There is another thing, stronger than all these, holding the poor prisoner to death: there is the sentence of the law. For, unless he would himself become a criminal, no man dares to help the condemned one out. Get the sentence repealed, and the other difficulties are removed. If a father has said to a dutiful child, "There is an object you must not handle," it is more truly out of the child's reach than if he had merely placed it high up where the little hand could not get hold of it.—*Edmond.*

6-10 (6) eaten . . place, *i. e.* "Within the forecourt of the sanctuary. Eight of the offerings had to be eaten in the precincts of the sanctuary: (1) the flesh of the sin-offering. (iv. 26); (2) the flesh of the trespass-offering (vii. 6); (3) the peace-offering of the congregation (xxiii. 19, 20); (4) the remainder of the omer (xxiii. 10, 11); (5) of the meat-offering of the Israelites (ii. 3-10); (6) the two loaves (xxiii. 20); (7) the shewbread (xxiv. 9); and (8) the leper's log of oil (xiv. 10-13.)" (10) one . . another, every man alike.

God lays stress upon — I. The way in which He was approached in worship. We should show the utmost care: 1. To draw nigh to His throne of grace in a right spirit—a spirit of reverence, trust, expectation, holy joy. 2. To use those methods of approach which are most likely to foster the true spirit of worship. II. The fact that sin means death in His sight. III. The truth that our very best, our own self, is to be consecrated to God. IV. The truth that all which is presented to God is to be regarded as holy in His sight. — *Pulpit Com.*

They had the privilege of claiming the skin.—This privilege probably dates from the days of Eden. Immediately after the Fall, our first parents covered themselves with the leaves of the fig, symbolically to express their sense of shame on account of their sin. In exchange for these, God graciously clothed them with skins, which we may presume were those of animals offered in sacrifice. Here, then, was the robe of an imputed righteousness to cover their sin and shame. If these skins were those of animals offered in sacrifice, then Adam must have acted as a priest, and of course by Divine appointment. As a priest, then he would receive the skins. To this hour those descendants of Adam who acted as spiritual priests are those who are invested with the robe of the righteousness of Christ. — *Pulpit Com.*

11-15. (11) law . . peace-offerings,^b additional or supplementary rules. (12) thanksgiving,^c for special mercies and favors. (14) heave-offering,^d heaved or lifted up on high in token that it was directed to the God of heaven (Ex. xxix. 24-28). (15) eaten . . offered,^e *i. e.* they were to hasten to obey God: cheerful and liberal use of Divine mercy. leave . . morning, as doubting to-morrow's mercy.

Example of thankfulness. — The room is clean, even airy; a bright little fire burns in the grate; and in a four-post bed you will see sitting up a woman of sixty-four years of age, with her hands folded and contracted, and her whole body crippled and curled together as the disease cramped it, and rheumatism has fixed it, for eight and twenty years. For sixteen of these years she has not

E. c. 1490.

the law of the trespass-offering

a Ex. xxix. 13.

"Humility and love, whatever obscurities may involve religious tenets, constitute the essence of true religion. The humble is formed to adore; the loving to associate with eternal love." — *Lavater.*

"He that has not religion to govern his morality is not a dram better than my mastiff dog; so long as you stroke him, and please him, and do not pinch him, he will play with you as fine as may be, — he is a very good moral mastiff; but if you hurt him, he will fly in your face, and tear out your throat." — *Seiden.*

the law of the peace-offering

b Ps. cxvi. 17. cxix. 108; He. xiii. 15. c 2 Ch. xxix. 31. Ps. i. 14, 23. cvii. 22. d Nu. xviii. 8, 11, 19.

e 1 Co. x. 3; Col. iii. 15.

"Gratitude is the fairest blossom which springs from the soul, and the heart of man knoweth none

B, c. 1490.

more fragrant; while its opponent, ingratitude, is a deadly weed; not only poisonous in itself, but impregnating the very atmosphere in which it grows with fetid vapours."—*H. Ballou.*

"Epicurus says, 'Gratitude is a virtue that has commonly profit annexed to it.' And where is the virtue, say I, that has not? But still the virtue is to be valued for itself, and not for the profit that attends it."—*Seneca.*

a Ex. xii. 10.

b Le. xxii. 3, 9.

c Le. xv. 3.

"The pleasure of the religious man is an easy and portable pleasure, such an one as he carries about in his bosom, without alarming either the eye or the envy of the world."—*South.*

law concerning fat and blood

d Le. iiii. 17; Ma. xxii. 21.

e Ge. ix 4; Jo. vi. 53, 54; Lu. xxii. 17-20.

"It is the property of the religious spirit to be the most refining of all influences. No external advantages, no culture of the tastes, no habit of command, no association with the elegant, or even depth of affection can bestow that delicacy and that

moved from her bed; or looked out of the window, or even lifted her hand to her own face; and also is in constant pain, while she cannot move a limb. But listen! She is so thankful that God has left her that great blessing, the use of *one thumb!* Her left hand is clinched and stiff, and utterly useless; but she has a two-pronged fork fastened to a stick, with which she can take off her great old-fashioned spectacles, and put them on again, with amazing effort. By the same means she can feed herself; and she can sip her tea through a tube, helping herself with this one thumb. And there is another thing she can accomplish with her fork: she can turn over the leaves of a large Bible when placed within her reach. A recent visitor addressed her with the remark, "What is the source of your happiness?" "The thought that my sins are forgiven, and dwelling on the great love of Jesus my Saviour. I am content to lie here so long as it shall please Him that I should stay, and to go whenever He shall call me."—*The Book and its Mission.*

16-21. (16) *sacrifice . . vow, i.e.,* a peace-offering vowed upon certain conditions. *voluntary offering, i.e.,* one offered as the simple tribute of a devout heart at peace with God and man: offered on no external occasion. (17) *remainder, etc.,* as being then unlawful to be eaten. (18) *imputed,* placed to his account. *abomination,* polluted, foul. *shall . . iniquity, i.e.,* punishment due to it. (19) *flesh,* the holy flesh of the peace-offerings. *as flesh, i.e.,* the undefiled flesh. (20) *soul . . people, i.e.,* he shall be destroyed, shall perish.^b (21) *soul . . thing, c* the person doing so became himself unclean, and hence was under the law of v. 20.

The peace-offering.—1. The peace-offering is a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Three forms of it are specified—1. The offering of thanksgiving, *i.e.,* for some special blessing. 2. The vow, the fulfilment of a promise to God. 3. The voluntary offering, made from a principle of gratitude. II. The peace-offering is a sacrifice of fellowship. This, taken with thanksgiving, is its characteristic idea.—*G. R. Leavitt.*

Eaten the same day that it was offered.—We here see that the flesh of some sacrifices was to be eaten on the day of offering; in some cases, however, what remained might be eaten on the next day, but nothing was to be kept for use till the third day—whatever then remained was to be consumed by fire. As the people of the East generally eat their meat the same day on which it is killed, and almost never later than the second day, we are inclined to concur in the view of Harmer (*Observations*, I. 457), who thinks that this regulation was intended to preclude any attempt to preserve the meat, by potting or otherwise, so that it might be taken to different parts of the country, and used superstitiously, perhaps as peculiarly holy food, or applied in some way inconsistent with the intention of the law. That intention was, that what became the offerer's share of the sacrifice he had presented, he should eat cheerfully before the Lord with his friends, and that the poor and destitute should partake in the benefit. This object was insured by the regulation which precluded the meat from being kept beyond the second day.—*Kitto.*

22-27. (22) *Lord . . Moses,* additional communication concerning prohibition of fat and blood, having not only a hygienic value, but also prevented them from mingling in the festivities of idolatrous neighbors. (23) *ye . . fat, c* etc, prob. for physical as well as moral reasons. *ox . . goat, i.e.,* of such animals as were offered in sacrifice. (24) *may . . use,* to wh. fat is applicable, save for sacrifice or food. (25) *beast,* named in v. 23. (26, 27) *eat . . blood, c* etc., no exception made as in the case of fat.

The supremacy of the Divine claims.—1. The recognition by the conscience in doctrine, in the place religion holds in the life. 2. *The social state* should be regulated on this principle. Man must not invade God's rights if he would retain God's blessing. 3. *The individual believer* will take care that he robs God of nothing. His service demands the fat, the choicest faculties, the deepest feelings, the largest gifts.—*Pulpit Com.*

Ye shall eat no manner of fat.—Independently of their consecration to the altar, it is not difficult to discover reasons which may have operated in causing this remarkable interdiction of employing those parts of animals which are of so much use to us for culinary and other purposes. In the opinion of Michaelis, it was one of the great objects of some of the laws of Moses to change the character of the Israelites from that of a nomad and pastoral to that of a settled agricultural people. Accordingly, there are a number of regulations, the combined operation of which rendered such a change almost

compulsory. The present is one of those which tended to wean them from that entire dependence upon their flocks which is usual among nomad people and to induce new wants which only agriculture could supply. The present law, in particular, appears to be one of several, which seem directed to oblige them to the cultivation of the excellent olives of Palestine, the country which they were destined to occupy. Being here debarred the use of animal fat, and being apparently, on the other hand, precluded the use of butter, no resource remained for them but to cultivate and employ its oil, which in fact they did to a great extent when they were settled in the Promised Land. Whether this view be correct or not, the tendency of such a law to prevent falling back on nomad habits can hardly be questioned. It was adapted to their condition in Palestine; but since their dispersion they have felt the interdiction of fat and (as they understand) of butter, as one of the peculiar evils of their state, and have been driven so to expound their law as to allow themselves the use of goose-fat as a substitute.—*Kitto*.

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grandeur of bearing which belong only to the mind accustomed to celestial conversation—all else is but gilt and cosmetics beside this, as expressed in every look and gesture."—*Emerson*.

28—34. (28) Lord . . Moses, rules relating to the priest's portion in the peace-offerings. (30) His . . hands, an act which the offerer himself was to perform, yet not independently of the priest, since the priest placed what belonged to the Lord in the hands of the offerer.

The believer's peace and portion.—I. To have God is to have peace, for He is the God of peace. II. Such peace is found in Christ alone; not in anything *done* by Him, or *given* by Him, but in His personal indwelling. III. But not only is Christ our peace, but from being the atoner, our peace-offering. He gives Himself to God an offering and a sweet smelling savor, and then to us who trust in Him for deliverance and satisfaction.—*Teacher's Com.*

Selfish religionists.—There are a great many men who are pious on this principle: "How economically can I go to heaven?" Virtue is to them like gold to a traveler, and they say, "Now I want to spend just as little as I can. I want to make this voyage just as cheaply as possible." Men mean to get to heaven, but they do not mean that it shall cost them any more virtue than they can possibly help. Everthing that the world will allow them to have they take. They practice as little self-denial as they can get along with, hoping that there will be an equalization of everything in the world to come.—*Beecher*.

35—38. (35) this . . anointing, appointed share; "this wave-breast and heave-shoulder are the portion or privilege arising from their being anointed and consecrated to the priesthood. That the allusion is to the 'portion,' is evident from the preceding and succeeding context."—*Bush*.

The gospel of the sacrifices.—I. There was a Divine institution and command of God, for the offerings and sacrifices which were under the law. 1. An offering in general is anything presented to the Lord to become peculiarly His, and to be typical of Christ and gospel mysteries. 2. The legal offerings were set apart for God, with respect to Christ and His great sacrifice and offering up of Himself unto God for us. II. The sacrifices of propitiation under the law, may be referred to these six kinds or sorts—burnt-offering, meat-offering, peace-offering, sin-offering, trespass-offering, and offering of consecrations. 1. There were some things in which these all agreed. (1) They were all offered at the brazen altar. (2) They were all holy of holiness. (3) They were all offerings made by fire. (4) They were all propitiatory. 2. The difference consisted—(1) Partly in the different matter of them. An ox or a sheep in some; flowers and wine in others. (2) Partly in the particular ends and designs and occasions of them. (3) Principally in the different ceremonies accompanying them. Lessons: 1. Keep close to the rule of Divine institution in matters of worship. 2 See the worth and value of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the necessity of it, for the justification and salvation of lost sinners.—*S. Mather*.

The use of oil in anointing.—As a cosmetic,—that is to say, as a means of giving to the skin and hair a smooth and graceful appearance—its use has been prevalent in hot climates from the earliest times. There is abundant historical evidence of this usage of oil amongst the Egyptians, the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans; and Pliny's statement that butter is used by the negroes, and the lower class of Arabs, for the purpose of anointing, is confirmed by the observation of all recent African travelers. In hot climates,

the wave-
and heave-
offering

"True religion is always mild, propitious, and humble; plays not the tyrant; plants no faith in blood, nor bears destruction on her chariot wheels; but stoops to polish, succor, and redress, and builds her grandeur on the public good."—*Jas. Mil-ler*.

recapitulation

"The plain gospel truth is, that although we cannot be saved by our works alone, we certainly dare not hope to be saved without them, or without being heartily and effectually made up to do our best. Wherever grace is effective, a well-ordered morality must necessarily follow."

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there is doubtless a practical as well as an æsthetic object in anointing. The oil, being a bad conductor of heat, affords a certain amount of protection against the direct action of the solar heat; it is likewise serviceable as a protection against the attacks of insects, and as a means of checking excessive perspiration. The fact of oily and fatty matters being bad conductors of heat, serves also to explain why the Esquimaux and other dwellers in Arctic regions have recourse to the inunction of the blubber, etc. In their case the oily investment serves to prevent the escape of the bodily heat.—*Chambers' Ency.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

consecration of the priests

a He. vii. 28, x. 5-7; Ex. xxviii. 2, 4.

"Obedience is not truly performed by the body of him whose heart is dissatisfied. The shell without a kernel is not fit for store."—*Saadi.*

anointing of Aaron

b Ps. cxxxii. 9, 16; 1 Sa. ii. 28; Ex. xxviii. 30, 36-38.

"Hence, it may be, God appointed the breast-plate to be made double, that the Urim and Thummim might be put within, and be hid on every side. This Urim and Thummim signified, saith one, that in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. ii. 3), and that He hath all secret things most perfectly known and numbered out before Him, which He revealeth continually to His Church and chosen as need requireth, by such means as Himself hath sanctified (Ps. xxv. 14; Jo. xiv. 21, 26, xvii. 14, 17, 26)."—*Trop.*

1-5^a See Ex. xxix. 1-4. (2) Take Aaron, the ritual has been described or defined in i.-vii., and now the Lord enjoins immediate putting in force. *The priestly calling.*—To what does God summon and set them apart?

1. *Intimate access with Him.* 2. *Fullest knowledge of Him.* 3. *Holy service for Him.*—*Preacher's Com.*

The duty of obedience.—We must obey, whether we see the reason or not; for God knows best. A guide through an unknown country must be followed without demur. A captain yields complete authority to the pilot. A soldier in battle must fight when and where he is ordered; when the conflict is over, he may reflect upon and perceive the wisdom of his commander in movements that, at the time of their execution, were perplexing. The farmer must obey God's natural laws of the seasons if he would win a harvest; and we must all obey God's spiritual laws if we would reap happiness here and hereafter.

6--12. See Ex. xxix. 4-6^b. (6) washed . . water, first initiatory rite. (12) poured . . head, this profuse pouring of oil was repeated at the consecration of ev. successor to the high priesthood, while the common priests were simply anointed or were simply marked with the finger on the forehead on their first installation.—*Handy Com.*

The essential significance of the priesthood.—(See Numb. xvi.). 1. A Divine choice or call ("Whom He hath chosen"). 2. A right of Divine service ("Who are His"). 3. Holiness ("Who is holy"). 4. A right of Divine access ("Come near unto Him").—*Bib. Ill.*

Washed them with water.—Here the ceremonies of consecration commence with ablutions, and we have seen that the priests were required to bathe their hands and feet whenever they entered the tabernacle. This doubtless was, not merely to insure physical cleanness, but also to symbolize that spiritual purity with which man should appear before God. The present washing is, however, distinguished from the daily ablution, inasmuch as the whole person seems now to have been washed, but only the hands and feet on common occasions. The idea of the fitness of such a practice is so obvious, that it has been more or less in use in most religious systems. We find, at the heathen temples, lavers of a similar use to this at the tabernacle. The Egyptian priests washed themselves with cold water twice every day, and twice at night the Greeks had their sprinklings, the Romans their lustrations and lavations; the ancient Christians practiced ablution before receiving the sacrament, and also bathed their eyes on entering a church. The Roman Catholic Church retains something of the practice of ablution before, and sometimes after mass; and Calmet says that the holy-water vessels at the entrance of their churches are in imitation of the lavers of the tabernacle. The Oriental Christians have also their solemn washings on particular occasions, such as Good Friday. The practice of ablution was adopted by Mohammed in a very full sense: for his followers are not only obliged to perform their ablutions before they enter a mosque, but before they commence their prayers, wherever offered, which they are required to repeat five times each day. This is certainly the most burthensome system of ablution which ever existed either in ancient or modern times. The Hindoos also rejoice in the purifying virtues of their idolized Ganges, and wash also in other waters, because they believe that such will be equally effectual, if whilst they bathe, they say, "O Ganges, purify me!" In fact, nothing is or has been more common than ablutions in the worship which different nations render to their gods; and there are few acts connected with thier service which are not begun or ended with some rite symbolical of purification.—*Kitto.*

13-17.^a See Ex. xxix. 8-14. (13) **brought . . sons**, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazer, Ithamar. (14) **brought . . bullock**, to slay for sin-offering while Aaron and his sons as penitents, with their hands on the head of the bullock, received the benefit. See ch. i. 4.

The sin offering.—For the *first time* in all history, as a new incident on earth, full of interest to all the hosts of heaven, instinct with significance for all humanity, suggesting new conceptions of man's guilt and Christ's atonement—the sin offering was now offered. Jehovah Himself must have viewed with peculiar regard the *first sin offering ever presented*. Calvary witnessed the *last ever to be offered*! "There remaineth no more offering for sin." The order of the sacrifices is noticeable: 1. The *sin offering* first: for substitution is the basis of the sinner's justification with God. 2. Next the *burnt-offering* (v. 18): as declaring complete self-surrender of life, in its highest qualities and complete devotion, unto God. 3. Then the *ram of consecration* (v. 22), which was the thank-offering and the peace-offering: representing the grateful joy of those whom God honored with the privileges of priesthood, and as initiating a career of festal fellowship with the Lord.—*Hom. Com.*

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the priest's sin-offering

a Ex. xxviii. 2, 40; Is. lxiii. 1, xi. 5; Ezek. xliii. 20-26. "Holiness and happiness are always an indissoluble connection; yea, holiness is felicity itself."—Alex. Macworter.

18-21. See Ex. xxix. 15-18. (18) **ram . . burnt-offering**, symbolic of the full consecra. of A. and his sons to the service of God.

Convincing power of holiness.—I would give more for one poor woman, whose poverty only makes her laugh and sing, who is contented with her humble lot, who bears her burdens with cheerfulness, who is patient when troubles come upon her, who loves every one and who, with a kind and genial spirit, goes about doing good, than for all the dissertations on the doctrines of Christianity that could be written, as a means of preventing infidelity. I have seen one such woman who was worth more than the whole church to which she belonged and its minister put together; and I was the minister, and my church was the church! She lived over a cooper-shop. The floor of her apartment was so rude and open that you could sit there and see what the men were doing below. She had a sort of fiend for a husband—a rough, brutal shipmaster. She was universally called "Mother." She literally, night and day, went about doing good. I do not suppose all the ministers in the town where she lived carried consolation to so many hearts as she did. If a person was sick or dying, the people in the neighborhood did not think of sending for anyone else half so soon as for her. I tell you, there was not much chance for an infidel to make headway there. If I wanted to convince a man of the reality of Christianity, I said nothing about historic evidence: I said, "Don't you believe Mother — is a Christian?" and that would silence him.—*Beecher.*

the priest's burnt-offering

"One of the almost numberless advantages of goodness is, that it blinds its possessor to many of those faults in others which could not fail to be detected by the morally defective. A consciousness of unworthiness renders people extremely quick-sighted in discerning the vices of their neighbors."—*Godfrey.*

22-26.^b See Ex. xxix. 19-23. (22) **other ram**. "Ram of Consecration," lit. "Ram of fillings," probably free-will offerings are intended. (1 Chron. xxix. 5, 2 Chron. xxix. 31). (23) **put . . feet** of Aaron and his sons; consecrated attention and service, energetic parts of the body standing for the whole body, as active for God and the people.

the ram of consecration

b He. ix. 11, 12, xiii. 12.

Use of blood in consecration.—Banier, in his work on the *Mythology of the Ancients*, gives, after Prudentius, a remarkable instance of the personal application of the victim's blood in the ceremonies of consecration. He calls it "a sort of baptism of blood," which was thought to convey a spiritual regeneration. It occurs in the Taurobolium, a sacrifice which was offered to Cybele at the consecration of her high priest, but not wholly confined to that occasion, and which had rites and ceremonies different from all other sacrifices. In order to consecrate the high priest, a great hole was made, into which he entered, dressed in an unusual manner, wearing a crown of gold, and with a toga of silk tucked up after the Sabine fashion. Above the hole was a sort of floor, the boards of which, not being closely joined, left certain chinks, besides which several holes were bored in the boards themselves. Then they led up to the place a bull (sometimes a ram or goat) crowned with garlands, bearing on his shoulders fillets covered with flowers, and having his forehead gilt. Its throat was cut over the hole, so that the blood fell upon the floor, which, being perforated, allowed it to pass through in a shower upon the priest, who received it eagerly upon his body and clothes. Not content with this, he held back his head to receive it on his cheeks, ears, lips, and nostrils; he even opened his mouth to moisten his tongue with it, and some he swallowed. When all the blood was drained, the high-priest came out. The horrible ap-

"The filling of the hand with sacrificial gifts signified that the priest was henceforth now enabled to offer sacrifice to God, and was endowed with the appurtenances which the priesthood received from the altar. Corresponding to it is the delivery of the Holy Bible, accompanied with prayer for the reception of the Holy Ghost, and with a conveyance of 'authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy Sacraments,' with which the Chris-

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tian priests are inaugurated."—*Wordsworth*, comp. *Bingham*, *Antiq.* II. xix. 17.

the priests' anointing

"He that is a good man is three-quarters of his way towards the being a good Christian, wheresoever he lives, or whatsoever he is called."—*South*.

"Goodness consists not in the outward things we do, but in the inward thing we are. To be is the great thing."—*Chapin*.

the days of consecration

"There is a great deal we never think of calling religion that is still fruit unto God and garnered by Him in the harvest. The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, patience, goodness. I affirm that if these fruits are found in any form, whether you show your patience as a woman nursing a fretful child or as a man attending to the vexing detail of a business, or as a physician following the dark mazes of sickness, or as a mechanic fitting the joints and valves of a locomotive; being honest and true besides, you bring forth fruit unto God."—*R. Collyer*.

the offering of Aaron for self and people

"Religion in a magistrate strengthens his authority, because it procures veneration, and gains a reputation to it.

pearance he presented may well be conceived; but he was received with congratulation, and the people, not daring to approach his person, adored him at a distance, regarding him now as a man quite pure and sanctified. Might it not be, to prevent such a practice as this last, that in the sin-offering, if any of the victim's blood was sprinkled upon a garment, that garment was directed to be carefully washed in the holy place?—*Kitto*.

27—30. (27—29) See Ex. xxix. 24—26. (30) See Ex. xxix. 21. **Moses..** sprinkled, oil and blood, whether mixed or separately does not appear. Person and garments were thus made sacred.

Holiness and Sanctity.—Holiness is to the mind of a man what sanctity is to his exterior. But it is a thing not to be affected; it is that genuine characteristic of Christianity which is altogether spiritual, and cannot be counterfeited; sanctity, on the other hand, is, from its very nature, exposed to falsehood, and the least to be trusted; when it displays itself in individuals, either by the sorrowfulness of their looks, or the singular cut of their garments, or other singularities of action and gesture, it is of the most questionable nature; but, in one who performs the sacerdotal office, it is a useful appendage to the solemnity of the scene, which excites a reverential regard to the individual in the mind of the beholder, and the most exalted sentiments of that religion which he thus adorns by his outward profession.—*Crabb*.

31—36. See Ex. xxix. 30—35, 43. (35) **abide.. days**, seven, a sacred period. To impress them with the new responsibility that they might realize that they were wholly the Lord's: perhaps also to signify that they were not to take up common occupations at all.

Consecration.—One of the most significant rites in the entire ceremony of consecration was the taking by Moses of the blood of the "ram of consecration" (ver. 22), and putting it "upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot." He was to have: 1. *An open ear*, to welcome every word of the Lord. 2. *A ready hand*, to discharge diligently and conscientiously his daily duties. 3. *A quick foot*, to run in the way of God's commandments.—*Clarkson*. The blood of the ram is sprinkled upon the ear, that it may hearken to the commands of God, and, whilst attentive unto him, disregard the whispers of evil. Also upon the right hand, that all its acts may be in conformity with righteousness. And upon the right foot, that its steps may be ordered by the Lord and its owner may ever tread the ways of obedience and sanctification. Every faculty is enlisted in the service of God. By the wave and heave offerings and the presentation of cakes we learn the necessity of looking upon all our property as belonging to God, who must have his special share and be glorified thereby as well as by our joyful use of the remainder. To fill the hands for God is to complete our consecration, and to live upon heavenly food in the enjoyment of His blessing. By giving to him we get for ourselves.—*Aldridge*.

Description of holiness.—Christian holiness is no fabrication of man, and differs as much from ritual and conventional sanctity as the temple filled with God differed from the same temple just as it was left by the builder's hand. It consists in our having the moral image of God, in being like our Father in heaven. We are holy, just as here and there a point or feature of God's gracious fullness is imprinted upon our nature, when that nature is made soft and yielding by converting grace. How little then has anything formal and external to do with this great and blessed attainment.—*Barrett*.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1—4. (1) **on.. day**, first day after the week of the consecration of the priests and the first of the beginning of the tabernacle service. **the.. Israel**, the elders, the representatives of the people called to witness the imposing ceremony of consecration including the active duties of the new priests. (3) **children of Israel**, same as elders before mentioned, representing Israel.

Reconciliation through Christ.—Themistocles having offended King Philip and not knowing how to regain his favor, took young Alexander, his son, in his arms, and so presented himself before the king; and, when he saw the young child smile upon him, his wrath was soon appeased towards him. The sinner should approach God with his Son Jesus Christ in his arms.

Comfort of reconciliation.—A boy who had offended his father came to him, saying, "Papa, I cannot learn my lesson unless you are reconciled. I am sorry I have offended you, and hope I shall never do so again. I hope you will forgive me." This confession won from the father the kiss of reconciliation. "Now," exclaimed the boy, "I will learn Latin and Greek with anybody."

5-7. (5) all . . Lord, all in their order and places. Moses, the great instructor and law-giver. Aaron and his sons. The priests, the elders or principal men, and now the congregation or general assembly of the people were before the Lord in solemn religious service.

To-day the Lord will appear unto you.—When an appointment is made to an exalted office in the State, it is accompanied by presentation in person to the Sovereign of the realm. This was Aaron's introduction, in his high official status, to the very presence of Jehovah, whose priest he was henceforth to be, and in whose Regal presence he was henceforth to minister. The Shekinah, which had dwelt in the secrecy of the holy place, would that day "shine forth" in brightness. God's elect servants should behold His glory. It would teach them to serve with awe, and impress on them the grandeur of their office; thus fostering reverence and circumspection in their ministry.—*Hom. Com.*

8-14. (8) which . . himself, like others, being himself involved in sin. (9-11) see iv. 7-12.

The high priest's sacrifice.—Aaron had sin that needed to be forgiven, there was natural enmity in his mind that needed to be slain. It was a humble thing for Aaron to proceed, arrayed in his splendid sacerdotal garments, upon which the people looked with awe and wonder, to slay the calf that was appointed for sacrifice, and to offer it for his own sins. The calf would probably remind him of his great sin in making a golden calf for the people to worship while Moses was up in the mount. Any pride of heart, or presumption of mind, would now be checked by a public acknowledgment of his sins and need of pardon, though chosen and lifted to so high and holy an office. *Our High Priest's offering of Himself* was accepted. He is therefore able to save all who come unto God by Him. He made no offering for Himself, for He had no sins to own, no guilt to atone for. His sacrifice is final, for by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Tasting death for every man, no other offering is needed by man, and no other can be accepted by God.—*F. W. Brown.*

15-21. (15) he . . offering. Aaron was now qualified to present the sin-offering for the people. as . . first, as in the sin-offering made for himself. (16) and . . manner, i. e., acc. to the prescribed manner.^a (17) meat-offering,^b see on ii. 1, 2; vi. 14-16. (18) peace-offerings,^c "a fig. of that peace which is consummated in the one Great Sacrifice." (19) caul . . liver, acc. to LXX. the gt. lobe of the liver;^d acc. to Calmet the caul wrapped ab. the liver.^d (20) breasts,^e briskets. (21) wave-offering, see vii. 30-34.

The people's offering.—Thoughts sugg.—I. By the person who presented them—the priest. Type of N. Test. Mediator. We offer our work of faith through Jesus. The altar sanctifies the gift and the giver. II. By their nature. 1. A goat. Type of lasciviousness. Our best things marred by imperfection. But the goat was to be the best of the kind; 2. Meat-offering. The priest's portion. Those who serve at the altar, shall live by the altar. Recognition of the just claim of those who minister for us in holy things. How much more do we owe our Gt. H. priest? 3. Fat, etc. The best part of our best things to be offered to the Lord. Self-denial in order to this. III. By the offerer, all the people: for all had sinned, and were sinful.

Are there modern priests?—"In the New Testament, of priests externally anointed there are none, nor can be; but if there be any now professing to be such, they are masks and idols, because they have neither example nor prescription of this their vanity in the Gospels or Epistles; they have been introduced by the mere invention of men, as Jeroboam did in Israel. For a priest in the New Testament is not made, but born; not ordained, but raised up; and he is born, not by the nativity of the flesh, but of the Spirit. And all Christians are altogether priests and all priests are Christians."—*Luther.*

God's orders must be carried out.—If the architect of a house had one plan, and the contractor had another, what conflicts would there be! How many

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In all the affairs of this world, so much reputation is in reality, so much power."—*Tillotson.*

atonement made for the people

the offering for the priests first

"It has been said that true religion will make a man a thorough gentleman. You may see simple laboring men as thorough gentlemen as any duke, simply because they have learned to fear God; and, fearing Him, to restrain themselves, which is the very root and essence of all good breeding."—*Rev. C. Kingsley.*

peace-offering and wave-offering

^a Lev. i. 3-10.
^b Ex. xxix. 28; 2 Co. v. 21; Le. ix. 4, vi. 26.
^c He. ix. 9, 10, viii. 6-8.
^d *Strabo* says that the Persians, in their sacrifice, offered nothing else upon the altar.
^e Le. vii. 30.

"The ordinances are the pipes of the sanctuary, which empty the golden oil of grace into the soul; they are *scala paradisi*, the ladder by which we ascend to the kingdom of heaven."—*T. Watson.*

The worst disease of the soul is an

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indisposition to
use the means of
recovery.

the priestly
benediction

a The form is still
maintained in the
Synagogues. See
Stanley's Jewish
Ch. ii. 419.

"Desultoriness
may often be the
mark of a full
head; connection
must proceed
from a thoughtful
one."—*Danby.*

the strange
fire of
Aaron's sons

b He. xii. 25; Re.
xx. 9.

"The fire wh. had
just bef. sanctified
the ministry of
Aaron as well-
pleasing to God,
now brought to
destruction his
two eldest sons
bec. they did not
sanctify Jehovah
in their hearts,
but dared to
perform a self-
willed act of
worship; just as
the same Gospel
is to one a savor
of life unto life,
and to another a
savor of death
unto death."—
Keil.

"Patience is the
ballast of the soul,
that will keep it
from rolling and
tumbling in the
greatest storms.
And he that will
venture out with-
out this to make
him sail even and
steady, will cer-
tainly make ship-
wreck and drown
himself."—*Hop-
kins.*

walls would have to come down, how many doors and windows would need to be altered, before the two could harmonize? Of the building of life God is the Architect, and man the contractor. It is for God to give the orders, and for us to carry them out.—*H. W Beecher.*

22-24. (22) came down, from the altar and from the sacrificing. (23) blessed . . people. Num. vi. 24-26. *a* glory . . people. God showed His gracious acceptance of the institution of the priesthood and of the service. (24) fire . . Lord, flashes of fire which consumed the victims. all . . faces. 2 Chron. vii. 3, gives remarkable instance of a similar characteristic. Oriental appreciation and respect.

God's acceptance of the sacrifice.—Let us consider—I. The testimonies of His acceptance. Of these there were different kinds. 1. Ministerial: Moses and Aaron came forth and "blessed the people;" and in this action they were (1) Eminent types of Christ; (2) Examples to all future ministers. 2. Personal. God—(1) Displayed His glory before the people; (2) Sent fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice. II. The effects produced by them. The people were filled with—1. Exalted joy: they shouted. 2. Profound reverence; they fell upon their faces. Learn—(1) Lay no stress on transient affections: the emotions of the Israelites were but transient. (2) Be thankful for the advantages you enjoy.—*Simeon.*

The order of victims.—The natural order of victims in the sacrificial service of the law was first the sin-offering, then the burnt-offering, and lastly, the peace-offering. This answers to the spiritual process through which the worshipper had to pass. He had transgressed the law, and he needed the atonement signified by the sin-offering; if his offering had been made in truth and sincerity he could then offer himself to the Lord as an accepted person, as a sweet savor in the burnt-offering. Afterwards, in virtue of this acceptance, he could enjoy communion with the Lord and with his brethren in the peace-offering.—*Spk. Com.*

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1-5. (1) censer, his own censer and not the sacred utensil of the sanctuary. strange fire, common fire instead of taking it from the holy fire of the altar. (2) fire . . devoured, *b* perhaps electrical fire, but sent of God to punish their sin of intoxication perhaps as well as irreverence and disobedience. (4) sons . . Uzziel, it was necessary that those who suffered so signally should be buried by men whose allegiance to God was unimpeachable.

The silence of Aaron.—Of the silence of grief there is no example more renowned than that of Aaron. This was truly the silence of grief, and no reproach of insensibility can be attached to him. I. The impressions and the conduct of Aaron cannot be usefully estimated without a knowledge of the event. The slaying of his sons was a necessity, they had profaned God's holy ordinances. II. It is a case of humility to be thus silent in the bosom of an irreparable loss, of a profound affliction. III. In this mute sorrow there is also more than wise humility; we must see there also acquiescence. He cannot hide from himself that his sons merited their fate. IV. It is just to recognize in this conduct lowly and firm resignation. Rebellion speaks, resignation holds its peace.—*Coquerel.*

Nature of resignation.—

Pain's furnace-heat within me quivers,
God's breath upon the flame doth blow;
And all my heart in anguish shivers
And trembles at the fiery glow:
And yet I whisper: *As God will!*
And in His hottest fire stand still.

He comes, and lays my heart, all heated,
On the hard anvil, minded so,
Into His own fair shape to beat it
With His great hammer, blow on blow:
And yet I whisper: *As God will!*
And at His heaviest blows hold still.

He takes my softened heart and beats it;
The sparks fly off at every blow;
He turns it o'er and o'er and heats it,
And lets it cool, and makes it glow:
And yet I whisper: *As God will!*
And in His mighty hand hold still.

Why should I murmur? for the sorrow
Thus only longer-lived would be;
Its end may come, and will to-morrow,
When God has done His work in me.
So I say trusting: *As God will!*
And, trusting to the end, hold still.—*Sturm.*

6—7. (6) Eleazar . . Ithamar, the remaining sons of Aaron. uncover . . heads,^a mourners usually let hair grow long and wore it in dishevelled manner, but in this case no evidence of grief was to be manifested. neither . . clothes,^b another sign of sorrow. lest, etc., they were not to manifest any symptoms of dissent fr. the Divine procedure. bewail, etc., they were to mourn the sin wh. had incurred so fearful a punishment. (7) shall . . door, etc.,^c the event was not to hinder the discharge of their official functions.

Personal griefs and public duties.—I. Why public duties should be discharged. The benefit of the many, etc. II. Why the private grief should not be indulged openly. Aaron might seem to side with his sons, or pronounce an opinion upon their punishment. "Let the dead bury their dead," said Jesus. There are times, then, when private sorrows must be kept in abeyance for the public good; nor can it be right that private griefs of high officials should be long permitted to interfere with the duties of office.

Expression of grief.—"I am stripped of all my honors; I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. They who ought to have succeeded me have gone before me. They who should have been to me a posterity are in the place of ancestors."—*Burke.*

Undisturbed service.—Valerius Maximus tells a story of a young nobleman, that attended upon Alexander, while he was sacrificing; this nobleman held his censor for incense, and there fell a coal of fire upon his flesh, and burned it; and because he would not disturb Alexander in his service, he resolutely did not stir to put off the fire from him, but held still the censor. If heathen made such ado, in sacrificing to their idol gods; what care should we have then of ourselves, when we come to worship the High God? Oh that we could mind the duties of God's worship, as things of greatest consequence, that so we might learn to sanctify the name of our God in the performance of duty more than ever we have done.—*J. Spencer.*

8—11. (8) spake . . Aaron, perhaps to confront Aaron as well as to specially warn him; hitherto the Lord had spoken to Moses. (9) not . . wine,^d this command indicates that intoxication was the cause of Nadab and Abihu's sacrilege in offering strange fire. (10) put difference,^e by keeping sober may discriminate between legal and illegal things. (11) and teach,^f by precept and example.

The duty of the friend of temperance.—I. The general claims of temperance. 1. The end at which it aims: to put an end to the use of ardent spirits as a beverage; 2. The means to attain this end. (1) Example; (2) Persuasion. II. Its particular claims. These arise from the circumstance that we are—1. Members of a social state, and, as such, deeply interested in the condition of our associates; 2. Christians.—*Bennett.*

Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warrior overturns,
Thou couldst repress; nor did the dancing ruby
Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavor or the smell,
Or taste that cheers the heart of gods and men,
Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.
Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure
With touch ethereal of heaven's fiery rod,
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
Thirst, and refresh'd; nor envied them the grape

B c. 1490.

Moses' charge to Aaron

a Ex. xxiv. 16, 17.

b Le. xxi. 10.

c Le. viii. 35, xxi. 12.

"The Christian ought to examine what operation, what influence, his religious performances have upon him. Prayer, hearing, reading, and such-like duties, do naturally tend to enlighten the mind, purify the heart, increase our love, strengthen our faith, and confirm our hope."—*Lucas.*

caution against the use of strong drink

d Ez. xlv. 21; Lu. i. 15; 1 Ti. iii. 2, 3; Ep. v. 18; Je. xxxv. 5-14.
e Ez. xxii. 26.
f Ex. xlv. 23; 2 Co. vi. 14-18.

"Bridl the appetite of gluttony, and thou wilt with less difficulty restrain all other inordinate desires of animal nature."—*Kempis.*

Spencer tells of a king who went about his kingdom feigning sickness, when everybody had a remedy for his complaint; and he was a fool who was not a phy

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sician. So it is everywhere. He is a fool that cannot teach others the way, whether he walks in it himself or not.

the priest's portion to be eaten in the holy place

"In the spirit of that significant Oriental usage wh. drops its sandals at the palace door, the devout worshipper will put off his travel-torn shoes. will try to divest himself of secular anxieties and worldly projects, when the place where he stands is converted into holy ground by the words 'Let us worship God'!"—*Hamilton.*

the rule broken

a He. v. 1, 2

b Jo. iv. 24

"Labor more to find the actings of this holy fear of God in all your ways. Study to have an inward light directing you; and be not merely held by the authority and laws of men, but learn to know the sovereign authority of the Most High God and His law"—*Leighton.*

beasts clean and unclean

"The hearer of God's Word ought to be like those animals that chew

Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.
O madness, to think use of strongest wines.
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
When God with these forbidden made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the limpid brook!—*Milton.*

12--15. (12) **Moses spake**, as Aaron had lost his two older sons through their violation of sacrificial regulations so Moses is most anxious to guard the father and the two younger sons against transgression and penalty. (13) **and . . . eat**, the priest's part for the male members of the family to eat. **thy due**, thy share for service as God's servants. (14) **wave-breast**, the people's peace-offering. (15) **heave-shoulder**, see vii. 29-34.

The priest's portion.—Was—I, Settled as to kind and quantity, by their Divine Master. II. To be partaken of in the holy place. Illustrative of the principle that whether we eat or drink we should do all to the glory of God. III. To be, in the partaking of it, a part of official duty, and not the mere gratification of a carnal appetite.

Take the meat-offering, etc.—Moses pressed upon the priests to turn to their spiritual functions and ministries without delay. For the best solace in grief is activity. Sit not in repining because of God's stroke, turn to Him in holy service. Possibly the dread of God, "lest He be angry," urged all to quick attention to duty. Sad it is that we need often the startling visitation of God to awaken us to vigilance in religion. "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. xxvi. 9).—*Hom. Com.*

Character of worshippers.—The heathen had a notion that the gods would not like the service and sacrifice of any but such as were like themselves; and, therefore, to the sacrifice of Hercules none were to be admitted that were dwarfs; to the sacrifice of Bacchus, a merry god, none that were sad and pensive, as not suiting their genius. An excellent truth may be drawn from their folly: he that would like to please God must be like God.—*Saltar.*

16--20 (16) **and . . . sought**, Moses suspected something and perhaps thought that Aaron and his sons might succumb to grief or in some other way be deterred from doing their duty. **bear . . . congregation, i. e.** to procure the remission of the sins of the people. (19) **things . . . befallen**, Aaron answers accepting blame, but giving reason. (20) **content**,^b Moses recognizes Aaron's reason as valid. The letter of the law was dispensed with under the circumstances.

The priest's excuse for neglect of duty.—I. Aaron's excuse—1. Was founded in religious fear: he feared lest his personal sorrow should interfere with the proper discharge of duty; 2. It had respect to the present only: "To-day." II. Moses' reply. He was content. If his brother was wrong, he was also, at any rate, devout and sincere.

Fear and love.—Fear and love are necessary to constitute that frame of mind wherein the essence of piety or true godliness doth consist. Fear is necessary to keep God in our eyes: it is the office of love to en throne Him in our hearts. Fear cautions or avoids whatever may offend; love yields a prompt and liberal service. Fear regards God as a witness and a judge; love cleaves to Him as a friend and a father. Fear makes us watchful and circumspect; love renders us active and resolute. In short, fear and love go hand in hand, and mutually assist each other. Love keeps fear from being servile and distrustful; and fear keeps love from being forward and secure; and both spring from one root, viz., faith in God as a Being possessed of infinite perfection, and related to us as our Creator and Governor, our Redeemer and Judge.—*Cope.*

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

1--2. (2) **Speak . . . saying**, the tabernacle service, with the various offerings, being established, attention is now turned to the law of the daily life. Aaron has attained a standing with Moses before God, so that they are conjointly instructed. First, the Lord spoke through Moses, then through the worshipping place with its ritual and the priests, now through Moses and Aaron that there may be a new and suggestive meaning in common things. **These . . . eat**,

dietetic regulations which have a hygienic or sanitary value, but are meant to be especially suggestive of moral separation and purity. Making a difference in common things leads up to discrimination in moral things.

Homiletic hints.—The Divine government of the table and appetite. The common meal regarded in relation to law, natural and revealed, a religious feast. The body to be cared for in the selection of food at once sufficient and wholesome. God legislating on behalf of our lower nature sugg. of His greater care for the higher. The food of the mind, and heart, and soul. Here also there is clean and unclean.

Clean and unclean animals.—In regard to quadrupeds, Moses reduces the previous customs of the Israelites, together with the additional ordinances which he found it necessary to make, into a very simple and natural system. According to him, all beasts that have their feet completely cloven, and at the same time chew the cud, are clean. Those which have neither, or indeed want one of these distinguishing marks, are unclean. That in so early an age of the world we should find a systematic division of quadrupeds so excellent, as never yet, after all the improvements in natural history, to have become obsolete, but, on the contrary, to be still considered as useful by the greatest masters of the science, cannot but be looked upon as truly wonderful. In the case of certain quadrupeds, however, a doubt may arise whether they do fully divide the hoof, or ruminate. For example, whether the hare ruminates or not is so undecided that if we put the question to any two sportsmen, we shall rarely receive the same answer. In such cases, to prevent difficulties, a legislator must authoritatively decide. The foot of the camel is actually divided into two toes, and the division even below is complete, so that the animal might be accounted clean; but then it does not extend the whole length of the foot, but only to the forepart; for behind it is not parted, and we find, besides, under it, and connected with it, a ball on which the camel goes. Now, in this dubious state of circumstances, Moses authoritatively declares (Lev. xi. 4) that the camel has not the hoof fully divided.—*Michaelis*.

Laws of health.—When the plague was desolating Europe, the Jews so universally escaped infection that the popular suspicion was excited into fury, and they were accused of causing the fearful mortality among their Gentile neighbors by poisoning the wells and springs. In our own day, in the recent cholera epidemic in Italy, a correspondent of the *Jewish Chronicle* testifies that the Jews enjoyed almost absolute immunity, at least from fatal attack. Professor Hosmer says: "Throughout the entire history of Israel, the wisdom of the ancient lawgiver in these respects has been remarkably shown. In times of pestilence the Jews have suffered far less than others; as regards longevity and general health, they have in every age been noteworthy, and, at the present day, in the life-insurance offices, the life of a Jew is said to be worth much more than that of men of other stock."—*S. H. Kellogg*.

3-8. (4) nevertheless, etc., here follow illustrations of this law. (3) parteth . . . cheweth, cloven-footed, cud-chewing animals are perhaps naturally cleaner in their flesh; they do not eat flesh and are less liable to be infested with parasites; they come nearer to what in the vegetable world is accepted to be the support and nourishment of human beings. camel . . . hoof, though divided above, it is connected below by the pad. (5) coney, "the hyrax (*Hyrax Syriacus*) or wabber of the Arabs. he . . . cud, the action of the jaws is like that of ruminating animals. (6) hare, two varieties, *Lepus Syriacus*, less than ours, yellowish buff; *L. Sinaiticus*, ab. size and color of our wild rabbit. (7) swine,^b still regarded as unclean by many E. nations. (8) flesh . . . eat, etc., "nothing separates one people fr. another more than that one should eat what the other considers unlawful."

Homiletic hints.—What to avoid. Three classes of animals to be rejected as sources of food. I. Those whose multiplication was slow, and whose special uses were needful—as the camel. II. Those that were difficult to obtain; and not to be got but by leaving the camp: wh. would involve danger and contact with the heathens around—as the coney. III. Those that were by habit unclean and whose flesh is not, even now, reckoned most wholesome and nutritious—as the hog.

Separation.—Elected to special privileges and responsibilities, the Hebrew nation was to be clearly distinguished from all other nations on the earth. The laws would keep the people from joining with the heathen in their ordinary meals and sacred feasts; would be a barrier against every intruder; for

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the cud; he ought not only to feed upon it, but to ruminate upon it."—*St Augustine* on Ps xlv.

The natural man acts on natural principles, the spiritual man on those which are spiritual. The believer lives to Christ, not through any pressure from without, but from a vital principle within.

The law convicts of sin.—"You see not the moles in the air, though numerous as the leaves of the forest, till the glowing ray reveals them to the eye. The river seems to flow stainless and clear till the wondrous microscope displays to the view a hundred loathsome reptiles enclosed in every drop that glitters beneath the sun."—*A. L. O. E.*

quadrupeds
clean and
unclean

^a De. xiv. 7; Ps. civ. 18; Pr. xxx. 26.

"The rule given was that no animal popularly held to ruminate should be regarded as fit for food unless it were cloven-footed. And this rule was most effectual for the intended purpose, because all real ruminants are cloven-footed, although all cloven-footed animals are not ruminants."—*Kitto*.

^b Ex. lxxv. 4. lxxvi. 3, 17.

^c Rom. xiv. 14, 17; 1 Cor. vii. Col. ii. 16, 17; Heb. ix. 9, 10.

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Treat animals kindly, and they will give us their love; teach them kindly, and they will give us their service.

"Admire the wisdom of the Creator in providing animals with instincts suitable to their forms and habits of life."—*Topics*.

fishes clean and unclean

a Da. xlv. 3.

The fish here described as edible, are such as, to this day, are regarded as wholesome.

birds clean and unclean

"The Arabs have a superstitious reverence for the lapwing, wh. they believe to possess marvelous medicinal qualities, and they call it 'the doctor.' Its head is an indispensable ingredient in all charms and in the practice of witchcraft."—*Tristram*.

the Canaanites ate some of the animals these laws prohibited, and offered others in sacrifice to heathen gods. Nothing tends to obliterate national differences and to throw social distinctions into oblivion more than sitting together at the same table and partaking of common food. Israel's observance of the directions given in this chapter would set a hedge around the family life, and indicate a peculiar people.—*F. W. Brown*. As Israel was by these dietetic ordinances severed from intimacy and festivity with the heathen, so are Christians called aside, led out from near intercourse with unsanctified society, to "put a difference between the unclean and the clean." The "unclean" is to be marked, repudiated, shunned, as an abomination. It entails an hourly watchfulness, a quick habit of penetrating into the moral differences which underlie society, men, and manners, pastimes and pursuits. Things must be looked at, not from their popularity, their advantages, their attractions but faced with a challenge as to their moral quality and tendency. Will this defile? Is it clean or unclean?—*Hom. Com.*

"There are three friendships which are advantageous, and three which are injurious. Friendship with the upright, friendship with the sincere, and friendship with the man of observation; these are advantageous. Friendship with the men of specious airs, friendship with the insinuatingly soft, and friendship with the glib-tongued; these are injurious".—*Confucius*.

9-12. (9) These . . eat, first, certain of the land animals, then of the water creatures; marked distinction made even now in Egypt and elsewhere. (12) fins . . scales, two very obvious marks as with land creatures; those with fins and scales, especially in warm latitudes, more wholesome. **abomination**,^a strong detestation.

Clean and unclean fish.—It is a well-known fact, that all fish that have both scales and fins are both wholesome and nutritious. This provision, therefore, secured to the people the free use of what was certainly profitable, and kept them back from the uncertainty of choosing among the others what might have injured them. Again, therefore, they were taught that it is better far to lean to the side of abstinence, in doubtful cases, than to run the risk of doing evil. Those "without fins or scales" are partly creatures of the mud and marsh; whereas the others swim through the clear, limpid waters of "seas and rivers." Others of them that are "without scales," are such as the voracious shark. Thus they were naturally fitted to exhibit purity. Many of the forbidden creatures are exceedingly small in size; yet even that atom is to be abhorred, if the Lord has given the command. It is not the importance of the thing, but the majesty of the lawgiver, that is to be the standard of our obedience.—*Bonar*.

13-19. (13) eagle, perhaps vulture, but carrion-eater; for entire list ending with the bat, see Smith's Dictionary of the Bible; all birds of prey especially unwholesome.

Homiletic hints.—These are, for the most part, birds of prey, or unclean feeders. I. Not good for food. II. Needful as scavengers. III. Not prolific. IV. Not gregarious. Live in solitudes and mountain regions.

The ossifrage.—The bird here denoted is the Lämmer-geyer, or Bearded Vulture, the largest and most magnificent of the vulture tribe. (*Gypætus barbatus*); and the Hebrew word, meaning "the breaker," is well expressed by the Latin *ossifrage*, or "bone-breaker." Marrow bones and tortoises are its favorite delicacies; but huge as is its size (four and a half feet in length), its claws and bill are comparatively weak, and it is only by carrying its prize to a great height, and then dropping it repeatedly, that it is able to reach the dainty morsel within. The Lämmer-geyer may be seen floating slowly at a uniform level, close to the cliffs of some deep gorge, like the Jabbok, where its shadow is cast on the wall-like rocks. If the ravine has sharp angles, it does not cut across from point to point, but preserves the same distance from the cliffs. When the other vultures have picked the flesh off any animal, it comes in at the end of the feast, and swallows the bones, or breaks them and swallows the pieces, if it cannot otherwise extract the marrow. The bones it cracks by letting them fall on a rock from a great height. It does not, however, confine itself to these delicacies, but whenever it has an opportunity, will devour lambs, kids, or hares. These it generally obtains by pushing them over cliffs when it has watched its opportunity, and it has been known to attack men while climbing rocks, and dash them against the bottom. But tortoises and serpents are its ordinary food.—*Tristram*.

20-23. (20) fowls .. creep, *lit.* creeping things with wings, insects. (21) legs .. feet, of all winged creeping things, those which have knees above their hindmost legs, or those which have the hindmost legs much larger and stronger than ordinary insects; locusts, grass-hoppers, (22) locusts^a much used in East for food. (23) all .. things, of the insect kind; all others shall be abhorred and rejected. Few insects besides locusts have ever been made an article of human food.

Homiletic hints.—Locusts, as an article of food, are—I. Abundant. II. Nutritious. III. Savory. IV. Used in many parts of the East.

Prohibited reptiles, etc.—Moses is especially careful to interdict the use of various sorts of lizards; which, of course, must have been eaten in some parts of Egypt, or by the people in the adjacent countries; but concerning which I have not met with any account besides. With regard, however, to those winged insects, which have besides, four walking legs, Moses makes an exception under the denomination of locusts. In Palestine, Arabia, and the adjoining countries, locusts are one of the most common articles of food, and the people would be very ill off if they durst not eat them. For when a swarm of them desolates the fields, they prove, in some measure, themselves an antidote to the famine which they occasion. They are not only eaten fresh, immediately on their appearance, but the people collect them, and know a method of preserving them for a long time for food, after they have dried them in an oven. *Locusts.*—“It is well known that locusts were eaten by many of the nations of antiquity, both in Asia and Africa, and even the ancient Greek thought the *cicadas* very agreeable in flavor. In Arabia they are sold in the market, sometimes strung upon cords, sometimes by measure, and they are also dried and kept in bags for winter use .. They are generally cooked over hot coals, or on a plate, or in an oven, or stewed in butter, and eaten either with salt or with spice and vinegar, the head, wings, and feet being thrown away. They are also boiled in salt and water, and eaten with salt or butter. Another process is to dry them thoroughly, and then grind them into meal, and make cakes of them.—*Keil.*”

24—28. (24) toucheth .. unclean, defilement from touching the carcasses of unclean creatures as well as from eating; rigid ceremonial, but important to keep the people in true relation to the sanctuary and the improved social life. (28) wash .. clothes, a still further guard to keep up the tone of respect for things pure and clean.

Homiletic hints.—I. Recapitulation needful—1. To enforce duty; 2. To aid the memory. II. Strict prohibition necessary to prevent evasion of law. If we do not touch, we cannot eat. Eve looked at, longed for, touched the fruit before she ate it. Give an inch, take an ell. Minute regulations useful in the infancy of society.

Touching the unclean.—The law further prohibited the touching the carcass of any unclean beast. This, however, does not mean that a carcass was, in a literal sense, never to be touched (for then it must always have been in the way, and we shall see in the sequel that it was expressly ordered to be buried), but only that the person who touched it was to be deemed unclean till the evening. To strangers who dwelt among the Israelites, unclean beasts were not forbidden: for certainly the legislator never thought of making his prohibition of certain meats a moral law, by which every man, of whatever nation, was to be bound to regulate his conduct. When a commander gives his soldiers a cockade to distinguish them from other troops, he by no means wishes that everybody should indiscriminately wear it, but would rather have it taken from any foreigner who should mount it. The law relative to clean and unclean beasts was never, not even under the Old Testament, a precept of religion which every individual, to whatever nation he belonged, was bound to observe for the sake of his eternal salvation; it was only, if I may so term it, a cockade for the Israelites; but still one that they could not omit wearing without committing a trespass of a Divine commandment; and indeed, it was so firmly pinned upon them by their earliest education, that it must certainly have been difficult for them ever to lay it aside.—*Michaelis.*

29—32. (29) These .. unclean, these the most or especially unclean, vs. 20—23, creeping things with wings; here creeping things without wings or creatures on all fours with very short legs and no wings. (32) when .. dead, pests and unwholesome, living; but especially so when dead.

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creeping things clean and unclean

^a Ma. iii. 4; Mk. i. 6.

On the perfection of insects, *Pliny* says:—“In these beings so minute and as it were, such nonentities, what wisdom is displayed, what power, what unfathomable perfection!”

“Insects furnish more food delicacies than is generally supposed. Many larvæ of insects, esp. beetles, are eaten in dif. parts of the world.”

“The Hottentots, rejoice at the arrival of the locusts, eating them in such quantities as to get visibly fatter than before, and making of their eggs a brown or coffee-colored soup.”

touching the carcasses of the unclean

“The great inconveniences of the law connected with this and other defilements, necessarily obliged the Israelites to pay great attention to cleanliness; and this was probably what the laws on this subject had principally in view.”—*Kitto.*

v. 26. The prohibited animals under this description include not only those wh. have a single hoof, but those which divide the foot into paws, as lions, etc.

reptiles, etc., clean and unclean

“The importance of regulations on

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such points as indicated in v. 32 are not so fully appreciated in this country as in the East, where all kinds of reptiles find their way into and conceal themselves in recesses, crevices, vessels, and boxes."—*Pict. Bib.*

things
rendered
unclean

By connecting the touch of such creatures with ceremonial defilement, wh. required immediately to be removed, an effectual means was taken to prevent the bad effects of venom and all unclean or noxious matter.—*Port. Com.*

rules for
those who
have
contracted
uncleanness

"The intention of human laws is to make amity and friendship among men; so the intention of the Divine law is to make friendship between man and God."

the purpose
of these laws

a Ex. xix. 5, 6; Le xix. 2; xx. 7-26; 1 Th. iv. 7; 1. Pet. i. 14-16; Ez. iv. 14.

To build your hope of heaven on your own righteousness, in whole or in part, would be as ridiculous as to attempt to raise an oak in a flower-pot. To walk in the ways of your own heart is to walk under the greatest

Homiletic hints.—The law not only decides what to eat, but how to prepare it for food. Cleanliness to be observed in the preparation of food. This a condition of health and appetite. Eating with a relish a condition of eating with profit. Good food often spoiled by absence of cleanly preparations.

The tortoise.—The Heb. *tsab*, rendered tortoise, signifies it is generally agreed, a kind of lizard, called in the Arabic *dab* or *dhab*. It is 18 in. long, 4 in. across the back, not venomous, burrows in the earth; it is common in Palestine. Gesenius derives its name from a Heb. word = to move slowly. It is not unlikely that our translators, at a time when Bible natural history was not minutely understood, were directed by the root of the word to the tortoise as a proverbially slow-moving creature.

33—38. (33) whereinto . . falleth, into which any part of a defiling carcass fell. (34) all . . eaten, both food and drink were to be regarded as contaminated easily. (36) fountain . . clean, a large quantity of water was not to be regarded as contaminated. (37—38) seed . . water, the dry seed would resist, the wet imbibe pollution.

The touch of unclean creatures.—This refers to any unclean or dead animal falling into or touching an earthen vessel. Most of the cooking utensils of the Hindoos are of earthenware. Should an unclean, or dead animal, or insect, touch or fall into them, they must be broken. Nay, should a person of low caste get a look at the cooking vessels of a Brahmin, or one of the Saiva sect, they will immediately be broken, and no small portion of abuse be poured upon the offending individual. Should an unfortunate dog, in his prowlings, find his way into the kitchen, and begin to lick the vessels, woe be to him, for he will not only have hard words, but hard blows; and then follows the breaking of the vessels. On this account the Brahmins and others conceal their earthenware when not in use.—*Roberts.*

39—43. (39) of . . eat, any clean beast. die, not being properly slaughtered for food. (40) eateth, ignorantly. wash . . even, ignorance shall not exonerate. (41, 42) every . . thing, with above exceptions. (43) abominable, the abomination transferred to the eater.

Homiletic hints.—Unslaughtered meat to be avoided. 1. May have died of some disease; or, 2. Of poison; 3. The principle to be extended: diseased animals not to be slaughtered for food. 4. Modern legislation concerning food attests the wisdom of the old law.

Unclean.—Taste the unclean and we thereby become defiled. God has marked specifically and minutely the things which are to be accounted "an abomination." So in the human sphere, there are interdicted pleasures, companionships, alliances. The ban of heaven is upon much which the world sanctions. We cannot "have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" without being made "unclean."—*Hom. Com.* Our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost; they ought, therefore, to be kept pure. The Church is the Body of Christ: from it, therefore, everything should be excluded that is unclean. Into the *celestial city* "there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination;" all there shall be for ever, "Holiness unto the Lord."—*F. W. Brown.*

44—47. (44) ye . . holy. "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (conduct) (1 Pet. i. 15). Carefulness in choice of relation to animals, but especially in eating, having to do with those only which in their character build up rather than destroy life, tends to carefulness in human associations and assimilations.

Homiletic hints.—Higher purpose of these sumptuary laws. The separation of the animals into clean and unclean would tend to separate the people from other nations. The Jews would not join others in convivial feasts, social banquets. Joseph's brethren ate by themselves. Daniel rejected the food from the king's table, etc.

The Divine Law.—Rites and ceremonies had already been instituted that would exclude other nations from mingling with the Hebrew in the worship of the tabernacle; now a guard is put around the social as well as sacred table, Tent, as well as tabernacle, to be consecrated to the Lord. Here we see Jehovah's sovereignty exercised, His jealousy for the exclusive worship of His people. Whether the people ate or drank, they were to do all to the glory of God. They were to come out from the ungodly and be separate, and touch

not the unclean thing, and thus become the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. Nothing less than cheerful obedience to divine regulations for private and public life would satisfy the claims Jehovah made upon the loyalty and worship of His people. — *Hom. Com.*

Clean and unclean. — In the New Testament a new interpretation is given to these Levitical laws. The root and seat of evil are within; yet, care needs to be exercised against temptation and contamination. Touching the unclean thing may lead to moral defilement, to spiritual degeneracy. — *F. W. Brown.*

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

1-5. (1) **Moses**, the law as to clean and unclean was given to both Moses and Aaron because the matter of sacrifices as well as that of daily and common life was specially involved. This may be called the law for a class and so was given to Moses alone. (2) **born . . . man**, given birth to a male **seven days**, ample time for removing the physical uncleanness or overcoming the issue of blood. (5) **maid child**, female child. **two weeks**; ancients thought the physical derangement of the system greater at birth of a girl; adaptation of command to low conception of woman's relation in social economy, or possibly to give the mother more rest.

Sinful by birth. — "For whenever, in any case, we find all creatures of the same class doing, under all circumstances, any one thing, we conclude that the reason for this can only lie in the nature of such creatures, antecedent to any influence of a tendency to imitation. If, for instance, the ox everywhere and always eats the green thing of the earth, and not flesh, the reason, we say, is found simply in the nature of the ox as he comes into being. So when we see all men, everywhere, under all circumstances, as soon as ever they come to the time of free moral choice, always choosing and committing sin, what can we conclude — regarding this, not as a theological, but merely as a scientific question — but that man, as he comes into the world, must have a sinful nature? And this being so, then why must not the law of heredity apply, according to which, by a law which knows of no exceptions, like ever produces its like?" — *Exp. Bib.*

6-8. (6) **burnt-offering**, denoted total dedication and Divine acceptance, it was *preceded* by sin-offering^a. **young pigeon**, see on i. 14. (7) **shall . . . blood**, *i.e.* shall be counted clean. (8) **able . . . lamb**, a merciful regard for the poor. This was the offering of the parents of our Lord^b who became poor for our sakes.

Homiletic hints (v. 8). — Relation of the poor to religious offerings. I. Poverty not to exempt any fr the duty of personal sacrifices. II. Poverty taken into account in fixing the amount of the offering. III. Poverty's offering as acceptable to God as that of the rich: *ill.* the widow's two mites

Monica, Augustine's mother. Never did mother struggle more earnestly than she. From her son's nineteenth to his twenty-eighth year, while he was revelling in all sin's foulness, she persisted in resolute hope and fervent prayer. In his twenty-ninth year she was still "instant in prayer," when he left her and journeyed to Rome. From Rome he went to Milan, and thither the praying mother followed him. And there the answer to her prayer and reward of her Christian influence came. In Ambrose's preaching contrition came to Augustine, and that event made Monica's happiness complete.

"And say to mothers, What a holy charge
Is theirs; with what a kingly power their love
Might rule the fountains of the new-born mind;
Warn them to wake at early dawn, and sow
Good seed before the world has sown its tares." — *Mrs. Sigourney.*

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bondage. We can only become free by becoming the servants of Christ.

purification of women

"There is no mother like the mother that bore us." — *Spanish Proverb.*

"A mother is a mother still, The holiest thing alive."

— Coleridge

Cecil, who had adopted infidel sentiment in his youth, and prided himself upon his strong arguments against religion, said, long afterwards: "There was one argument I could never get over, the influence and life of a holy mother."

offerings for purification

a Ez. xxix. 14, 18; Le. viii. 14, 18, ix. 7, 8, 12, 15, 16.

b Lu. ii. 22-24, cf. 2 Co. viii. 9.

"Do you not know what God puts us on our backs for?" said Dr. Payson, to a friend who came to see him. "No," was the answer. "In order that we may look upward."

"The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom." — *Beecher.*

"Children are what their mothers are."

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CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

leprosy
of the person

a Ps. xxxviii. 5-7; Is. i. 5, 6; De. xxviii. 27; Is. iii. 17; De. xxiv. 8; Lu. xvii. 14.

Leprosy, Gk. *lepra*, fr *lepis* a scale, bec in this disease the body was often covered with thin scales, so as to give it the appearance of snow. Ex. iv. 6; Nu. xii. 10; 2 K. v. 27. See also note on leprosy in *Spk. Com.* ii. 559.

b "The hairs upon the part bec. yellow and stunted, and aft. a time fall off, leaving the hair bulbs empty and enlarged, esp. on the face, so as to present one of the most diagnostic signs of the malady." — *Dr. Davison*.

He who has good health is a rich man, and rarely knows it.

c Is. i. 16-18.

"In the 'dusky' variety, natural hair, wh. is usually black in Palestine and Egypt, is not changed and the smooth, laminated circular scales or patches are not depressed below the general surface of the skin, and do not remain stationary at their first size, but continually enlarge their limits and are either scattered or confluent." — *Kitto*.

1-4. (1) **Aaron**, laws of leprosy concerned the priests, they had to examine symptoms. **leprosy**; "three general classes considered, viz. of man (chap. xiii. 2-46), of garments (chap. xiii. 47-59), and of houses (chap. xiv. 33-57). In the leprosy of man there are six different cases. (3) **look**," carefully examine. **hair** . . **white**, a characteristic symptom, **plague** . . **flesh**, *lit* the stroke app. to be deeper than the scarfskin. (4) **if**, *etc.*, case of suspected, but not distinctly or fully developed, leprosy. **then** . . **days**, omit "*him that hath*," and read "shall shut up the plague."

Beginnings of evil.—I. The corrupt tendencies of the heart should lead us to examine the moral character of all strange thoughts, words, deeds. II. If we are ourselves in doubt, the advice of others should be sought. The Lord should be inquired of: the spirit of the Bible considered in relation to that wh. excites suspicion. III. Men should not wait till the faint indication of possible evil develops into distinct moral disease; and, presently, through neglect becomes chronic.

Avoidance of false suspicion.—When you read in the fourth verse of shutting up the parties for seven days, and then to look on it again, you may note with yourself, how greatly God hateth hasty, rash, and uncharitable judgment. A thing which many men and women, otherwise honest and good, are carried away withal, to their own great hurt, not only in soul, but in worldly reputation also, and to the bitter and biting discomfort of those whom they ought to love and judge well of. Nay, you may reason further with yourself thus: That if in a matter thus subject to the eye, as these sores were, yet God would have no haste, but a stay for seven days, and longer as occasion served, before any judgment should be given that the party was unclean. Oh, how much more doth He abhor haste and love leisure, in pronouncing of the hearts and thoughts of our friends and neighbors which are not seen, nor subject to an easy censure?—*Bp. Babington*.

Leprosy.—The name leprosy has been made to cover a number of diseases similar but not identical in character. There are many spurious forms of leprosy, and many diseases akin to leprosy which do not now come under discussion. The disease here dealt with is elephantiasis, especially in its anæsthetic form, which is otherwise called white leprosy. The first symptom of the malady is a painless spot, which covers an indolent ulcer. This ulcer may continue unprogressive for months or for years, during which the person affected is able to do his ordinary business; but at the end of these periods, whether longer or shorter, it produces a more repulsive and foul disfigurement of the human face and frame than any known disease, the features of the face changing their character, and part of the body occasionally mortifying and dropping off. Death at last comes suddenly, when a vital part of the body has been affected.—*Pul. Com.*

5-8. (5) **stay** stand. **spread not**, *i. e.* does not advance. (6) **dark**, dim, fading away, not glossy, dull. **scab**, mark of some slight surface cutaneous disease. **clean**, as to leprosy. (7) **scab** . . **skin**, the spread of evil may well strengthen suspicion. (8) **unclean**, reversing the former decision, and proving that even the priest might be deceived by appearances. **leprosy**, clearly pronounced; and to be treated as such.

Leprosy a type of sin.—I. Its nature: loathsome, hereditary, contagious, injurious. II. Its progress: fr. small beginnings till the whole man is corrupted. III. Its power will manifest itself: destroys influence, peace, *etc.* IV. Only the great H.-priest can heal the sinner. He is able and willing. "Wilt thou be made whole?"

Leprosy and sin.—Because leprosy was hideous and foul, it made the man affected by it unclean, and before he could be restored to communion with God and His people, he must be certified by God's priest to be delivered from the disease. "The Levitical law concerning leprosy reveals to us the true nature of sin. And it reveals to us the inestimable benefit which we have received from the incarnation of the Son of God; and fills us with joy, thankfulness, and love to Him for His infinite goodness to us."—*Wordsworth*. Leprosy, the most loathsome of all common diseases, is the type and symbol of sin, and the ceremonial uncleanness attaching to it is a parable of the moral foulness of sin.—*Pul. Com.*

9-13. (9) when . . in, disease reappearing calls for different treatment. (10) if . . white, *lit.* if there be a white rising. quick . . rising, denoting advance of the disease: perh. "proud flesh." (11) old . . flesh, confirmed, indisputable leprosy. and . . up, no need of probationary test: the disease inveterate: see v. 46. (12) and if, etc., the leprosy be clear to the eye -- to every beholder. (13) consider, having carefully examined. clean, "nature has made a great effort, a vigorous struggle, and has expelled the malady. The diseased matter turned into a scurf, which peeled off, and died away."

The old leprosy.—An image.—I. Of indwelling sin manifesting itself upon occasions. II. Of the easily besetting sin revealing itself. III. Of the presence of an old habit that has been "scotched" but "not killed."

Leprosy in South Africa.—In the South of Africa there is a large leprosy-house for lepers. It is an immense space, enclosed by a very high wall, and containing fields, which the lepers cultivate. Dr. Halbeck, a missionary of the Church of England, from the top of a neighboring hill, saw them at work. He noticed two particularly, sowing peas in the field. The one had no hands, the other had no feet—these members being wasted away by disease. The one who wanted the hands was carrying the other, who wanted the feet, upon his back, and he again carried in his hands the bag of seed, and dropped a pea every now and then, which the other pressed into the ground with his feet; and so they managed the work of one man between the two. Two Moravian missionaries, impelled by an ardent love for souls, have chosen the leprosy-house as their field of labor. They entered it, never to come out again; and it is said as soon as these die, other Moravians are quite ready to fill their place. "Ah! my dear friends," adds the late Rev. Robert M. MacCheyne, "may we not blush and be ashamed before God that, we redeemed with the same blood and taught by the same Spirit, should be so unlike these men in vehemence, heart-consuming love to Jesus and the souls of men?"

14-17. (14) raw flesh, sound flesh; whenever patches of sound flesh were intermingled with white scurf, it showed that the disease had not exhausted itself. (16) turn again, if the patches of sound flesh take on the white color so that the whole body is white and no spots appear. 17 clean, the priest being the judge shall make the declaration.

The comparative harmlessness of manifest leprosy.—I. The man who was distinctly a leper would be avoided; so also the man who is desperately wicked. II. The man whose leprosy is partial and concealed might mingle with unsuspecting people and spread contagion: so those who cloke their evil hearts with an appearance of virtue, may be corruptors of others who do not know of the evil.

Leprosy in the Holy Land.—"Sauntering down the Jaffa road, on my approach to the Holy City, in a kind of dreamy maze, with, as I remember, scarcely one distinct idea in my head, I was startled out of my reverie by the sudden apparition of a crowd of beggars, 'sans eyes, sans nose, sans hair, sans everything.' They held up towards me their handless arms, unearthly sounds gurgled through throats without palates—in a word, I was horrified. . . . The lepers, when not obliged to live outside the city, have a separate abode assigned to them, and they are shunned as unclean and dangerous. No healthy person will touch them, eat with them, or use any of their clothes or utensils, and with good reason. The leper was required by Moses to stand apart, and give warning by crying, 'Unclean! unclean!' Thus the ten men that met our Saviour stood afar off, and lifted up their voice of entreaty."—*Thomson.*

18-23. skin . . boil, if there is in the skin of the flesh a boil; the third case of leprosy developing itself from a healed boil or from an inflammation which has apparently been healed.

Leprosy.—The home of leprosy has in all ages been Syria and Egypt and the countries adjacent to them, but Europe has not escaped the scourge. In the Middle Ages, no European country was free from it; London had at one time six leper houses; cases were found not unfrequently in Scotland till the middle of the last century; and there was a death certified by medical science to have resulted from leprosy in the city of Norwich in the year 1880.—*Pul. Com.* *Leprous outcasts in England.*—A gentleman visiting the venerable church of St. Mary's in the village of Minster, near Ramsgate, said to the guide, "What means this hole through the wall?" "That," replied the guide,

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v. 13. "Why clean?" The true answer perh. is that it was owing to a diff. species or a diff. stage of the disease; the partial being infectious, the total not.—*Bush.* But *Patrick* supposes that "that wh. is here, called 'leprosy,' was not truly such, but another disease having so strong a resemblance to the leprosy as to prompt the writer to give it the same denomination."

Of the two kinds, the "bright white" *bahereth* is the most virulent; the dark is much less severe, but still far more so than the common lep., or *bôhak*. "The characteristics of this disease are precisely as descr. by Moses, being a glossy white and spreading scale upon an elevated base, encircled with a red border. The natural black hair on the patches participates in the whiteness and the patches perpetually widen their outline."—*Kitto.*

"In these days half our diseases come from the neglect of the body in the overwork of the brain. In this railway age, the wear and tear of labor and intellect go on without pause or self pity. We live longer than our forefathers: but we suffer more from a

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thousand artificial anxieties and cares. They fatigued only the muscles, we exhaust the finer strength of the nerves."—*Bulwer Lytton.*

"Men that look no further than their outsides, think health an appurtenance unto life and quarrel with their constitutions for being sick; but I, that have examined the parts of man, and know upon what tender filaments that fabric hangs, do wonder that we are not always so; and considering the thousand doors that lead to death, do thank my God that we can die but once."—*Sir Thos. Brown.*

"If mankind in the present day were strictly to adhere to those practices which promote the health and well-being of their minds and bodies, and as strictly to abstain from those which tend to injure them, there would be little or no cause to complain that our race is degenerating, and that the men of modern days scarcely possess the sixth part of the strength of their forefathers."—*Hodgkin.*

"Who would not be covetous, and with reason, if health could be purchased with gold? Who not ambitious if it were at the command of power, or restored by honor? But alas! a white staff will not help gouty feet to walk better than a common cane, nor a blue riband blind up a wound so well as a fillet; the glitter of gold or of diamonds will but

"recalls a fact which is full of interest and pathos. In the twelfth century there were a number of lepers in the neighborhood. You will understand, of course, that they were obliged to live by themselves, and were supported by charity. Over at the old Abbey you may still see the place where bread and other food was passed out to them. Being unclean and afflicted with a horrible and incurable disease which was contagious, they were not allowed in the church, or to come in contact with healthy persons, so they had no way of taking any direct part in the worship of God. Both as to soul and body they were driven out from all intercourse with the rest of mankind. Yet many of them longed for some sound or sight that might comfort them in their sad, loathsome, and hopeless condition. Taking pity on the poor creatures, the monks made this hole in the wall, so that, one at a time, they could see the priests ministering at the altar, hear the music, and perhaps a few words of the Mass. Then they would go back to their huts and caves, trusting that in heaven, if not on earth, they might be free from the dreadful curse under which they suffered. That is why this hole is called the Leper's Squint. Poor outcasts! my heart aches to think of them, though they are all dead and gone these seven hundred years."—*Bib. III.*

24—28. (24) *skin . . burning*, if there is in the skin of the flesh a burning, i.e. an inflammation. (25) *hair . . white*, hair before black now turned white. (26) *seven days*, in a former case two remands of seven days, in this but one, because the inflammation in part accounts for condition.

Homiletic hints (v. 28).—Appearance of evil. Many things in speech and conduct may have the appearance of sin. Not to pronounce upon their moral character without examination. To consider constitutional defects and infirmities.

Leprosy in England.—It was introduced into England in the reign of Henry I., and was supposed to have been brought out of Egypt, or perhaps the East, by means of the Crusaders. To add to the horror it was contagious, which enhanced the charity of a provision for such miserables, who were not only naturally shunned, but even chased by royal edict from the society of their fellow-creatures.—Lepers, or lazars, were sick persons removed out of monasteries to cells or hospitals, always built out of towns and cities. Their usual maintenance was from liberty allowed them to go upon every market day to the market, where with a dish, called a *clap* dish, they would beg corn. Their sickness and loathsome appearance giving great disgust, many withheld their charity, upon which account they were afterwards restrained from begging at large, but permitted to send the p.ector of the hospital, who came with his box one day in every month to the churches and other religious houses, at time of service; and there received the voluntary charity of the congregations.

29—34. (29) *plague*, fourth case, possible leprosy of the head or chin. (30) *sight deeper*, in its appearance deeper; usual symptom, depression of the affected spot. (33) *shaven*, to make examination easy. (34) *clean*, after the quarantine test.

Homiletic hints—Excitements to evil to be repressed (on v. 29)—the plague in the head. Those who thus suffer are—I. Often crotchety. II. Influenced by erroneous opinions. III. Men of one idea. IV. Self-willed.

Extent of leprosy in the past.—Lepers were so numerous in the twelfth century, that by a decree of the Lateran Council, under Pope Alexander III., A. D. 1179, they were empowered to erect churches for themselves, and to have their own ministers to officiate in them. This shows at once how infectious and offensive their distemper was. And so late as the reign of Edward VI. multitudes of lepers seem to have been in England; for in I. Edwd. 6, c. 3, in which directions are given for carrying the poor to the places where they were born, etc., we read the following clause:—"Provided always, that all leproous and poor bed-rid creatures may, at their liberty, remain and continue in such houses appointed for lepers, or bed-rid people, as they now be in."

35—37. (35) *spread . . skin*, after a fortnight, the lapse of two quarantines. (36) *not . . seek*, the scale spreading being sufficient sign. (37) *black . . therein*, healthy color of the hair has returned.

Leprosy and sin hereditary.—Never shall I forget a visit which I paid to the leper hospital outside the East Gate of Damascus, which tradition says occupies the site of Naaman's house. A woman was crossing the courtyard, whose

loathsome features seemed all but eaten away by disease. In her hands—the fingers of which were almost consumed by leprosy—she held a sweet looking infant, as fair and pretty a child as one could desire to see. The contrast was most painful. Life and health and innocence seemed to sleep in the arms of sin, disease, and death. I said to the missionary who accompanied me, “Surely the woman is not the mother of the child?” He said, “Yes, she is; the child does not show the leprosy now, but it is in the blood, and before long it will probably appear; and if the infant live long enough she will be as bad as the mother.” Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?—*J. W. Bardsley.*

38—41. (38) **skin . . spots**, fifth case, harmless leprosy, yet suspicious and needing examination. (39) **freckled . . spot**, Heb. *bōhak*,^a or white scurf still denotes superficial skin disease among the Arabs. (40) **hair . . head**, fr. old age. **bald, naturally.** (41) **part . . face**, partial baldness.

The freckled spot.—The Hebrew word here translated “freckled spot,” is *bōhak*, and the Arabs still use the same word to denote a kind of leprosy, of which Niebuhr says: “*Bōhak* is neither contagious nor dangerous.” He adds, subsequently, from Forskal’s papers, the following particulars: “The spots of this eruption are of unequal size; they do not shine, are imperceptibly higher than the skin, and do not change the color of the hair. They appear on the neck and face and spread gradually. This disorder is neither contagious nor hereditary, and does not cause any bodily inconvenience.” Hence it appears why a person affected with the *bōhak* is declared in the above law not to be unclean.—*Rosenmüller.* *Leprosy of sin.*—We are told that in the case of those who inherit the taint, it frequently remains quite dormant in early life, only gradually appearing in later years. How perfectly the type, in this respect, then, symbolizes sin! No comfort can be rightfully had from any complacent comparison of our own characters with those of many, perhaps professing more, who are much worse than we. No one who knew that from his parents he had inherited the leprosy taint, or in whom the leprosy as yet appeared as only an insignificant bright spot, would comfort himself greatly by the observation that other lepers were much worse; and that he was, as yet, fair and goodly to look upon. Though the leprosy were in him but just begun, that would be enough to fill him with dismay and consternation. So should it be with regard to sin.—*S. H. Kellogg.*

42—46. (42) **bald . . head**, bald part on back of head; **sore**, reddish white eruption either on bald back or forward part of head. (44) **leprous**, having, at least, a tendency that way. (45) **leper**, any one of the foregoing varieties. **put . . lip**,^b bandage on lower part of face, leaving mouth free. **unclean**,^c to prevent others fr. coming in contact with him. (46) **alone**, apart, separated fr. the people. **without . . be**,^d to save it from contamination.

The cleansing of the leper.—The particulars here recorded explain, in reference to sin—I. Its nature. It is—1. Abominable before God; 2. Incurable by man. II. Its consequences. It unfits for communion with—1. God’s saints on earth; 2. Saints and angels in heaven. Learn:—(1) Self-distrust; (2) Self-humiliation; (3) Self-purification.—*Clayton.*

Covering the lip.—The prophet Ezekiel, in reference to the death of his wife, was ordered not to “cry,” neither to cover the lips (the margin has “upper lip.”) This passage refers to the sorrow of Ezekiel. A person in deep distress puts his hand over his mouth, and hangs down his head, as if looking on the ground. When a man suddenly claps his hand on his mouth, it denotes great sorrow or surprise. To put the fingers in a line with the nose, conveys the idea of silence and submission. “Why is your hand on your mouth?” “Not for joy.” “But why?” “My son, my son, my wicked son! He has gone with the evil ones to the distant country.”—“Ah, friend, why is your hand there?” “Alas, the tigers got among my cattle last night, and great is the slaughter.”—“The king is angry with Raman—his hand is now on his mouth.”—“I may well put my hand on my mouth, I have been taken by the neck, and driven from the presence of my lord. My requests have all been denied.” (Job xxi. 5).—*Roberts.*

47—52. (47) **garment**,^e clothing generally. **woolen . . linen**, only kind of garments worn by the Israelites. (48) **whether**, minuteness of detail sugg. a disposition to evade the spirit of law, and quibble ab. the scope of a.

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hurt sore eyes, instead of curing them; and an aching head will be no more eased by wearing a crown instead of a common night-cap.”—*Sir W. Temple.*

^a “If v. 12 refs. to *Lepra vulgaris*, as seems most prob., the Heb. *bōhak* may denote some kind of *Eczema*, a skin disease of a somewhat similar external character.”—*Spk Com.*

^b Ez. xxiv. 17, 23; Mi. xlii. 7.

^c 2 K. vii. 3; Lam. iv. 15.

^d Nu. v. 2, xii. 14; 2 K. xv. 5; Lu. xvii. 12.

^e “People who are always taking care of their health are like misers, who are hoarding a treasure which they have never spirit enough to enjoy.”—*Sterne.*

“Health! thou chiefest good, Bestowed by heaven, but seldom understood.”—*Lucan.*

of garments

^e Jude 23; Re. iii. 4.

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"When a man is laboring under the pain of any distemper it is then that he recollects there is a God, and that he himself is but a man. No mortal is then the object of his envy, his admiration, or his contempt; and, having no malice to gratify, the tales of slander excite not his attention."—*Pliny*.

"Dress has a moral effect upon the conduct of mankind. Let any gentleman find himself with dirty boots, old surtout, soiled neckcloth, and a general negligence of dress, he will in all probability, find a corresponding disposition by negligence of address."—*Sir Jonah Barrington*.

It is evident that medical science had at this time been reduced to a system, from the nice discrimination of infectious disorders, and the symptoms by which they were characterized. — *Killo*.

a "Acc. to the Jews, the first washing was to put away the plague; the second was to cleanse it."—*Clarke*.

"Some (as *Calmeth*) think that the clothes-leprosy, as well as that in man, was caused by the presence of minute insects or worms, which gnawed the texture, and left the stains."

commandment. (49) **greenish**, perh. some kind of mildew or fungus is indicated. (50) **and, etc.**, the same course pursued with clothes as with persons. (51) **fretting**, rotting, corroding. (52) **it . . fire**, the distemper could not be eradicated in any other way.

Impure surroundings.—The legal provision made for the leprosy garments suggests to us—I. The impure surroundings by which we may be surrounded. 1. Depraved tastes and cravings in our body. 2. Unholy companionships. 3. Corrupt political associations. 4. Impure, demoralizing literature. 5. Injurious occupation. 6. A deadenin church.—*Clarkson*.

The leprosy of garments.—I do not suppose that this leprosy of garments and skins was just the same disease of that name which attacked the human system. It may have been, and one may have sometimes taken it from the other; but we are not required to take this view. It is enough to understand it to be some affection of woven fabrics bearing a general resemblance to a leprosy affection of the living body. As the life and comeliness of the leper are fretted away by his disease, so clothes and skins are affected by dampness, mould, or the settling in them of animalculæ, fretting away their strength and substance. Michaelis, who very thoroughly investigated this whole subject, speaks of dead wool, that is, the wool of sheep which have died by disease, as particularly liable to damage of this sort. His explanation is, that it loses its points and breeds impurity: and that when made into cloth and warmed by the natural heat of the wearer, it soon becomes bare and falls in holes, as if eaten by some invisible vermin. The unsoundness and unhealthiness of fabrics made of such materials were thought so serious by this learned investigator, that he strongly urges the interference of legal enactments to prohibit the use of such wool in the manufacture of cloths.—*Seiss*. *Leprosy in clothes.*—To account for the use of the name leprosy in this connection, an ingenious theory has been propounded that the same cause produced a like effect in the human frame, in clothes and in houses. It is not necessary to have recourse to tempting but unproved hypothesis, inasmuch as the similarity of appearance presented by the two affections is enough to account for their going by the same name.—*Pul. Com.* *Leprosy* in linen and woolen fabrics or clothes consisted in all probability in nothing but so-called mildew, which commonly arises from damp and want of air, and consists, in the case of linen, of round, partially colored spots, which spread and gradually eat up the fabric, until it falls to pieces like mould. In leather, the mildew consists more strictly of 'holes eaten in,' and is of a greenish, reddish, or whitish color, according to the species of the delicate cryptogami by which it has been formed.—*Keil*.

53-59. (53) **plague . . spread**, if at end of first week, has not spread, then garment must be washed. (54) **seven . . more**, to see whether color has changed and distemper has disappeared. (55) **fret inward**, distemper has eaten into the fabric. (56) **dark**,^a changed from green or red into a darkish color. (57) **if . . still**, spreading leprosy, the garment must be entirely destroyed.

The remedy for clothes-leprosy.—The best remedy was, in the language of Moses, to destroy the leprosy article: for that would soon make every one careful to manufacture nothing either for himself, or for sale, that might be pronounced leprosy; and people would soon observe where the fault lay, when they were losers, and found no sale for their goods, in consequence of former purchasers having suffered by them. The prohibition of dead wool, although the legislator be ever so fully satisfied that it is entirely to blame for the effects in question, is not sufficient of itself; for it will still be privately manufactured and then denied, particularly where there is no board of survey. But where the stuff, in which leprosy symptoms make their appearance, is destroyed in spite of the owner, every one will become attentive to guard against such a loss. Moses therefore enjoined, first, that the place on which there were marks of leprosy that no washing could obliterate, should be torn out; and then, if the leprosy still recurred a second time, that the whole piece should be burnt.—*Michaelis*.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1-7. (1) **spake** . . Moses, Moses again presented as teacher of priesthood as well as the people. (2) **law** . . **cleansing**.^a The manner in which an Israelite cured of his leprosy shall be purified and restored to his communion in the sanctuary. (3) **go** . . **camp**, to meet and examine the leper and see if he was cured. (4) **two birds**, one to kill, the other to let fly away. **cedar**,^b cedar and hyssop.^c As some think were chosen to symbolize haughtiness and humility. **scarlet**, to represent healthy blood. **running**, living, drawn fresh from the fountain. (7) **sprinkle**, the back of the hand and forehead of the leper. **seven**, Naaman in Jordan^d washed seven times.

The two birds. — I. The first bird is a type of Christ. 1. As captured from the air, it suggests the Lord Jesus, who came down from the realms of light and glory; 2. As a clean bird, it suggests the pure and holy Jesus; 3. As a defenceless bird, it is a type of Him who said, "I have trod the winepress alone, and there was none to help;" 4. As a bird slain, it suggests the Saviour, who died "for man and creature sin." II. The second bird is a type of our own soul. 1. As it was plunged in the blood of the first bird, so must we be washed in the blood of Christ, or go polluted forever; 2. In that it was free to go after it had been dipped in the blood, so it is a type of our souls after we have washed in the Lamb's blood; we can go where we will, and do what we will; for our will has been changed, and we shall not will that which is wrong; 3. As the bird flew away, so must we fly upwards to heaven.—*Talmage*.

The two birds.—Interpreters have not been able to determine in what parts of Scripture the Hebrew term *tsippor* ought to be translated sparrow. Some suppose that Moses intends this bird in the law concerning the purification of the leprosy; "Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two birds alive." One of these birds was to be killed over running water; and the living bird, after certain ceremonies described in the law, was ordered to be let loose into the open field. The same ceremonies were commanded to be observed in cleansing the leprous house. Jerome and many succeeding interpreters render the word used in the law, sparrows. But it is evident from an attentive perusal of the fourth verse that it signifies birds in general. "Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two birds alive and clean." Now if the sparrow was a clean bird, there could be no use in commanding a clean one to be taken, since every one of the species was ceremonially clean; but if it was unclean by law, then it could not be called clean. The term here must therefore signify birds in general, of which some were ceremonially clean, and some unclean; which rendered the specification in the command proper and necessary.—*Paxton*.

8-11. (8) **he** . . **shall**, "there must be a co-operation of man's will and work with Divine grace" (9) **seventh** . . **off**, a second time. (10) **eighth**, the cleansing being complete, his consecration follows. **three** . . **deals**, *i. e.* ab. 10½ pints. **log**, ab. ½ pt. (11) **door** . . **congregation**, *lit.* "entrance of the tent of meeting."

Homiletic hints. — Putting off the old man and putting on the new. Marked —I. By putting away sources of uncleanness—shaving, washing, bathing. II. By reconsecration to God, and seeking, anew, Divine aid. III. The great change acknowledged by the priest and people in the presentation at the door of the tabernacle.

12-16. (12) **lamb** . . **offering**, difference between ritual of leper's trespass offering and that described in chap. v. 6. **wave**, both offering and oil were waved by the priest. (13) **slay** . . **lamb**, on other occasions the sacrificer slaughtered the lamb on north side of altar; now the priest. (14) **put** . . **tip**, as in case of priestly consecration (Ex. xxix. 11.) (16) **sprinkle** . . **seven**, sacred number seven ever recurring to mark completeness.

The cleansing of the leper. — These ceremonies set forth in a striking manner —I. The ends for which the blood and spirit of Christ are to be applied to our souls. 1. The blood of Christ must be applied to purge away our guilt; 2. His spirit must be applied to renovate our nature. To this end we must—(1) Seek His influence; (2) Submit to His operations. II. The manner of this application, in order to render it effectual. It must be—1. Particular; 2. United; 3. Orderly; 4. Believing. Address:—Those who are—(1) Conscious of their leprous state; (2) Desirous of deliverance from it.—*C. Simeon*.

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the cleansing of the leper

^a Ma. viii. 3-4. Lu. xvii. 14.

^b Nu. xix. 6.

^c Ps. li. 7; He, lx. 19. Jo. xix. 29, 30.

^d 2 K. v. 10, 14.

"The sprinkling with blood symbolized the importation of life; and blood mingled with water was the uniform symbol of cleansing. The cedar-wood (or juniper), which is almost incorruptible, signified that with this new life was imparted also freedom from corruption. Scarlet, as a color, is the constant symbol, again, like the blood, of life and health. The hyssop was a plant supposed to have healing and purifying virtues.—*Exp Bib*

^e 1 Jo. iii. 3.

"The final restoration ceremonial took place on the eighth day—the day symbolic of the new creation."—*S. H. Kellogg*.

"Compare the rites which now follow (vv. 10-20) with those appointed for the Nazarite, when defiled by the dead (Numb. vi. 9-12)."

"Holiness is something of God, wherever it is. It is an efflux from Him, and lives in Him; as the

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sunbeams, although they gild this lower world, and spread their golden wings over us, yet they are not so much here where they shine as in the sun from whence they flow."—*Cudworth.*

The purification of the leper.—As leprosy, regarded as a decomposition of the vital juices, and as putrefaction in a living body, was an image of death, and like this introduced the same dissolution and destruction of life into the corporeal sphere which sin introduced into the spiritual; and as the leper fr. this very reason was not only excluded from the fellowship of the sanctuary, but cut off from intercourse with the covenant nation which was called to sanctification, the man, when recovered from leprosy, was first of all to be received into the fellowship of the covenant nation by a significant rite of purification, and then again to be still further inducted into living fellowship with Jehovah in His sanctuary. Hence the purification prescribed was divided into two acts, separated from one another by an interval of seven days.—*Delitzsch.*

a 2 Co. viii. 12-15. Bishop Patrick says: "The blood seems to have been a token of forgiveness; the oil of healing." Together they show the intimate connection between the Son of God and the Spirit of God in the work of redemption and salvation."—*Pulpit Com.*

of the house

b Am. iii. 6; Is. xlv. 7.

c Ps. xxxii. 5.

d Pr. iii. 33; Zec. v. 3, 4.

e in Switzerland they speak of a cancer in buildings. *Calmet* seems to think that this disorder was caused by animalcules, wh. eroded the stone like mites in a cheese. *Michaelis* refers it to the action of salt-petre, or mural salt, hence dampness and mouldiness.

"We have abundant experimental evidence that a large number of diseases, and, not improbably, leprosy among them, are caused by minute parasitic forms of vegetable life; and, also, that in many cases these forms of life may, and do, exist and multiply in various other suitable media besides fluids and tissue of the human body; as, for instance, in cloth or leather, or in the plaster of a house."—*Kellogg.*

17-23. (17) rest . . oil, both blood and oil, put upon tip of right ear, thumb of right hand and great toe of right foot; why this consecration of healed leper like that of priests? Was he to give up everything to the service of the Lord in gratitude for healing? and . . atonement, see on. iv. 26. (19) sin-offering, see vv. 1-6; xii. 7; i. e., the ewe-lamb. (20) meat-offering, wh. seems to have been here a distinct sacrifice. (21) poor, his case mercifully regarded. (22) two, see on. xii. 8. (23) bring, see on. v. 11

The cleansing of the leper—In this way the man cleansed from leprosy was reconciled to Jehovah, and reinstated in the covenant privileges and covenant grace (vv. 19, 20). It was not till all this had been done that the priest could proceed to make expiation for him with the sin-offering, for which the ewe-lamb was brought, "on account of his uncleanness;" i. e., on account of the sin which still adhered to him as well as to all the other members of the covenant nation, and which had come outwardly to light in the uncleanness of his leprosy, after which he presented his burnt-offering and meat-offering, which embodied the sanctification of all his members to the service of the Lord, and the performance of works well-pleasing to Him.—*Delitzsch.*

24-32. (24-27) see on. vv. 12-15. (28-31.) see on. vv. 16-18. (32) law, the special and exceptional law for the poor man.

The majesty of law.—Of law there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage—the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels, and men, and creatures, of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all, with uniform consent, admiring her as the master of their peace and joy.—*Hooker.*

Love in the law of God.—There is the same love in the Law as in the Gospel, the difference is only in expression; as when I warn one against venturing into the roaring flood, and when, on his leaping madly in, I follow to save him. In the law love warns, in the cross it redeems. Both are, as I undertake to show, the true mirror of Him who thus defines His own character, "God is love," "Fury is not in Me."—*Guthrie.*

33-38. (33) spake, a prospective law. Divine legislation has respect to the future. (34) when . . possession, through unbelief they entered not into Canaan. I put, God is often said to do what He permits. Either way it might be a Divine visitation. (35) seemeth, fr certain signs. (36) afterward, the cleared house admitted the closer inspection. (37) hollow streaks, *lit.* "depressed spots of dark green or dark red, appearing beneath the surface of the wall."—*Spk. Com.* (38) then, many are the explanation of house-leprosy; for some, see marg. c.

Three main principles on the subject of corruption.—Corruption (impurity) may attach to the "house" or community as well as to the individual. We read of "the iniquity of the house of Israel," and of "the iniquity of the house of Judah" (Ezek. iv. 5, 6). 2. Earnest effort should be made to cleanse it from corruption. The leprous house of stone was to be cleansed; the leprous part was to be removed and the house renovated. So must the contaminated community purify itself removing that from it which is evil and corrupting—its Achan, its Ananias and Sapphira. 3. All efforts failing, the house will be destroyed. "He shall break down the house, the stones of it, etc. (ver. 45). A community of any kind that is incurably corrupt (1) had better be broken up deliberately by the hand of man; but if not (2), will certainly be dissolved in time by the hand of God. The history of the world

abounds in proofs that moral and spiritual corruption lead on to feebleness, decay, dissolution.—*Pulpit Com.*

D. c. 1490.

39-42. (39) **look, examine.** (40) **stones . . plague**, as far as the leprosy reached. (41) **house . . about**, having the plaster of the rest of the house scraped off. (42) **put . . stones**, such a house shall be fully repaired.

cleansing of the house

House-leprosy.—The house-leprosy is said to consist of greenish or reddish dimples, which appear on the walls, and continually spread wider and wider, and its nature would probably have been understood long ago, but for the prevalence of the notion of its being a disease communicable to man, which notion arose from taking the word leprosy in a literal sense. The bare description of it given by Moses is so clear that I have known more than one example of children who, shortly after reading it, described it distinctly or figuratively to their parents. What we usually term the saltpetre, that appears on walls, has much the same symptoms as the Mosaic house-leprosy, and is at the same time attended with such noxious effects as require the attention of a well-regulated police.—*Michaelis.*

a Lu xlii. 6-9; 1 Co. xv. 58; Jo. xiv. 2; Job. xix. 25-27; 1 Co. v. 5.

43-47. (43) **break . . house**, unexpectedly, suddenly. (44) **it . . house**, a leprosy that will spread till all be consumed. (45) **break . . house**, doing with all as formerly with a part. (46) **he . . house**, even for a moment: or unwittingly. **shall . . even**, be cut off fr. social intercourse. (47) **lieth**, the stay and the penalty proportioned.

Saltpetre in walls.—Our walls and houses are often attacked with something that corrodes and consumes them, and which we commonly denominate saltpetre. But I have never seen it to such a degree as at Eisleben, in the church in which Luther was baptized. In the year 1757, I observed, on the left side of the choir of that church, a gravestone, I think of marble, and dated in the present century, in which the inscription, though deeply cut, was in many cases, by reason of numberless dimples, scarcely legible, while I read with perfect ease other two inscriptions, four times as old. On my asking the sexton the reason of this, he said the saltpetre had come into the stone, and told me a great deal more about it, which I did not sufficiently attend to because I had no idea of its ever being useful to me in explaining the Bible.—*Michaelis.*

The lesson is always in force, for God has not changed. He is not a God who cares for the souls of men only but for their bodies also, and everything around them. His servants do well to remember this, and in this imitate Him, as happily many are doing more and more.—*Kellogg.*

48-53. (48) **plague . . spread**, if it had not spread after second week's quarantine, the distemper being checked by means mentioned in vss. 42, 43 **clean**, the priest shall so declare, and pronounce fit for habitation. (49) **cleanse . . house**, the same rites, with necessary exceptions, as those prescribed in cleansing healed leper.

The law relating to house-leprosy.—By this law many evils were actually prevented,—the spreading of the saltpetre-infection, and even its beginning: for the people would guard against these impurities whence it arose, from its being so strictly inquired into;—the danger of allowing their property or their health to suffer in an infected house, from mere carelessness;—the difficulty of making (among the Hebrews it would have been their slaves, but among us it would be) our hired servants, or perhaps our children's preceptor, occupy an infected apartment that was for no other use, and sleep close to an unwholesome wall. With such a law, no man can have any just ground of dissatisfaction; and we might at all events ask why we have it not put in force in newly-built cities. It is certainly very singular, that in this country, or, at any rate, in some places of it, we have a law, which is a most complete counterpart to it. No doubt our house-leprosy is not attended with the same evils as it was among the Hebrews, by reason of the change of circumstances, and because the saltpetre, being necessary for the manufacture of gunpowder, is often scraped off; and herein we have a strong example of the diversity occasioned in legislative policy by difference of time and climate.—*Michaelis.*

If leprosy in the body visibly typified the working of sin and death in the soul of man, then, as clearly, the leprosy in the house must in this law be intended to symbolize the working of sin in the material earthly creation, which is man's abode.—*S. H. Kellogg.*

54-57. (57) **to teach**; the function of all rites and regulations general and special being to point out, to show, to give knowledge, to help to understand the way of safety and life.

Bible notes on leprosy.—A Scripture summary. A common disease, Lu. iv. 27. *Infected*: men, Lu xvii. 12; women, Nu. xii. 10; houses, Le. xiv. 34; clothes, Le. xiii. 47; incurable, 2 K. v. 7; a punishment, Nu. xii. 9, 10; 2 Ch.

The plague also breaks out where sunshine never comes. What a healing thing is the sunshine! How glorious it can make even the dingiest street!—*Hovatt.*

B. C. 1490.

xxvi. 19; oft. hereditary, 2 S. iii. 29; 2 K. v. 27. *Parts affected*: hand, Ex. iv. 6; head, Le. xiii. 44; forehead, 2 Ch. xxvi. 19; beard, Le. xiii. 30; body, Lu. v. 12. *Appearance*: began with red spot, Le. xiii. 2, 24; turned the skin white, Ex. iv. 6; 2 K. v. 27; turned the hair white, Le. xviii. 3, 10, 30. *Rules for the priests*: De. xxiv. 8; Le. xiii. 2, 9; xiv. 3-32. *Rules for the afflicted*: Le. xiii. 8, 11, 22, 44; Nu. v. 2; xii. 14, 15; 2 K. vii. 3; Lu. xvii. 12; 2 K. xv. 5; 2 Ch. xxvi. 21; Le. xxii. 2-4; xiii. 45. *Rules ab. clothes*: Le. xiii. 49-59. *Ab. houses*: Le. xiv. 35-48. *Cure of*: by power of God, Nu. xii. 13, 14; 2 K. v. 8-14. *Of Christ*: Ma. viii. 3; Lu. v. 13, xvii. 13, 14; Ma. x. 8.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

unclean issues

a Le. xxii. 4; Nu. v. 2; Ma. ix. 20; Lu. viii. 43; Mk. v. 23.

"Our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, was always the first thing; 'our bodies washed with pure water' was the second (Heb. x. 22); and throughout the book of the law these two have been by God so joined together that no candid mind can put them asunder."—Gibson.

1-33. (2) When . . flesh,^a defilement from issues relates to two diseased and three natural secretions; this is the case of the first diseased secretion, the others follow. Sexual manhood and womanhood should be kept clean, and when from sin or natural causes there is danger of corruption, it should be purified speedily. Water and grace have great potency. The very delicacy and sacredness of sexual life calls for the highest sanitation and respect for cleanliness and purity. (32) This . . law, the very minuteness of the regulations and the plainness of utterance show the low untutored condition of the Israelites. They also suggest the danger from life about them.

Homiletic hints.—I. That personal purity was and is a matter of the very greatest consequence in the sight of God. The Jews were taught and trained to put far away from them everything that was unclean. With this view it was made unlawful not only for those who had knowingly violated moral laws, but for those who had unwittingly offended the laws of ceremonial cleanness, to draw near to their God or to their fellows. II. That specific instructions thereon are a matter of holy expediency. Parental warning, wisely and timely given, may save sons and daughters from much bodily mischief and spiritual suffering. III. That, in this matter, we must consider what is due, not only to ourselves, but to others also spiritually. How guilty in the very last degree are those who drive a nefarious trade in corrupt literature. How shameful to put indecent thought into print to pollute the young.—*Pulpit Com.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

b Le. x. 2.

c As Bush. "The instructions for observing this day seem naturally to follow the laws of sacrifices and purifications."

d Ex. xxvi. 33; Heb. ix. 3.

e Ex. xvi. 10; xix. 9; xl. 34; Nu. ix. 15; 1 K. viii. 10; Ex. xxv. 17.

f Ez. xlv. 17, 18.

g He x. 22.

h He. vii. 26-28, v. 2, ix. 7; Le. ix. 7.

the scape-goat

i The Rabbins say that these goats were to be taken from the same flock, to be of equal stature, of the same color, and of the same value.

1-6. (1) after . . Aaron,^b whence some^c think the prop. place for this chap. is aft. the tenth. (2) he, even he, the high p. come . . times,^d unreasonable: at any time he may please. cloud . . seat, the Shekinah.^e (3) thus . . place, in this way, and at the prop. time. bullock, see on iv. 3. (4) put on,^f see on Ex. xxviii. 39-43: and Le. vi. 10. wash . . water,^g bathe himself. (5) take . . Israel, these offerings of the people to be provided at public cost. two . . goats, lit. two shaggy he-goats. (6) offer . . house,^h the atonement for the priesthood to be made first; that they, imputed innocent, might then offer for the people.

The Priest in the Holy of Holies. — In the Holy of Holies, "in awful solitude; there, in unbroken silence; there, in utter gloom, were it not for His own radiance, the Shekinah — the presence of the Lord God of Israel, brooded over the mercy-seat, between the golden cherubs. No eye saw Him. No voice spake with Him. On one day only of every year did a pale and agitated man dare to pierce the seclusion, not without blood and prayer and an elaborate ritual, and the gathering of an anxious nation, every man, into the courts without." — *Chadwick*.

7-10. (7) take . . goats.ⁱ "Having presented his own sin-offering, the high priest, accompanied by the two chief priests, now came to the north of the altar. Here the one of his companions who was next in rank to the pontiff placed himself at his right side, whilst the other, who held the office of chief of the principal household (see 1 Chron. xxiv. 6), stood at his left. It was here that the two goats were presented with their faces to the west, where the Holy of the Holies was, and where the Divine majesty was especially revealed." — *Hand. Com.* (8) lots, one goat to be a sin-offering to Jehovah, the other to bear sin away to the representative of evil-doing in

the wilderness. **scapegoat**, *R. V.*, "Azazel," or "dismissal."^a (See an extended discussion in *Bush*). (10) *R. V.*, "But the goat, on which the lot fell for Azazel, shall be set alive before the LORD, to make atonement for him, to send him away for Azazel into the wilderness."

The scapegoat.—I. That the separation of man from his sins is a subject of tremendous moment. 1. The moral struggles of mankind; 2. The influence of sin on human nature; 3. The intervention of Christ shows this. II. That a penitential approach to God through sacrifice is the Divine method of separation. The sacrifices mentioned in the text show—1. That sin deserved death; 2. That through another's death the sinner's may be avoided. III. That the separation of man from his sin, if effected through the True Sacrifice, is complete.—*Thomas*.

Casting lots.—Acc. to the Jews, the two lots might be either of wood, stone, or metal. On one was written "*for Jehovah*," and on the other "*for Azazel*." They were then put into a vessel, while the goats stood with their faces to the west. The vessel was then shaken, and the priest, putting in both his hands, brought out a lot in each. Being stationed betw. the two goats, the lot wh. was in his right hand he laid upon the goat that was on his right; and that which was in his left hand he laid upon the goat that was on his left; and thus acc. to what was written on the lots, the *scape-goat* and the *goat for sacrifice* were determined.

11—19. (11) and . . . bring, the first of the rites of day of atonement, make . . . himself, he must be accepted *himself* bef. he offers for others; (12) censer,^b see on Ex. xxx. 3. and . . . vail, the second rite of day of A. (13) cloud, see Ex. xxx. 7, 8. mercy-seat, see Ex. xxv. 17. (14) take, the third rite of day of A., wh. completes the A. for the priest. (15) then, being himself accepted. kill . . . people, this is the fourth rite of day of A. bring . . . vail, the fifth rite. (16) make . . . place, the sixth rite. (17) shall . . . man,^c either of the priests or people, save the H.-priest. (18) altar . . . Lord, prob. brazen altar. take . . . goat, said to have been mixed in a basin. horns . . . about, the seventh rite. (19) sprinkle,^d to complete the atonement for holy places and persons.

The day of atonement.—The sacrifices and purifications enjoined thus far did not suffice to complete the reconciliation between the congregation of Israel, which was to be called a holy nation, but in its very nature was still altogether involved in sin and uncleanness. This want was met by the appointment of a yearly general and perfect expiation of all the sins and uncleanness which had remained unatoned for and uncleansed in the course of the year. In this respect the laws of sacrifice and purification received their completion and finish in the institution of the festival of atonement, which provided for the congregation of Israel the highest and most comprehensive expiation that was possible under the Old Test.—*Delitzsch*.

20—25. (20) made . . . end, having finished the expiation for himself, his fellow priests, and utensils of the sanctuary. (21) confess,^e humble and full acknowledgment of sin of heart and life.^f hand . . . man, *lit.* a man at hand, said to be appointed a year before. (22) unto . . . inhabited,^g *lit.* unto a place cut off. he . . . wilderness, bearing the sins of the people far away from them. The eighth rite of day of A. (23) leave . . . there, to preserve fr. pollution; that they be reserved for holy uses. (24) wash, the ninth rite. (25) fat . . . altar,^h see on i. 9; Ex. xxix. 13. The tenth rite.

The scapegoat.—I. The scapegoat represented the substitution of Christ in the place of sinners. II. This substitution of Christ has made ample satisfaction for sin. III. This atonement by Christ extends to all sins. 1. Iniquities. Some say these refer to our original depravity. 2. Transgressions. The violations of the positive laws of God. 3. Sins. Neglect of His holy commands. IV. That Christ, as typified by the scapegoat, has effected substitution for all people.—*Burns*.

The Aswamedha Jug.—The Aswamedha Jug is an ancient Indian custom, in which a horse was brought and sacrificed, with some rites similar to those prescribed in the Mosaic law. "The horse so sacrificed becomes the expiatory victim." Mr. Halhed observes that this ceremony reminds us of the scapegoat of the Israelites: and indeed it is not the only one in which a particular coincidence between the Hindoo and Mosaic systems of theology may be traced. To this account may be subjoined a narrative, in some measure simi-

B C. 1490.

^a Heb. word is retained in most modern crit. trans.

the priest's sin-offering

^b Nu. xvi. 46; Re. viii. 3-5; Is. vi. 6, 7. ^c Le. iv. 5; He. ix. 25. ^d x. 4, xii. 24, xiii. 20.

^e Lu. i. 10; Is. lxiii. 3, lxiii. 11, xlv. 21.

^f See v. 12. Ex. xxix. 11, 12; Le. i. 5; cf. Jos. Ant. iii. 10, 3.

^g Ez. xliii. 20; Ma. xxiii. 19.

"The temple of His body and the veil of His flesh (Jo. ii. 21; He. x. 20) were by imputation of our sins, made as unclean, and sprinkled with His own precious blood, that He might reconcile us to God.—*Ainsworth*.

the scape-goat

^g Is. liii. 6.

^h "O Lord, Thy people, the house of Israel, have transgressed, they have rebelled, they have sinned before Thee. I beseech thee now absolve their transgressions, their rebellion, and their sin that they have sinned against Thee, as it is written in the law of Moses Thy servant, that on this day he shall make atonement for you to cleanse you fr. all your sins, and ye shall be clean."—*Form of Confession acc. to the Mishna*.

ⁱ Is. liii. 11, 12; Jo. i. 29; He. ix. 28; i Pe. ii. 24.

^j Ex. xxx. 9.

B. C. 1490.

v. 21, *C. E. Kennaway*, ii. 385; *C. Bradley*, ii. 229.

lar, from Mr. Bruce. "We found, that upon some dissension, the garrison and townsmen had been fighting for several days, in which disorders the greatest part of the ammunition in the town had been expended, but it had since been agreed on by the old men of both parties, that nobody had been to blame on either side, but the whole wrong was the work of a camel. A camel, therefore, was seized, and brought without the town, and there a number on both sides having met, they upbraided the camel with everything that had been either said or done. The camel had killed men: he had threatened to set the town on fire; the camel had threatened to burn the aga's house and the castle; he had cursed the grand seignor and the sheriff of Mecca, the sovereigns of the two parties; and the only thing the poor animal was interested in, he had threatened to destroy the wheat that was going to Mecca. After having spent great part of the afternoon in upbraiding the camel, whose measure of iniquity, it seems, was near full, each man thrust him through with a lance, devoting him *diis manibus et diris*, by a kind of prayer, and with a thousand curses upon his head, after which every man retired, fully satisfied as to the wrongs he had received from the camel!"—*Burder*.

a He. xiii. 11; Le vi. 30.

The Biajus, or aborigines of Borneo, observe a custom bearing a considerable resemblance to that of the scapegoat. They annually launch a small bark, laden with all the sins and misfortunes of the nation, "wh," says Dr. Leyden, "they imagine will fall on the unhappy crew that first meets with it."

26-28. (26) wash . . clothes, because he had been beyond the camp, or because of contact with sin-laden animal. (27) burn,^a not as sacrifice, see i. 9; iv. 12. (28) wash . . bathe, etc., that being ceremonially clean himself, he may not contaminate others.

An Indian custom.—When a person is sick he vows on his recovery to set a goat at liberty, in honor of his deity. Having selected a suitable one from his flocks, he makes a slit in the ear, or ties a yellow string round its neck, and lets it go whithersoever it pleases. Whoever sees the animal knows it to be a *natekadi*, the vowed goat, and no person will molest it. Sometimes two goats are thus made sacred; but one of them will be offered soon, and the other kept for a future sacrifice. But it is not merely in time of sickness that they have recourse to this practice; for does a man wish to procure a situation, he makes a similar vow. Has a person heard that there are treasures concealed in any place, he vows to Virava (should he find the prize) to set a goat at liberty, in honor of his name. When a person has committed what he considers a great sin, he does the same thing; but in addition to other ceremonies, he sprinkles the animal with water, puts his hands upon it, and prays to be forgiven.—*Roberts*.

the day of atonement

b Le. xxiii. 27; Ma. xxvi. 36-39; Lu. xii. 50; He. v. 7, 8; Ph. ii. 5-8.

c On the 1st of this mo was the feast of trumpets, and on the 14th the feast of tabernacles began (Le. xxiii. 24; Ex. xxiii. 16.)

d Ps. ii. 2; Je. xxxiii. 8; Ep. v. 26; Ma. xxvi. 27, 28; He. ix. 14; 1 Co. xv. 3; 1 Jo. i. 7-9; Lu. vii. 47, 50; 1 Pe. ii. 24, iii. 18.

e He. iv. 10, 11.

f Ex. xxix. 29, 30; Nu. xx. 26-28; He. v. 4-6, vii. 23.

29-34. (29) statute forever, *lit.* statute of eternity, everlasting ordinance; binding upon Israelites as long as they exist. seventh . . tenth month,^b called *Tishri*, corresponds to September, and is the month of great festivals. On the first is the Feast of Trumpets (see chap. xxiii. 24), on the tenth the Day of Atonement,^c and on the fourteenth begins the Feast of Tabernacles, which lasts eight days. afflict . . souls, fasting, (Isa. lviii. 3, 5, 10.) Only public fast ordained in Mosaic law. or . . you, what is unlawful for you, not to be imposed on others. (30) cleanse,^d as now described. (31) by . . ever,^e a binding law for the whole of that dispensation. (32, 33) priest,^f the rite was to be continued by ea. generation of priests. (34) once . . year, great annual sin-offering.

Duties required on the great day of atonement.—Notice—I. The objects for which atonement was made. For—1. The high priest; 2. The people; 3. The sanctuary itself and the altar. II. The duty especially enjoined at the time of that atonement; to afflict the soul. The exercise of godly sorrow would—1. Dispose man to justify God in requiring the services of the day; 2. Prepare him for a just reception of God's mercy; 3. Lead him to acknowledge with gratitude God's unbounded goodness; 4. Stimulate him to greater watchfulness and diligence in future. Reflections:—(1) How vain is the idea of establishing a righteousness of our own; (2) How transcendent must be the efficacy of our Redeemer's blood; (3) How blessed is the issue of true repentance.—*Simeon*.

The doctrine of atonement.—Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, once said to the late Rev. John Newton, "Sir, I have collated every word in the Hebrew Scriptures seventeen times, and it is very strange that the doctrine of atonement which you hold, if there, cannot be found by me." "I am not surprised at that," said Mr. Newton; "I once went to light my candle with the extinguisher on it."

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-7. (1, 2) **speak** . . Israel, this law touching the slaying of animals for food, concerned the people equally with the priests. (3) **killeth**,^a for food. (4) **blood . . blood**,^b guilty of having shed blood unlawfully. (5) **to . . end**, the purpose of the injunction to prevent the Israelites from sacrificing to the demons in the open fields. **offer . . Lord**, if of everything slain somewhat had to be offered to the Lord, the practice of idolatry would be prevented. (7) **devils**,^c R. V., "the he-goats."^d

Grace before meat.—What we have in this chapter is the *religious use of food*, or, as we have put it, "Grace before meat." In this connection let us observe—I. That God has implanted some memento of himself in all our food. Vegetable as well as animal life, of which we are reminded at every meal, is the sign manual of the living God. The Divine hand is behind the whole, and an honest heart can see it and will bless it as the source of all! II. God reminds us at every meal of atonement as the preliminary to peace and fellowship. For all our food once thrilled with organic life. There is literally the sacrifice of life, vegetable and animal, in every meal. "Vicarious sacrifice" is a principle of vast range, and the atonement of Jesus is but a single application of it. III. The recognition of God in every pleasure will make it doubly delightful. Let us have religion in bodily exercise, religion in our social enjoyments, religion in business, religion in politics, religion in all things.

Devils.— "There can be no doubt that 'he-goats,' as in the Revised Version, instead of 'devils,' as in the Authorized, is the right rendering. The worship referred to was still in existence in the days of the monarchy (2 Chron. xi. 15)." — *Exp. Bib.*

Dedication of food to God.—Very beautiful and instructive was the direction that the Israelite, in the cases specified, should make his daily food a peace-offering. This involved a dedication of the daily food to the Lord. Such also should be, in spirit, the often neglected prayer before each of our daily meals. It should be ever offered with the remembrance of the precious blood which has purchased for us even the most common mercies. And so, eating in grateful, loving fellowship with our Heavenly Father that which His bounty gives us, to His glory, every meal shall become, as it were, a sacramental remembrance of the Lord. We may have wondered at what we have read of the world-wide custom of the Mohammedan, who, whenever the knife of slaughter is lifted against a beast for food, utters his "*Bism Allāh*" ("In the name of the most merciful God"); and not otherwise will regard his food as being made *halāl* or lawful; and no doubt in all this, as in many a Christian's prayer, there may often be little heart.—*S. H. Kellogg.*

8-12. (8) **strangers, foreigners.** (9) **bringeth**, idolatrous usages were not in any wise to be connived at. (10) **eateth . . blood**,^e see on Le. iii. 17. vii. 26. **set . . against**, i. e. will be angry with. (11) **life . . blood**, the blood a type of the immortal principle,^f and was devoted to significant sacred uses. **for . . soul**,^g and this higher use shall save it fr. common uses. (12) **stranger**, he who for his convenience or advantage joins himself to Israel must respect the laws of Israel.

The prohibition to eat blood.—To elucidate this ordinance, I shall—I. Confirm the fact here stated. God had from the beginning appointed the blood of animals to be offered by man as an atonement for his soul. This appears throughout all the Mosaic history and the New Testament. II. Consider the prohibition as founded on it. It was most salutary as tending—1. To excite reverence for sacrifices; 2. To bring continually to remembrance the way of salvation; 3. To direct attention to the great sacrifice — *Simeon.*

Eating the blood a characteristic of savage life.—The Greenlanders, though they do not usually eat their meat raw, have a superstitious custom, on every capture, of cutting out a piece of the raw flesh and drinking the warm blood. A European writer states that he often followed their example in the chase and assuaged his hunger by eating a piece of raw reindeer's flesh; nor did he find it very hard of digestion, but it satisfied his appetite much less than cooked meat. The Abyssinians also eat meat raw. Travelers who have witnessed their *brunde* feasts, can attest the intoxicating effects of this kind of food, and they must have been astonished at the immense quantities that can be eaten in the raw state, compared to that when the meat is cooked, and at the insensibility which it sometimes produces.—*Simmonds.*

B. C. 1490.

slaying
animals for
food

a Is. lxxvi. 3; Ja. iv. 17; De. xli. 13, 14; He. iii. 12; Ro. v. 13.

b Le. iii. 17; Ex. xxix. 18; Le. iv. 31; Nu. xviii. 17.

c De. xxxii. 17; 2 Ch. xi. 15; Ps. cvi. 37, 39; 1 Co. x. 20.

d "The worship of the goat, accompanied by the foulest rites, prevailed in lower Egypt. The word wh. strictly means hairy ones is in Is. xli. 21, and xxiv. 14, rendered satyrs.

blood not to
be eaten

e Ge. ix. 4; De. xii. 16, 23; 1 Sa. xiv. 33.

f See note by Dr. Payne Smith on xi. 39-43.

g 1 Jo. i. 7; Re. i. 5; Jo. vi. 53; He. ix. 21; Jo. xix. 34; Ma. xxvi. 28; Mk. xiv. 24; Ro. iii. 25; v. 9; Ep. i. 7; Col. i. 20.

"Not only did the Mosaic laws exclude from the Hebrew dietary, animals 'particularly liable to parasites,' but also that 'it is in the blood,' so rigidly prohibited by Moses as food, 'that the germs or spores of infectious disease circulate.'" — *Exp. Bib.*

B. C. 1490.

blood not to be poured out as a libation

a Ac. xv. 29.
"There are two distinct grounds given for the prohibition of blood as food; first, its own nature as the vital fluid; secondly, its consecration in sacrificial worship"—*Spk. Com.*

"A lesson lies here for us regarding the sacredness of all that is associated with sacred things. All that is connected with God, and with His worship, especially all that is connected with His revelation of Himself for our salvation, is to be treated with the most profound reverence."—*S. H. Kellogg.*

principles independent of circumstances

b Ro. i. 23-29.

c Ex. xx. 11; Lu. x. 28; Ro. x. 5; Ga. iii. 12; Ne. ix. 29

Chapters xviii—xx. by a formal introduction and a formal closing, are indicated as a distinct section, known by the name, "the Law of Holiness."—*Exp. B.*

"Which if a man do, he shall live in them;" that is, as the Chaldee paraphrast, Onkelos, rightly interprets in the Targum, "with the life of eternity."—*S. H. Kellogg*

v4. *Dr. J. Tunstall, Académica,* 143.

unlawful marriages

d1 Co. v. 1, vi. 9, 10, 13; Ga. v. 19-21; Mark vii. 21, 22; Ep. v. 3-7.

e Ge. xxxv. 22.

f2 S. xlii. 12; Ez. xlii. 11.

g This seems once to have been allowed, as in the

13—16. (13) whatsoever man, inclusive of all having any relation to Israel. hunteth," the rule applied as well to wild as to domesticated animals. (14) cut off, see on Ex. xxxi. 14. (15) eateth, see on xi. 39. (16) he . . iniquity, i. e., "it shall not be borne by the sacrifice of atonement."

The costliness of hunting.—Our great English game, hunting and shooting, is costly altogether; and how much we are fined for it annually in land, horses, gamekeepers, and game laws, and all else that accompanies that beautiful and special English game, I will not endeavor to count now; but note only that, except for exercise, this is not merely a useless game, but a deadly one, to all connected with it. For, through horse-racing, you get every form of what the higher classes everywhere call "Play" in distinction from all other plays; that is, gambling—by no means a beneficial or recreative game; and, through game-preserving you get also some curious laying out of ground; that beautiful arrangement of dwelling-house for man and beast, by which we have grouse and blackcock—so many brace to the acre, and men and women—so many brace to the garret. I often wonder what the angelic builders and surveyors—the angelic builders who build the "many mansions" up above there, and the angelic surveyors who measured that four-square city with their measuring reeds—I wonder what they think, or are supposed to think, of the laying out of ground by this nation, which has set itself, as it seems, literally to accomplish, word for word, or rather fact for word, in the persons of those poor whom its Master left to represent Him, what that Master said of Himself,—the foxes and birds had homes, but He none.—*Ruskin.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1—5. (2) I . . God, a reminder of their covenant relation: as well as of the source of their laws. (3) Egypt . . Canaan,^b neither the land they had left, nor the land they were going to, should influence their religious life. (4) my judgments, mine only. ordinances, same as statutes. (5) he . . them,^c shall not be cut off: shall live in the enjoyment of all the Divine favor secured by obedience.

"If a man do, he shall live in them."—Thus the world was taught through the Mosaic legislation.—I. That life is not an idle dream. Life, though brief, to be spent in doing the will of God. II. That man is not a creature of circumstances. Israel was not to be the victim of the environments of Egypt, nor of the land towards which they were journeying. They were not to drift, but to live.—*Preacher's Com.*

Safety in the observance of God's laws.—"This preface of some is taken generally to concern all the laws of God; the observation whereof is ever the sure safety of state public or private, for it is not the munition of walls, leagues, and alliance with foreign princes, largeness of confines, plenty of treasure, or such like, that preserve a commonwealth, but careful and diligent observation of public laws ordained of God for the good of man. It is said that Lacedemon flourished whilst Lycurgus's laws were observed: much more any commonwealth when God's be kept. For what comparison betwixt man's laws and God's? Demosthenes saith, It was the manner of the Locrenses, that if any man would publish and devise a new law he should put his neck into a halter ready to be put to death, if the law were not good, by which means they made men more careful to observe old and ancient, tried and known laws, than with busy heads to make new. Now what laws so old and so approved good as God's laws? Ever, therefore, are they to be regarded and hearkened unto."—*Ep. Babington.*

6—10. (6) None . . you, *lit.* "Man, man, ye shall not approach." (7) near . . him,^d *lit.* flesh of his body, i. e., blood relations of certain degrees of consanguinity. uncover, *etc.*, marriage with those relations is forbidden. (8) of . . wife, as the sin of Reuben.^e (9) sister,^f the distinguishing offense of the Egyptians. born . . abroad, prob. ref. to half sister. (10) of . . daughter, niece,^g

Violation of law of consanguinity.—I. Must result in deterioration of the race. II. In unwholesome restraints upon the intercourse of the members of families. III. Marriages just within the prescribed limits sometimes promoted to prevent the surrender of family property.

Unholy marriages.—The thoughtlessness of youth and headlong impetus

of passion frequently throw people into rash engagements and in these cases the formal morality of the world, more careful of externals than of truth, declares it to be nobler for such rash engagements to be kept, even when the rashness is felt by the engaged, than that a man's honor should be stained by a withdrawal. The letter thus takes precedence of the spirit. To satisfy this prejudice, a life is sacrificed. A miserable marriage rescues the honor; and no one throws the burden of that misery upon the prejudice. I am not forgetting the necessity of being stringent against the common thoughtlessness of youth in forming such relations; but I say that this thoughtlessness once having occurred, reprobate it as you will, the pain which a separation may bring had better be endured than evaded by an unholy marriage, which cannot come to good. — *Lewis*.

11-15. (11) *thy . . sister*, incest of every degree forbidden. (12) *thy . . sister, aunt.* *kinswoman*, according to the law which obtained in the time of Christ this prohibition not only extended to the father's half-sisters, but even when they were begotten by the grandfather illegitimately. It is remarkable that Moses himself was the off-spring of such an alliance, since his father Amram married his own aunt, Jochebed, who was the sister of his father. (See Exod. vi. 20.) (14) *aunt*, brought into that relation by marriage. (15) *daughter in law*,^b "for an offense of this kind both parties were punished with death. (See xx. 12.) Other nations regarded such alliances with the same abhorrence. (See *Koran*, iv. 27.)"

The law of Moses relating to marriage.—The prohibitions which follow require little special explanation. As just remarked, they are directed in particular to those breaches of the law of 'chastity which were most common with the Egyptians, from the midst of whom Israel had come; and with the Canaanites, to whose land they were going. This explains, for instance, the fullness of detail in the prohibition of incestuous union with a sister or half-sister (vv. 9, 11)—an iniquity very common in Egypt, having the sanction of royal custom from the days of the Pharaohs down to the time of the Ptolemies. The unnatural alliance of a man with his mother, prohibited in ver. 8, of which Paul declared (1 Cor. v. 1) that in his day it did not exist among the Gentiles, was yet the distinguishing infamy of the Medes and Persians for many centuries. Union with an aunt, by blood or by marriage, prohibited in vv. 12-14 — a connection less gross, and less severely to be punished than the preceding — seems to have been permitted even among the Israelites themselves while in Egypt, as is plain from the case of Amram and Jochebed. (Exod. vi. 20.) * * * The prohibition (v. 18) of marriage with a sister-in-law, as is well known, has been, and still is, the occasion of much controversy, into which it is not necessary here to enter at length. But whatever may be thought for other reasons as to the lawfulness of such a union, it truly seems quite singular that this verse should ever be cited as prohibiting such an alliance. No words could well be more explicit than those which we have here, in limiting the application of the prohibition to the life-time of the wife. "Thou shalt not take a woman to her sister *to be a rival to her*, to uncover her nakedness beside the other *in her life-time*." (R. V.) The law, therefore, does not touch the question for which it is so often cited, but was evidently only intended as a restriction on prevalent polygamy. Polygamy is ever likely to produce jealousies and heart-burnings; but it is plain that this phase of the evil would reach its most extreme and odious expression when the new and rival wife was a sister to the one already married; when it would practically annul sisterly love, and give rise to such painful and peculiarly humiliating dissensions as we read of between the sisters Leah and Rachel. The sense of the passage is so plain, that we are told that this interpretation "stood its ground unchallenged from the third century B. C. to the middle of the sixteenth century A. D." Whatever opinion any may hold therefore as to the expediency, upon other grounds, of this much debated alliance, this passage, certainly, cannot be fairly cited as forbidding it; but is far more naturally understood as by natural implication permitting the union, after the decease of the first wife. — *Exp. Bible*.

16-21. (16) *brother's wife*, not in the lifetime of the brother. If the brother died leaving no children: it was made a duty to marry brother's widow. (17) *uncover . . daughter*, i. e. prob the daughter by former marriage. (18) *neither*, "This sentence forbids a married man to bring into his household

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case of Abraham (Ge. xi. 29, cf. xx. 12).

"I express my conviction that Scripture says not one word against marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Surely it is not a crime, and if it be not, the law that constitutes it so, must be, for the worst of all crimes, an evil and unjust law." — *Gifflian*

^a Allowed in former times: case of Amram and Jochebed, Ex. vi. 20.

^b Ge. xxxviii. 18, 26; Ez. xxii. 11.

"I admit that marriage with a wife's sister is not forbidden in Leviticus. — *Bp. of Lincoln*.

"The prohibition in v. 18 is only against marrying a wife's sister during the life of the first wife, which of itself implies a liberty to marry the sister after her death." — *Dr. Chalmers*.

"When Themistocles was to marry his daughter, there were two suitors, the one rich and a fool, and the other wise, but not rich; and being asked which of the two he had rather his daughter should have, he answered, I had rather she should marry a man without money than money without a man. The best of marriages is in the man or the woman, not in the means or the money." — *Venning*.

deceased wife's sister

^c De xxv. 5. "This law was broken in

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the case of H. Antipater and Herodias; and the Baptist appealed to it in proof of their sin. There is no proof that Philip was dead at that time." — *Jos. Ant.* xviii. 5, 1.

"One would fain charitably hope, if possible, that our modern apologists for Oriental idolatries are unaccountably ignorant of what all history should have taught them as to the inseparable connection between idolatry and licentiousness. And so, in these stern prohibitions, and their heavy penal sanctions, we may find a profitable lesson for even the cultivated intellect of the nineteenth century." — *S. H. Kellogg*.

another wife to vex her who is already his wife." (19) **uncleanness**, *see* on xx. 18. (20) **thy . . . wife**, *see* Ex. xx. 18. (21) **let . . . fire**, sacrifice thy children as a burnt-offering. **Molech**, first mention of this idol. **profane . . . name**, offering animals to God to represent the best gifts of the soul and children in idol worship is the height of profanity.

Molech. — Molech, the national deity of the Ammonites, is often mentioned in the Old Testament, and the Israelites are very specially and solemnly warned against his worship. The name signifies "king" or "ruler;" and Milcom or Malcham is just the same radical word with the pronoun affixed, "their king." Molech was "the fire-god." He represented the sun, like Baal, but in a different aspect. Baal represented the life-power and protecting power. Molech the destructive or consuming power. He was, in fact, the great destroyer, the author of all calamities — of war, famine and pestilence. He was supposed to delight in cruelty, suffering, and misery. Hence the cruel and inhuman character of his worship, and the brutal acts perpetrated upon his altars in the name of religion. Purifications and ordeals by fire were the ordinary rites. Children were made "to pass through the fire to Molech" (Le. xviii. 21, xx. 2). Solomon introduced his worship, and, at the instigation of his Ammonite wives, built a temple to Molech on one of the summits of Olivet (1 K. xi. 7). At a later period an image of the deity was set up in the Valley of Hinnom. It is mentioned by Jeremiah, and a terrible prophetic curse is pronounced against the place on account of the cruelties perpetrated (Je. vii. 31). Mesha, king of Moab, when his army was routed and hemmed in by the Israelites, offered up his son as a burnt-offering to Molech on the walls of his capital (2 K. iii). — *Porter*.

Modern heathenism and licentiousness. — In these days of ours, when it has become the fashion among a certain class of cultured writers to act as the apologists of idolatrous religions, the mention of these crimes in this connection may well remind the reader that in all ages, in the modern heathenism no less than in the ancient, idolatry and gross licentiousness ever go hand in hand. Still, to-day, even in Her Majesty's Indian Empire, is the most horrible licentiousness practiced as an office of religious worship. Even the modern "reformed" Hindooism, from which some hope so much, has not always been able to shake itself free from the pollution of these things. — *S. H. Kellogg*.

unlawful lusts

a De. xxiii. 17; Rom. i. 27; Lev. xx. 13; 1 Cor. vi. 9-11; 1 Tim. i. 9, 10; Gen. xix. 5; Jude. 7.

b 1 Co. iii. 17; Le. xx. 23; De. xviii. 12; Ps. cxxxix. 22.

22-25. (22) **lie . . . mankind**, the characteristic sin^a of Sodom. (23) **lie . . . beast**, prohibitions which imply abominable practices in Egypt and Canaan. (24) **nations . . . defiled**, physical defilement and not less moral. (25) **visit' punish vomiteth**, a bold rhetorical figure: the very land represented as loathing the people.^b

Bestiality. — The crimes here prohibited might — I. Seem incredible, were it not for well-attested facts. Thus Lucrezia Borgia forsook her husband Giovanni Sforza, Lord of Pesaro, and lived in incestuous intercourse with her two brothers and also her own father. The Bible also records various instances. II. Might be deemed impossible did not these laws assume it, and facts, as Sodom, prove it. Old legends (Europe, for example), paintings, sculptures, etc. (*vide* Naples Museum), also reveal the hideous possibilities of corrupt human nature. Passages in the Pauline Epp. are also confirmatory of the corruptions of the heathen world.

The power of appetite. — A king, according to an eastern fable, once permitted the devil to kiss him on either shoulder. Immediately two serpents grew from his shoulders, who, furious with hunger, attacked his head, and attempted to get at his brain. The king pulled them away, and tore them with his nails. But he soon saw with indescribable horror, that they had become parts of himself, and that, in wounding them, he was lacerating his own flesh. Such is the deplorable condition of every victim of appetite and lust.

doom of sensuality

c 1 Co. v. 9-13. d Je. ix. 10; Ez. xxxvi. 13, 17

"Israel is told (vv. 25, 28) that it was because the

26-30. (26) **keep . . . statutes**,^c because the perpetration of such abominations as have been described entails such terrible consequences. (27) **all . . . done**, and so were doomed for their sensuality and worse than bestiality. (28) **land . . . also**,^d as if the land itself, conscious of the degradation, spewed them forth. (30) **customs**, many of the abominations were legally enacted as statutes and formed part of the religious institutions.

The penalty of sin. — The disastrous consequences of iniquity are clearly and strongly expressed in these concluding words of the chapter. We have

the truth brought out—1. That by sin we corrupt ourselves. Those sins which a man commits against his own spirit or his own body—those wrongs which a man does himself—end in positive and serious injury. They enfeeble, they degrade, they brutalize, they bring down a man's tastes and appetites to the meanest levels. II. That by sin we contaminate society. All society as well as individuals become corrupt. Even one Achan defiled the whole camp of Israel and paralyzed its power. One incestuous member of the Corinthian Church infected and stained that Christian society. How much more will many evil-doers corrupt the community. III. That by sin we incur the high displeasure of Almighty God. It is a fearful thing to have done or to have become that which God regards with Divine abomination to be the object of his awful resentment and indignation. IV. That by sin we are determining our doom. It is certain that ver. 28 points to stern rejection and utter destruction. 1. It is certain that by open sin we expose ourselves to exile from the Christian Church, and even to banishment from all decent and honorable society. 2. Also that by continuance in deliberate sin, whether open or secret, whether of the body or of the soul, we shall be rejected from the city of God.—C.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1-4. (1, 2) **holy**,^a supreme reason for man's holiness, God's holiness: holiness always implies that which is separated from the evil, the false, or it implies true character. (3) **fear, honor,**^b **mother**, "put first because usually slighted." **sabbaths**,^c the seventh and all appointed days. (4) **idols**,^d nonentities, nothings, vanities, **molten**, as the golden calf.

The law of holiness.—The first division of the law of holiness which follows (vv. 3-8), deals with two duties of fundamental importance in the social and the religious life: the one, honor to parents; the other, reverence to God. The principle of reverence toward God is inculcated, not here by direct precept, but by three injunctions, obedience to which presupposes the fear of God in the heart. These are, (1) the keeping of the sabbaths; (2) the avoidance of idolatry; and (3) the observance of the law of the peace-offering. One reason seems to have determined the selection of each of these three injunctions, namely, that Israel would be more liable to fail in obedience to these than perhaps any other duties of the law. As for the sabbath, this, like the law of the peace-offering, was a positive, not a moral law; that is, it depended for its authority primarily on the explicit ordinance of God, instead of the intuition of the natural conscience. Hence it was certain that it would only be kept in so far as man retained a vivid consciousness of the Divine personality and moral authority. Moreover, as all history has shown, the law of the sabbath rest from labor constantly comes into conflict with man's love of gain and eager haste to make money. It is a life picture, true for men of every generation, when Amos (viii. 5) brings before us the Israelites of his day as saying, in their insatiate worldly greed, "When will the sabbath be gone, that we may set forth wheat?" As regards the selection of the second commandment, one can easily see that Israel's loyalty, surrounded as they were on every side with idolaters, was to be tested with peculiar severity on this point.

The Sabbath kept.—During the latter part of his life General Jackson was in the habit of coming down to New Orleans to see his old friends and comrades in arms and participate in the celebration of the glorious 8th of January. It happened on one of these visits that the 8th occurred on Sunday. General Plauché called upon the old hero and requested him to accompany the military to the battle ground on the anniversary of the great day. "I am going to church to-morrow," mildly observed the General. The military preparations for the celebration went on, and on Sunday morning at ten o'clock General Plauché called at the St. Charles and informed General Jackson that the military and civic processions were ready to accompany him to the scene of his glory. "General Plauché," responded old Hickory, turning upon him the glance of his kindly eye, "I told you I was going to church to-day." General Plauché withdrew, muttering to himself, "I might have known better." The celebration was postponed till the next day.—*Bib. III.*

5-8. (5) **offer** . . Lord, not only to reject idols, but to worship God, **freewill** at . . will, *lit.* that ye may be accepted. (6-8) See on vii. 15-18.

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Canaanites practiced these enormities that God was about to scourge them out of their land. If God indeed be a holy and righteous Governor among the nations, He could do nothing else."—*Exp. Bib.*

v. 25. Joseph Nichol Scott. The Extripation of the Canaanites Considered, i. 293.

recapitulation of duty

a 1 Pe. i. 16; Job i. 1; Ps. xxxvii. 37; Ge. v. 24; Phil. iii. 20, 21.

b Ex. xx. 12; De. v. 13; Ep. vi. 1-3; Lu. ii. 51.

c Ex. xx. 8, xxxi. 13; Mk. ii. 27, 28.

d Ex. xx. 4, 5; Le. xxvi. 1; 1 Co. x. 14; 1 Jo. v. 21.

"If we are surprised, at first, to see this place of honor in the law of holiness given to the fifth commandment (verse 3), our surprise will lessen when we remember how one learns to fear God, first of all through fearing and honoring his parents.—*Kellogg.*

freewill offering

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Ver. 5. "At your own will," or "that you may be accepted," i. e. do it as unto God, by His Word, for His glory, in dependence on His grace, with hearty resignation of self to Him.

"Some fancy a God made up altogether of mercy, a childish mercy,—as if His mercy had nothing else to do but to wrong all His other perfections, to make Him belle His truth, extinguish His justice, discard His wisdom and enslave His power."—*Charnock*.

harvest law

a De. xxiv. 19-21; Ru. ii. 15, 16.

Glean, to gather in *handfuls* the corn left by the reapers. *Fr. glaner—glane, ears of corn gathered.* A. S. *gilno*, a handful of corn.

b Matt. xxvi. 11; Gal. ii. 10; Ps. x. 2, 11, 12; De v. 19. c Ps. xxxvii. 21. d Ep. iv. 25; Col. iii. 9; Re. xxi. 8. e Ex. xx. 7; De v. 11; Ma. v. 33. f Ja. v. 12.

"See what provision the Lord maketh for His poor, commanding that the fuller cups of the richer sort may overflow into their empty dishes. James V. of Scotland was, for his charity, called the poor man's king; much more may God."—*Trapp*.

social laws

g Ja. v. 4; De. xxiv. 14, 15; Mal. iii. 5.

h Ja. ii. 1, 9, 10; Ps. lxxxii. 1, 4.

Plato would have him paid double that is not paid in due time. Men too often forget how a great part of the poor live, as the saying is, "from hand to mouth," so that the failure to get what is due

The law of the offering.—I. The heart was to be willing. 1. Feeling its need of peace with God; 2. Anxious to be at peace with Him. II. Not only to offer willingly, but in exact obedience to rule. 1. A whole sacrifice; 2. The penalty of disobedience. Sin increased, penalty inflicted.

Blasphemous defiance of God—It was near the close of one of those storms that deposit such a volume of snow upon the earth, that a middle-aged man, in one of the southern counties of Vermont, seated himself at a large fire in a log-house. He was crossing the Green Mountains from the western to the eastern side; he had stopped at the only dwelling of man in a distance of more than twenty miles, being the width of the parallel ranges of gloomy mountains; he was determined to reach his dwelling on the eastern side that day. In reply to a kind invitation to tarry in the house, and not dare the horrors of the increasing storm, he declared that he would go, and that the Almighty was not able to prevent him. His words were heard above the howling of the tempest. He traveled from the mountain-valley where he had rested, over one ridge, and one more intervened between him and his family. The labor of walking in the snow must have been great, as its depth became near the stature of a man; yet he kept on, and arrived within a few yards of the last summit, from whence he could have looked down upon his dwelling. He was near a large tree, partly supported by its trunk; his body bent forward, and his ghastly intent features told the stubbornness of his purpose, to overpass that little eminence. The Almighty had prevented him,—the currents of his life's blood were frozen. For more than thirty years that tree stood by the solitary road, scarred to the branches with names, letters, and hieroglyphics of death, to warn the traveler that he trod over a spot of fearful interest.

9--12. (9) *reap . . harvest*, benevolent consideration^a for the poor instead of merely selfish, covetous habit. *gather . . harvest*, let the fallen ears remain. (10) *vineyard*, fruit-garden of any kind. *grape*, fruit, esp. *fallen fruit*. (11) *steal*^b see Ex. xx. 15. *neither . . falsely*,^c another form of dishonesty. *lie*,^d dishonest speech. (12) *swear . . falsely*, accuse falsely^e or bear false testimony and use God's name^f in an unholy way.

A generous consideration for the poor.—1. The needs of the gleaner are to be respected. (1) In reaping the harvest, owners are instructed to spare the corners of their crops for the poor. What falls from the hand of the reaper is not to be gathered up again, but left to the gleaner. So in gleanings the vintage, the loose branches must be left to the poor and the stranger. (2) We must not consider that to be wasted which goes to the poor. (3) The harvest and vintage are seasons of joy. Such seasons should be seasons also of charity. Kindness purifies and so heightens joy. 2. The authority of God must be remembered. (1) "I am Jehovah thy Elohim." This gives the poor and the stranger a Divine right in the gleanings, which now to disregard becomes impiety and injustice. Those who refuse their rights to the poor will have to answer for it to God (Ps. ix. 18; xii. 5; lxxxii.; Isa. x. 1-4). (2) The Divine example should inspire and guide us. "He openeth his hand, and satisfieth every living thing." Man must not attempt to close the hand of God by refusing to the poor their due. (3) The blessing of God is promised to those who consider the poor (see Deut. xxiv. 19; Ps. xli. 1; Prov. xiv. 21).—*Pulpit Com.*

13-16. (13) *defraud*, oppress. *rob*, do violence. *wages*,^g the poor have no reserve capital: live fr. hand to mouth. (Luke iii. 14). (14) *curse*, disparage, defame *deaf*, if he does not hear thee, God does: this applies to the absent also. *blind*, either in sport or malice. *but . . God*, the all-seeing and all-merciful; who has given thee ears and eyes. (15) *do . . judgment*,^h not pervert justice, either as judge or witness. *respect . . mighty*, in courts of law there should be no partiality. *but . . neighbour*, acc. to merits of the case. (16) *talebearer*, peddler, petty trafficker in scandal. *neither . . neighbour*, either falsely accuse, or be silent where life is endangered; thus be in any way the cause of the loss of his life.

Law the bond of social morality.—Consider here the details of social law. I. The law of trade, forms of fraud. II. The law of hiring, prompt and frequent payment of the laborer's wages. III. The law for the infirm, considerate care for the deaf, blind; and, by inference, for all who suffer from natural defects. IV. The law of equity in administration of justice. Right,

eousness and neither person nor position to be regarded. V. The law of social intercourse. Government of tongue. Honorable regard for family secrets, etc.

Righteous judgment.—The power of the court of Areopagus at Athens was very great; and it is said to have been the first court that ever determined upon questions of life and death. It was customary to hold its sittings in the night only, and without light. The reason of this singular practice is said to have been, that the members might not be prejudiced for or against any accused person, by seeing his gestures and looks. Truth only was regarded, and no attempt to warp the opinion of the judges was permitted. — *Univ. Hist.*

17-22. (17) *hate . . brother*, commands here pass from outward acts to inward feelings. Do not hate for wrong done, but rebuke, *i. e.*, show him something better. *not . . him, lit.* not bear sin on his account; *i. e.* contract sin by withholding reproof. (18) *not . . grudge*, no smothered ill-will. *love . . thyself, i. e.* really, truly. (19) *ye . . statutes*,^b however trivial in appearance, yet Divine. *shalt . . kind*, not think to improve the physical order of the world. *not . . seed*, causing confusion in the harvest; and injury of one kind. *garment mingled*, perhaps because wool and linen were appointed for the priests; but more likely because unnatural mixtures, even of fabrics, were liable to lead up to dishonesty in character. (20) *woman . . bond-maid*, case of mixed social and domestic kind makes all ministration of law difficult, yet, in justice, must be avoided. (21) *he . . offering*, the transgressor must bring sacrifice.

Simplicity of manners.—This is suggested by the law relating to mixtures. I. Designed to keep the inventiveness of human ingenuity within reasonable bounds. The thirst for "witty inventions" in the antediluvial age was certainly somehow connected with corruption of manners. II. To prevent the absorption of too much time by worldly fashions, etc. III. To teach purity in the ceremonies of religion and treatment of Divine truth. The things admit not of human innovations.

Victory over self the best way to gain others.—Winthrop, the Puritan Governor of Massachusetts, had a wonderful control of his own passions. On one occasion one of the officers of the colony wrote him a "sharp letter," complaining of his official acts. He sent back the letter—would not keep such a letter of provocation by him. By and by, the writer of the letter, while there was a scarcity of food in the colony, sent to buy some of Winthrop's cattle. "Receive them," said the governor. "as a gift in token of my good will." The offender wrote back: "Sir, your overcoming of yourself hath overcome me." This way of dealing with offenders was loved by him. — *Kellogg*.

23-25. (23) *trees . . food*, anticipatory provision to finally result in gain to the husbandman; must abstain three years.^d (24) *holy*, plucking off the fruit or pinching off the blossoms three years made the fruit good the fourth. (25) *yield . . increase*, gratitude to God first, then increase for man in some measure deserving.

A curb to animal appetites.—The people after their long wilderness life, would be anxious to taste at once the fruit of the promised land. I. This law enforced self-control. II. Taught that the earth was the Lord's and the fulness thereof. III. Secured future advantages. The first harvest would prob. be scant. The people unused to tillage. By not using the fruit they learned the laws of supply, etc. IV. It also manifested the nature of the discipline of the past.

First fruits.—"The explanation of this peculiar regulation is to be found in a special application of the principle which rules throughout the law; that the first-fruit, whether the first-born of man or beast, or the first fruits of the field, shall always be consecrated unto God. But in this case the application of the principle is modified by the familiar fact that the fruit of a young tree, for the first few years of its bearing, is apt to be imperfect; it is not yet sufficiently grown to yield its best possible product. Because of this, in those years it could not be given to the Lord, for He must never be served with any but the best of everything; and thus until the fruit should reach its best, so as to be worthy of presentation to the Lord, the Israelite was meanwhile debarred from using it." — *Exp. Bib.*

26-29. (26) *enchantments*, auguries, divinations. *observe times*, omens fr. the sky, clouds, etc. (27) *round . . head*, trim the hair fr. the

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to them at the exact time appointed is frequently sore trial; and, moreover, by forcing them to buy on credit instead of for cash, of necessity increases the expense of their living, and so really robs them of that which is their own. — *Kellogg*.

simplicity of manners

a Ga. v. 14; Ja. ii. 8; 1 Pe. ii. 17; iii. 8-12; 1 Jo. iii. 10-18; 1 Th. iv. 9.

b Ma. vi. 22, 24.

c De. xxii. 9-11.

As opportunity goes by swiftly, do at once what love prompts, and "do it with thy might." There are wounds waiting to be healed, hearts to be comforted, estrangements to be conciliated, errors to be forgiven. — *Hom. Com.*

v. 17. T. Mantou, iv. 1195; J. Wesley, M. A., vi. 296; C. G. Finney, Lec., 34.

first years in Canaan

d "Every fruit tree here stands for three years, as a test of their obedience. Every stranger saw, in Israel's orchards and vineyards, proofs of their obedience to their supreme Lord—a witness for Him." — *Bonar*.

Acc. to Herodotus the Arabs honored their deity Orotal by cutting the hair away fr. the temples in a circular form. (iii. 8.) v. 30. Jos. Mede, i. 507; D. R. Warren, ii. 341; Dr. E. Munkhouse, 267; E. Southgate, B. A., ii. 60.

wizard, old age, neighbors

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temples. **neither . . beard**, another heathen custom. (28) **cutting . . dead**, prob. to propitiate evil spirits. **nor . . marks**, tattooing practiced by heathen. (29) **prostitute, etc.**, in heathen temples as acts of worship.

Popular superstitions.—I. These have been common in all lands. II. They are not to be traced to ignorance alone: eminent men have been superstitious. III. They indicate a general belief in supernatural powers and influences. IV. They should lead us to be grateful for, and trust in, the more sure word of prophecy.

Wounding for the dead.—From this injunction we may infer that the practice of inflicting wounds in compliment to the dead was prevalent, if not amongst the Jews themselves, at least amongst the nations with whom they held communication. Upon the demise of their kings, the Lacedæmonians were in the habit of assembling together, when every rank and sex expressed their grief by tearing the flesh from their foreheads with sharp instruments. Among the Naudowessies the men, to show how great their sorrow is, pierce the flesh of their arms above the elbows with arrows, the scars of which I could perceive on those of every rank in a greater or a less degree; and the women cut and gash their legs with sharp broken flints, till the blood flows very plentifully.—*Carver*.

a Le. xxvi. 2; Ge. ii. 2, 3; He. iv. 3, 4, 10, 11.

b Ex. xxii. 18; De. xviii. 10; Re. xxi. 8; 1 S. xxviii. 7; 1 Ch. x. 13; Is. viii. 19; Ac. xvi. 16, xix. 13-20.

c Ventriloquists, Greek *εγγαστριμύθοι*, those who speak out of the belly. This Gk. word is used by the LXX.

d Le. xx. 6, 27; De. xviii. 11.

"The ancient Egyptians, like the Lacedæmonians and the old Roms., appear to have been exemplary in this respect; as were, and are to this day, most of the E. nations."—*Spk. Com.*

e Pr. xx. 29; 1 Ti. v. 1.

f Ex. xxii. 21, xxiii. 9; De. x. 13; Jo. iv. 6-9; Lu. x. 29-37.

trade morality

g Am. viii. 5; De. xxv. 13, 15; Pr. xi. 1, xvi. 11, xx. 10; Mi. vi. 10, 11.

h 1 Co. xiii. 4, 7; Ro. xiii. 10; De. v. 1, vi. 25; Ma. v. 17-19.

"He who freely praises what he means to purchase, and he who enumerates the faults of what he means to sell, may set up a partnership with honesty."—*Lavater*.

30-34. (30) **sabbaths**,^a see v. 3. (31) **regard . . spirits**,^b *lit.* turn not to the oboth,^c persons supposed to be attended by invisible spirits, perhaps in some cases ventriloquists. **wizard**,^d knowing one. (32) **rise . . head**,^e *etc.* respect due to age inculcated. (33) **stranger**, foreigner. **ye . . him**,^f not oppress, defraud. (34) **thou . . thyself**, be mindful of his welfare: just in dealings, *etc.*

The almond-tree flourishing.—Give honor to the old man—I. For what he has been. There is something about all old objects that calls for our veneration: an old tree, for example, or an "ivy-mantled" ruin. And especially do we venerate them when we connect them with some historic event or scene. Think, then, when you see the aged man, what toils and trials have bleached those hairs to snow. Think what an honorable man is an "old disciple." II. For what he is. There are two things about old age that should win your kindness and regard. It is—1. Beautiful; 2. Dependent. III. For what he is soon to be. The light of earth is fading from his face; but another light is soon to break upon his dim eye; he is about to become young again.—*Edmond*.

Reverence for age.—Age naturally awakens our respect. A Greek historian tells how, in the pure and early and most virtuous days of the republic, if an old man entered the crowded assembly, all ranks rose to give room and place to him. Age throws such a character of dignity even over inanimate objects, that the spectator regards them with a sort of awe and veneration. We have stood before the hoary and ivy-mantled ruin of a bygone age with deeper feelings of respect than ever touched us in the marbled halls and amid the gilded grandeur of modern palaces; nor did the proudest tree which lifted its umbrageous head and towering form to the skies ever affect us with such strange emotion as an old, withered, wasted trunk that, though hollowed by time into a gnarled shell, still showed some green signs of life.—*Guthrie*.

35-37. (35) **unrighteousness . . judgment**; no unrighteousness where God's commandments are obeyed; every decision, every act or transaction is in accordance with truth; righteousness, too, is practical in all minor as well as great matters. **meteyard**,^g thy measure of length shall be honest, whether cubit, span, etc. **weight**, as talent, shekel. **measure**, as ephah, hin, etc. (36) **balances**, scales. **ephah**, standard of dry measure, 8 galls. and a half. **hin**, liquid meas. little less than 1 gall. and a half. **Egypt**, where you suffered fr. unrighteous exactions. (37) **therefore**,^h that you may be a more upright nation, and by contrast a teacher of others.

The law of holiness.—How much Israel needed this law all their history has shown. But it is not Israel alone which has needed, and still needs, to hear iterated this command, for the sin is found in every people in Christendom. It is of no account to keep the Sabbath—in a way—and reverence—outwardly—the sanctuary, and then on the week-day water milk, adulterate medicines, sugars and other foods, slip the yard-stick in measuring, tip the balance in weighing, and buy with one weight or measure and sell with another, "water" stocks and gamble in "margins," as the manner of many is. God hates, and even honest atheists despise religion of this kind.—*Kellogg*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1-6. (1, 2) **Molech**,^a see xviii. 21. **people . . land**, his neighbors. **stone . . stones**, the principal cap. punishment among the Jews. (3) **set . . man**, oppose him, withdraw protection. **to . . sanctuary**,^b "pollute the people as identified with the sanctuary." **to . . name**, lavishing on idols the honor due to God. (4) **hide . . eyes**, overlook, neglect to punish, wink at his sin. (5) **all**, they shall be dealt with as accomplices. (6) **soul . . spirits**, as case of Saul.

Sin at its worst. — I. Sin sometimes leads to a shocking distortion of the human judgment. How, we naturally ask, could men ever come to believe in the desirableness of such inhuman rites as those here prohibited? There is no account to be given of it but that sin, as it goes on its maleficent path, not only disfigures the life and corrupts the heart, but also degrades and distorts the understanding of men. II. Deliberate transgression makes all worship unacceptable if not sinful. The man who, while flagrantly violating the Law of Jehovah by "giving his seed unto Molech," presented himself, at the same time, before the tabernacle, was only "defiling the sanctuary" of the Lord and "profaning His Holy Name" (ver. 3) by such worthless devotion. III. Unrepented sin must bear its doom. "He shall surely be put to death," etc. (ver. 2); "I will cut him off from among his people" (ver. 3). There is no provision here stated of mercy for the penitent. IV. Connivance at deadly sin is a guilty participation in wrong, and must share its miserable doom. (Vers. 4, 5.) There are evils at which no friendship however dear, no kinship however close, may dare to wink. V. Those who are responsible for the Church's welfare must warn repeatedly against the most dangerous sins. — *Pulpit Com.*

The punishment of stoning. — One of the most common punishments in use among the Jews was stoning, which appears to have been a most grievous and terrible infliction: "When the criminal arrived within four cubits of the place of execution, he was stripped naked, only leaving a covering before; and, his hands being bound, he was led up to the fatal spot, which was an eminence about twice the height of a man. The first executioners of the sentence were the witnesses, who generally pulled off their clothes for that purpose; one of them threw him down with great violence upon his loins; if he rolled upon his breast, he was turned upon his loins again; and if he died by the fall, the sentence of the law was executed; but if not, the other witness took a great stone and dashed it on his breast as he lay upon his back; and then, if he was not dispatched, all the people that stood by, threw stones at him till he died." — *Lewis*.

7-11. **Sanctify**,^d separate, *i. e.* fr. idolatry, etc. **holy**, in heart, life, worship. (8) **I . . you**, make you a distinct and holy people. God's work in man's behalf always joined to man's true work in behalf of himself. (9) **curse**,^e make light of. **shall . . death**, such a crime fraught with special evil in a patriarchate. (10) **man**, etc.,^f see xviii. 20. (11) **man**, etc., see xviii. 8.

Reverence due to parents. — I. Reasons for treating them with respect. 1. To them, under God, we owe our existence; 2. Their toil and self-denial are great to provide us with the necessities of life; 3. They are held responsible by law and by society for our character, conduct, etc.; 4. We may be to them sources of great sorrow or joy; 5. God enjoins filial respect. II. Penalties incurred by filial misconduct. 1. The anger of God; 2. The reproaches of men; 3. The stings of conscience; 4. Retribution. A bad child will make a bad parent. In our own children we shall reap the reward of our own misconduct.

Filial love. — Frederick the Great of Prussia, during his last illness, endured many restless nights, which he endeavored to soothe by conversing with the servant who sat up with him. On one of these occasions, he inquired of a young Pomeranian from whence he came. "From a little village in Pomerania." "Are your parents living?" "An aged mother." "How does she maintain herself?" "By spinning." "How much does she gain daily by it?" "Sixpence." "But she cannot live well on that?" "In Pomerania it is cheap living." "Did you never send her anything?" "O yes, I have sent her, at different times, a few dollars." "That was bravely done; you are a good boy. You have a deal of trouble with me. Have patience; I shall endeavor to lay something by for you, if you behave well." The monarch kept his

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Molech

a 2 K. xvii. 17, xxiii. 10; Ez. xx. 26, 31.

b Ez. v. 11; Pr. xxix. 1; 1 K. xi. 6 — 13; Is. i. 24.

c De. xvii. 2, 5; Ho. ix. 17; Mal. ii. 11.

"It is the peculiar interest of this chapter that it gives us certain important sections of the penal code of a people whose government was theocratic, whose only King was the Most Holy and Righteous God." — *Exp. Bib.*

Innocent VIII. issued the celebrated bull *Summis Desiderantis* in 1484, directing inquisitors and others to put to death all practisers of witchcraft, and other diabolical arts. And Dr. Sprenger (*Life of Mohammed*) computes that as many as nine millions of persons have suffered death for witchcraft since the bull of Innocent.

filial duty, etc.

d Le. xi. 45, xviii; 4, 5, xix. 2, xx. 22 — 26.

e Ex. xxi. 17; De. xxvii. 16; Ma. xv. 4; Mk. vii. 10.

f De. xxii. 22; Ex. xx. 14.

"Honor your parents, *i. e.* 1. Obey them; 2. Respect them; 3. Treat their opinions with regard. 4. Treat their habits with respect. They may be different. ours may be antiquated, and to us strange, odd, whimsical; but they are the habits of a parent, and they are not to be ridiculed. 5. Provide for them when sick, weary, old, and infirm." — *Barnes*.

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unnatural
lusts

a Jos vii. 15.

b Jude 17-19.

c Ge. xx. 2, 9-12.

"Although the crimes mentioned in this chapter, are not unknown in modern Christendom, yet, while the law of Moses punished all these with death, modern law treats them with comparative leniency. . . . What are crimes of this kind but assaults on the very being of the family? Where there is incest or adultery, we may truly say the family is murdered; what murder is to the individual, that precisely, are crimes of this class to the family. In the theocratic code these were, therefore, made punishable with death; and, we venture to believe, with abundant reason." — *Kellogg*.

d This the view of *Michaelis*, *St. Augustine*, *Bush*, etc., see *Je. xxii. 30*.

"Where God has declared certain alliances and connections to be criminal, we shall permit or condone them at our peril. God rules, whether modern majorities will it or not." — *Exp. Bib.*

lines of
demarcation

e Ex. xlii. 5, xxxiii. 3; 1 S. xiv. 25, 26; De. xxxii. 13, 14.

f Am. iii. 2; 1 Pe. i. 16; Tit. ii. 14.

g Ex. xxii. 18; 1 S. xxviii. 7, 8; 1 Ch. x. 13, 14.

We are reminded that God visited His heavy judgments upon the Canaanitish nations precisely for

word, for a few nights after, the Pomeranian, being again in attendance, received several pieces of gold; and heard to his great joy and surprise, that one hundred rix dollars had been settled on his mother during her life.

12-17. (12) *man*, etc., see xviii. 15. (13) *man*, etc., see xviii. 22. (14) *man*, etc., see xviii. 17. *they . . . fire*, having first been stoned.^a (15, 16) *man . . . beast*,^b etc., see xviii. 23. (17) *man*, etc.,^c see xviii. 9.

A profligate woman. — A poor wretched female, religiously educated, but afterwards abandoned to sin, misery, and want, was struck with horror at hearing her own child repeat, as soon as she could well speak, some of the profane language which she had learned of herself. She trembled at the thought that she was not only going to hell herself, but leading her child thither. She instantly resolved that, with the first sixpence she could procure, she would purchase Dr. Watt's Divine Songs, of which she had some recollection, to teach her infant daughter. She did so; and, on opening the book, her eye caught the following striking verse:—

"Just as the tree cut down, that fell

To north or southward, there it lies;

So man departs to heaven or hell,

Fix'd in the state wherein he dies."

She read on; the event was blessed to her conversion, and she lived and died an honorable professor of religion.

18-21. (18) *man*, etc., see xviii. 19. (19) *thou*, etc., see xviii. 12. (20) *man*, etc., see xviii. 14. *childless*, i. e. not literally, but in a civil sense.^d (21) *man*, etc., see xviii. 16.

The death-penalty. — "This chapter gives a most weighty testimony against the modern tendency to a relaxation of the laws which regulate the relations of the sexes. That such a tendency is a fact is admitted by all; by some with gratulation, by others with regret and grave concern. French law, for instance, has explicitly legalized various alliances which in this law God explicitly forbids, under heavy penal sanctions, as incestuous; German legislation has moved about as far in the same direction; and the same tendency is to be observed, more or less, in all the English-speaking world. In some of the United States, especially, the utmost laxity has been reached, in laws which, under the name of divorce, legalize gross adultery, — laws which had been a disgrace to pagan Rome. So it goes. Where God denounced the death-penalty, man first apologises for the crime, then lightens the penalty, then abolishes it, and at last formally legalizes the crime. This modern drift bodes no good; in the end it can only bring disaster alike to the well-being of the family and of the State. The maintenance of the family in its integrity and purity is nothing less than essential to the conservation of society and the stability of good government. To meet this growing evil, the Church needs to come back to the full recognition of the principles which underlie this Levitical code; especially of the fact that marriage and the family are not merely civil arrangements, but Divine institutions; so that God has not left it to the caprice of a majority to settle what shall be lawful in these matters." — *Exp. Bib.*

22-27. (22) *keep . . . do*, carefully observe; all difference between the Israelites and others would depend upon this. (23) *committed . . . things*, God's ground of abhorrence of other nations clearly stated. (24) *ye . . . land*, a punishment for them, a warning to you. *you . . . it*, as I promised; and that you may show the nations a more excellent way. *land . . . honey*,^e see Ex. iii. 8, 14. (25) *difference*, see xi. (26) *severed*,^f by laws, privileges, religion. (27) *wizard*,^g etc., see xix. 31.

Lines of demarcation. — The separation of Israel from the rest of the world — I. Was effected by a God of wisdom and power. A herd of poor brick-makers could not of themselves have made a place for themselves, or constituted themselves a nation. II. Was based on moral differences. They were to be holy, etc. III. Was characterized by peculiarities of law and religion. IV. Was to be associated with distinguished privileges.

Holiness the moral end of government. — God has declared that not merely the material well-being of man, but *holiness*, is the moral end of government and of life; and He will find ways to enforce His will in this respect. "The nation that will not serve Him shall perish." All this is not theology, merely,

or ethics, but history. Let us not miss of taking the lesson by imagining that this law was for Israel, but not for other peoples. Our modern democracies, English, American, French, German, or whatever they be, would do well to pause in their progressive repudiation of the law of God in many social questions, and heed this solemn warning. For, despite the unbelief of multitudes, the Holy One still governs the world, and it is certain that He will never abdicate His throne of righteousness to submit any of His laws to the sanction of a popular vote.—*Kellogg*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-4. (1) **none . . people**, hence, save in case of near kin, a priest was not to assist in laying out the dead. (2, 3) **kin . . him**, a tender regard for family affection shown in this exception. **defiled**, and be subjected to purification. (4) **defile . . people**, the meaning seems to be that though the dead person had been a chief man among his people, the priest was not to defile himself. Social distinctions leveled by death.

The sanctity of priesthood. — I. Was to be official. II. Moral. III. Social. IV. Personal. V. As such to reflect the holiness of God, and be a long enduring type of the holiness of the great High Priest of our profession.

Practical holiness. — The shining love of John, the burning and shining zeal of Paul, were a splendid comment on their words, and have caused the way of God to be known on earth better than the arguments of all the schoolmen. The shining holiness and far-reaching fervor of Swartz and Eliot and Zinzendorf made known to entire communities the great salvation — the saving health of God. The shining sanctity of Fénelon sent away from under his roof the scoffing Earl of Peterborough, with the exclamation, "I must not stay here, or I shall become a Christian in spite of myself;" and the shining generosity of Henry Thornton led some one to remark, "It is not more Boyle and Bampton Lectures that are wanted to convert the world; it wants a thousand Henry Thorntons."

5-8. (5) **baldness**,^a one law for priest and people, *see* xix. 27, 28, no practices to disfigure bodily appearance. **neither . . beard**, and thus conform to heathen customs. (6) **bread**,^b *i. e.* food: hence all sacrificial offerings. (7) **profane**,^c an illegitimate daughter or ungodly woman. **holy**, his domestic relations to be ruled by this principle. (8) **he . . thee**,^d the people to regard their priests with peculiar respect: the priests to deserve that respect.

Reasons for priestly holiness. — "For he is holy unto his God:" *i. e.* — I. He shall manifest the holiness of his Divine Master. II. He shall illustrate the holiness that God approves. III. He shall practically expound the holiness which he enforces. "Like priest, like people."

The singularity of holiness. — What though the polite man count thy fashion a little odd, and too precise; it is because he knows nothing above that model of goodness which he hath set himself, and therefore approves of nothing beyond it; he knows not God, and therefore doth not discern and esteem what is most like Him. When courtiers come down into the country, the common home-bred people possibly think their habit strange; but they care not for that — it is the fashion at court. What need then, that Christians should be so tender-foreheaded, as to be put out of countenance because the world looks upon holiness as a singularity. It is the only fashion in the highest court — yea, of the King of kings Himself.—*Coleridge*.

9-15. (9) **she . . father**,^e the children of all ministers of the Gospel should consider how their conduct affects their father's reputation and success. **she . . fire**, prob. stoned first. (10) **that . . garments**, official dress. **not . . head**,^{lit.} shall not make free his head: *i. e.* neglect his hair. **nor . . clothes**, as an ordinary mourner. (11) **neither**, *etc.*, *see* on vv. 2, 3. (12) **for . . him**, as officiating he is occupied with higher relations and duties. (13) **he . . wife**,^f celibacy of priesthood a modern innovation. (14) **his . . people**,^g not only of the Hebs., but tribe of Levi. (15) **shall . . seed**, "by a marriage wh. was not in keeping with the holiness of his office."

The priest's household. — I. His wife to be well chosen. II. His daughters to be chaste. III. The social intercourse of his children to be wisely over-

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this very thing, their doing of these things which are in this law of holiness forbidden. — *Exp. Bib.*

laws of holiness for the priesthood

"Extravagant demonstrations of sorrow, whether in dress or in prolonged separation from the sanctuary and active service of God, as the manner of many is, are all as contrary to the New Testament law of holiness as to that of the Old."—*Kellogg*.

the priest's wife

a De. xiv. 1; Ex. xlv. 20; Je. xli. 5. b 1 Pe. ii. 5; Re. i. 6, xx. 6; Ps. cxxxii. 9, 16. c 1 Ti. iii. 2, 8-12. d Jo. xvii. 17, 19.

How often we see a young man or a young woman professing to be a disciple of Christ, entering into marriage alliance with a confessed unbeliever. And yet the law is laid down as explicitly in the N. T. as in the O. that marriage shall be only "in the Lord."—*Exp. Bib.*

the priest's daughter

e Ge. xxxviii. 24; Tit. i. 6.

"It appears that, if the children of believers sin, their guilt will be judged more heavy than that of others; and that justly, because they thereby cast dishonor on their believing parents, and in them soil and defame the honor of God."—*Exp. Bib.*

f As the high priest was a type of Christ, his wife who was to be a virgin, was a type of the Church. See 2 Co. xi. 2. g Song vi. 9; Ep v. 27.

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A young man convicted of murder was visited in his cell by his mother, when he said to her, "If it had not been for you, I should never have been here!" She replied, "I'm sure I never told you to do any harm." He rejoined, "I'm sure you never told me to do any good."

blemishes in the priesthood

α Le. x. 3; Ps. lxxv. 4; 1 Th. iv. 12.

δ Le. xxii. 21.

ε De. xxiii. 1.

δ "Lest his ministry be slighted for his personal defects and deformities; how much more for his ignorance, envy, indirect aims, uneven walking, injudiciousness, unheavenly mindedness, etc., purported by these bodily imperfections."

As contrasted with the world without, it is not then enough that Christians should be equally correct and moral in life with the best men of the world; though too many seem to be living under that impression. They must be more than this; they must be holy: God will wink at things in others which He will not deal lightly with in them.—Kellogg.

ε 1 Pe. i. 15, 16.

ζ He. iii. 2.

"Our bodily afflictions, blessed be God, cannot exclude us from His heavenly glory."—Scott.

"And now, though such blemishes do

ruled. IV. The whole evidently designed to make the priest's a pattern family. See facts of history (as case of Eli) illustrating this principle.

Failure in family government.—It is a point very commonly overlooked or forgotten, that parental government is genuine only as it bears rule for the same end that God Himself pursues in the religious order of the world. True family government will be just as religious as His, neither more nor less. It will have exactly the same ends, and no other. Just here, accordingly, is the main root of mischief and failure in the government of Christian families. The parents are not Christian enough to think of bearing rule for strictly Christian ends. They drop into a careless, irresponsible way, and rule for anything that happens to chime with their feeling or convenience. They want their children to shine, or be honorable, or rich, or brave, or fashionable; so to serve themselves in them, or their pride, or their mere natural fondness. They bring in thus bad motives to corrupt all government, and even to corrupt themselves. If they have some care of piety in their government, it is a kind of amphibious care, sometimes in one element and sometimes in another. They are never truly and heartily in God's ends. And the result is, that what they do in the name of religion, or to inculcate religion, shows their want of appetite, and has really no effect but to make both God's authority and theirs irksome.—Bushnell.

16—21. (16, 17) **blemish**,^a deformed or disfigured. **approach**, the altar, etc., in his official capacity; it would be regarded as an indignity to the Deity to consecrate a blemished or an imperfect man to His service. (18) **he . . . superfluous**,^b first four conspicuous defects. (19, 20) **or . . . dwarf**, second four; **or . . . broken**, last four defects, the last implying possible sexual incapacity.^c (21) **shall not . . . offer**,^d repetition for impressiveness.

Personal drawbacks to influence.—I. In advanced society the mind is the measure of the man. Mental qualities often independent of bodily defects. This may be illustrated by many examples. II. In the infancy of society this truth may not have been recognized. Moses legislated for the time then present. The people might associate the personal defects of their priests unfavorably with the rites of religion; as children are apt to let a teacher's defects detract from the respect and attention they owe. Are not preachers' oddities (not to speak of other things) often hindrances to the truth in our day? Is there no preacher with "a blemish in his eye?"—men who can see only one truth, one side of the truth, one class among his hearers? Are there no dwarfs?—men of low moral or mental stature?

Blemishes in the priesthood.—Even those of the seed of Aaron who had any personal defect, were not allowed to take a part in the offerings of the Lord. The priesthood among the Hindoos is hereditary, but a deformed person cannot perform a ceremony in the temple; he may however, prepare the flowers, fruits, oils, and cakes, for the offerings, and also sprinkle the premises with holy water. The child of a priest being deformed at the birth will not be consecrated. A priest having lost an eye or a tooth, or being deficient in any member or organ, or who has not a wife, cannot perform the ceremony called Teevasam, for the manes of departed friends. Neither will his incantations, or prayers, or magical ceremonies, have any effect.—Roberts.

22—24. (22) **eat . . . bread**, mercifully provided for, supported, but shall not serve. God requires a whole man for His holy service. (23) **profane**, lower the estimation. **sanctuaries**,^e places esp. holy; altar, most holy place, etc. (24) **Moses . . . Aaron**,^f those whom it personally concerned: and others for the suggestions it contained.

Divine compassion for the involuntarily infirm.—I. The blemish implied. Those described in vv. preceding. Malformations from birth, disease, or accident. II. The merciful care of them. 1. They were exempt from onerous duties; 2. But they were not to be deprived of lawful sources of income; 3. The people had to nourish them: hence their burden had to be borne by others; 4. The principle of this humane law enforces the care of the infirm, etc.

Blemishes in the priesthood.—Among the heathen, persons of the most respectable appearance were appointed to the priesthood; and the emperor, both among the Greeks and Romans, was both king and priest. Considering the object of religious worship, it is not possible that too much circumspection can be maintained in every part of it. If great men deem it reproachful to

have things imperfect presented to them, it may most reasonably be supposed that such offerings would be rejected with anger by God. The general opinion was, that a priest who was defective in any member was to be avoided as ominous. At Elis, in Greece, the judges chose the finest-looking man to carry the sacred vessels of the deity; he that was next him in beauty and elegance led the ox; and the third in personal beauty carried the garlands, ribands, wine, and the other things used in sacrifice. Among most nations of antiquity, persons who had bodily defects were excluded from the priesthood. Among the Greeks "it was required, that whoever was admitted to this office should be sound and perfect in all his members, it being thought a dishonor to the gods to be served by any one that was lame, maimed, or any other way imperfect: and therefore at Athens, before their consecration, they were *ωφέλεις*, i. e. perfect and entire, neither having any defect, nor anything superfluous."—*Rosenmüller*. Seneca says, "that Metellus, who had the misfortune to become blind, when he saved the Palladium from the flames, on the burning of the temple of Vesta, was obliged to lay down the priesthood:" and he adds, "Every priest whose body is not faultless, is to be avoided like a thing of bad omen."—*Rosenmüller*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

1-7. (1, 2) . that. themselves, when ceremonially unclean. holy . . Israel, i. e. things consecrated. (3) cut . . presence,^b excluded fr. the sanctuary. (4) until . . clean,^c see on xv. 13. whoso . . dead, see xi. etc. man . . him, see xv. 16. (5) creeping, etc., see xi. 29, 31, 43; xx. 25. man, etc., see xv. 5, 7, 19. (6) soul, i. e. person. shall . . even,^d see xi. 24; xv. 5. (7) when . . down,^e the priest who had contracted defilement had to go without food till sundown when he purified himself in the prescribed way.

On marring the good of others. — I. The case supposed. Some people intent on their religious duty have devoted some acceptable sacrifice to God; but before it is offered, others being ceremonially impure, pollute it; and render it useless for the end proposed. 1. Such people increase their own guilt; 2. Hinder the piety of others. II. The old principle applied. Sometimes men who would do good are hindered by others. Thus, it is proposed to devote certain time to the Lord, when some thoughtless one steps in and monopolizes the time. Or money is laid up for sacred uses, and the sinful obtain possession of it. Or affections are about to be set on good things, when other objects are interposed.

The life of holiness. — Holiness is the life of the Church; it is this that makes the Church a living body, and consequently the means and agent of its own growth and happiness. A living thing grows from itself, and not by accession from without, as a house or a ship grows. A flower does not grow by adding a leaf to it, nor a tree by fastening a branch to it, nor man by fixing a limb to his frame. Everything that has life grows by a converting process, which transforms the food into means of nourishment and of growth and enlargement. A holy Church lives and its holiness converts all its ordinances and provisions into means of deep-rooted, solid, enlarged, and beautiful usefulness. — *Jenkyn*.

8-13. (8) that . . itself,^f see xi. 39; xvii. 15; how much more were the priests bound by this law. (9) lest . . it,^g be accounted as sinners and punished. (10) stranger,^h not of the fam. of Aaron. sojourner, visitor. (11) if . . money,ⁱ and hence, one of his household.^j (12) stranger, one of ano. fam. she . . things, she now is of the fam. into wh. she mar. (13) she . . meat,^k death or the law having dissolved the tie that bound her to another fam.

Close communion. — I. The ordinances of the Lord not to be profaned by the disqualified. II. Disqualifications based on national and social relations. III. Such disqualifications might be removed under the law. IV. They do not exist under the Gospel. No bond or free; all one in Christ. V. Modern disqualifications solely of a spiritual kind.

The Lord's Table. — "No man who has any just apprehension of Scriptural truth can well doubt that we have here a lesson which is of the highest present-day importance. When one goes out into the world and observes the practices in which many whom we meet at the Lord's Table habitually

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not disable men from the ministry of the Gospel, such remarkable deformities as apparently procure contempt, should discourage any from undertaking that work, except where such persons feel themselves irresistibly called to it. But that which in the evangelical ministry is most liable to exception is, such blemishes in the mind or manners as render such men incompetent to teach others, and unfit to be public examples." — *Assem. Annot.*

the priest and holy things

a Le. xxi. 22.

b Le. xx. 17, vii. 20; Ps. lxxxix. 7.

c 1 Th. iv. 3, 4, 7; Jude 23.

d He. x. 22. vii. 26

e Nu xviii. 11, 13; 1 Jo. i. 6.

A fable says, that a horse, being too weak to contend with a stag, called a man to his aid, who, getting on the horse's back, quickly put the stag to flight; but the horse could never get the man off his back, nor the bit out of his mouth. So it is with obligations incurred by receiving aid from others.

the priest's household

f Ez. xlii. 31.

g Ez. xxii. 26, Mi. iii. 11, 12; Lam. iv. 13, 14; Zep. iii. 4.

h Ma. xii. 3-6; 1 S. xxi. 6; Ep. ii. 19.

i 2 Co. v. 18; Ep. iii. 14, 15.

j "This shows how completely a purchased bondman was incorporated into the household." — *Spk. Com.*

k Ge. xxxviii. 11.

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sins of
ignorance

a Ps. xix. 12; Ps cxxxix. 23, 24.
b Num. xviii. 32.
"Of a small handful of outward things, I am ready to say, it is enough; but that which I long so passionately for, is a large heart full of God in Christ. Thou art my Sun; the best of creatures are but stars, deriving the lustre they have from Thee." — *Dr. Arrowsmith*.

offerings
without blemish

c Nu. xv. 14.
d De. xv. 21; Mal. i. 8, 14; Ro. xii. 1, 2; 1 Pe. i. 18, 19; Ep. v. 27; He. ix. 14; Jo. i. 29.
e Nu. xv. 15, 16.
"The question is whether the resident foreigner is meant, or one dwelling in another land who desired to show respect to the God of Israel (1 K. viii. 14). The Rabbins take the latter alternative, wh. the Heb. seems to favor. So understood, the passage is one of those wh. indicate the beneficent breadth with which the law was administered." — *Spk. Com.*

choice of
victims

f To prevent the slaughter of the young "in the presence of the dam, bec. this occasions to animals extreme grief; nor is there in this respect, a diff. betw. the distress of man and that of the irrational creature." — *Maimonides*.
g Ps. cvii. 22, xxii. 25, cxvi. 17; Am. iv. 5.
h Ps. xix. 7-11, cxix. 1-4, 9, 14.
i Ps. viii. 9, ix. 10.

indulge, whether in business or in society, — the crookedness in commercial dealings and sharp dealing in trade, the utter dissipation in amusement, of many Church members, — a spiritual man cannot but ask, Where is the discipline of the Lord's house? Surely, this law of holiness applies to a multitude of such cases; and it must be said that when such eat of the holy things, they 'profane them.' — *Ecp. Bib.*

14-16. (14) unwittingly,^a unknowingly. fifth, of the value of the holy thing. unto it, i. e. to the value what was eaten. (15) they, the priests. profane . . . Israel,^b either by misappropriating or misapplying them themselves: or suffering Israel in ignorance to do so. (16) suffer . . . trespass, by the neglect of any essential ceremony. when . . . things, they were not to eat of what the people offered, without doing with the offering what the law enjoined; as heaving, waving, etc.

With respect to the families of priests. — "(1) The stranger that sojourneth in Israel must become regularly proselyted to entitle him to the privileges of the Law. So those who would enjoy the corresponding spiritual privileges of the gospel must first become disciples of Jesus. (2) The hired servant in the family of a priest is not sufficiently incorporated in the family to entitle him to eat of the holy things. And there are servants of the gospel — persons who take a commendable interest in its outward prosperity — who yet are not of the "household of faith," and have no experience of its spiritual mysteries. (3) The daughter of a priest, by marrying a stranger, forfeits her right to eat of the holy things. If now in her father's house, she is simply a visitor, and has to be provided with common food. By yoking with the ungodly, the children of God forfeit his favor, and are only tolerated in the Church as visitors." — *Pulpit Com.*

17-25. (17, 18) Aaron . . . Israel, priest and people to cooperate in performance of the law. (19) at . . . will,^c lit. for your favorable acceptance. (20) not . . . acceptable,^d must be "perfect to be accepted," see v. 21; general rule repeated as to introduction to what follows. (21) accomplish . . . vow, perhaps promise made in time of impending danger (Gen. xxviii. 20-22, Jonah i. 16). (23) mayst . . . offer, Hebrew writers understand by free-will offering, in this case, not an offering for sacrifice on the altar, where a blemished beast under no circumstances was allowed, but for the maintenance of the priests, or for sacred uses in general; as, for instance, to be sold for the reparation of the temple, etc." — *Bush*. (25) stranger's hand.^e

True willingness measured by the quality of the offering. — I. The people were to offer of their own free will. II. But they were not free to offer whatever their own imperfect will might select. III. The will of man was to act in obedience to the will of God. IV. The perfection of the offering thus willingly made an indication of the extent of the harmony between the human and the Divine will.

Our best for God. — Some people give grudgingly, that is to say, they come up to the collection-box with a limp. Many serve Christ with a broken arm. The holy work is done, but it is painfully and slowly done. Among the heathen, I believe, they never offered in sacrifice to the gods a calf that had to be carried. The reason was that they considered that the sacrifice ought to be willing to be offered, and so it must be able to walk up to the altar. Take care that you bring your bodies a living sacrifice. We must not bring Him the mere chrysalis of a man, out of which the life has gone; but we must bring before Him our living, unmaimed selves if we would be acceptable before Him. — *Spurgeon*.

26-33. (26) Lord . . . Moses, separate regulations, yet logically connected with that before said concerning sacrificial animals. (27) eight . . . accepted, not being fit for sacrifice, till it was fit for food. (28) kill . . . day, this to prevent cruelty,^f (29) at . . . will,^g see v. 19. (30) same . . . morrow, see vii. 15; xix. 6. (31) therefore, etc.,^h see xviii. 29. (32) shall . . . name, etc.,ⁱ see v. 9; x. 3; xi. 44, 45. (33) brought . . . Egypt, see xi. 45; xix. 36.

The truly religious to be the supporters of religion (v. 25). — I. They were themselves to support their priests, and maintain their rites, etc. II. They were not to accept or present the offering of the stranger. For many reasons the stranger might be tempted, or compelled, to this, but for this law. His offering could not benefit him; hence, in justice, it was not to be accepted. Does not apply to much in the church life of the present.

Divine worship. — “We fully recognize the fact that, as compared with the old dispensation, the New Testament allows in the conduct and order of worship a far larger liberty than then. But, in our age, the tendency, alike in politics and in religion, is to the confounding of liberty and license. Because the New Testament lays down but few laws concerning the order of Divine worship, it does not follow that these few are of no consequence, and that men may worship in all respects just as they choose, and equally please God. To illustrate this matter. It does not follow, because the New Testament allows large liberty as regards the details of worship, that therefore we may look upon the use of images or pictures in connection with worship as a matter of indifference. If told that these are merely used as an aid to devotion, — the very argument which in all ages has been used by all idolaters, — we reply that, be that as it may, it is an aid which is expressly prohibited under the heaviest penal sanctions in both Testaments.” — *Kellogg*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

1-3. (1, 2) Regulations about sanctuary and sacrifices, priests and people, are here followed by those about special seasons. **feasts**, appointed times. **convocations**,^a a calling together of the people, gen. by sound of trumpet.^b (3) **Sabbath**,^c to this is awarded the first place. Those who violate the Sabbath will not observe the rest of the law. Sabbath observance lies at the foundation of religious obedience.

Sabbath observance. — I. The Sabbath to be publicly observed, — a holy convocation. II. To be a family observance, — in all your dwellings. III. A personal observance, — ye shall do no work therein.

The feasts of the Lord. — It is of consequence to observe that the Revisers have corrected the error of the Authorized Version, which renders two perfectly distinct words alike as “feasts;” and have distinguished the one by the translation, “set feasts,” the other by the one word, “feasts.” The precise sense of the former word is given in the margin “appointed seasons,” and it is naturally applied to all the set times of special religious solemnity which are ordained in this chapter. But the other word translated “feast,” — derived from a root meaning “to dance,” whence “feast” or “festival,” — is applied to only three of the former six “appointed seasons,” namely, the feasts of Unleavened Bread, of Pentecost, and of Tabernacles; as intended to be, in a special degree, seasons of gladness and festivity, — *Exp. Bib.*

4-8. (4) **proclaim**, by the trumpet on the day of the month on which to be observed. (5) **first month**, *Abib* in Pentateuch, *Nisan* in later books of Scripture (our March-April), **at even**, “between the two evenings,” **passover**,^d see Ex. xii., “the feast of unleavened bread”^e (v. 6). (7) **no . . . work**, shall not pursue usual occupation; for violations person was not stoned as in violating observance of Sabbath, but by infliction of forty stripes save one. (8) **offering** . . . **fire**, seven days, and in addition to ordinary daily sacrifices.

The Hebrew months. — Of course there is some dif. in making the Heb. mos. correspond to those in our calendar, 12 of wh. very nearly make up a solar year. This may be ill. by the fact that in 1853 Nisan 1 fell on Mar. 30, Nisan therefore nearly = April; whereas in 1863 Nisan 1 fell on Mar. 21; and in 1865 on Mar. 28. We may best reach a definite conclusion by the observation of the seasons in Palestine. Now travelers inform us that barley harvest is, even in the hot neighborhood of Jericho, not till ab. the middle of April. But the firstfruits were to be presented Nisan 15, or just after (Le. xxiii. 5-11). Hence that month must have coincided rather with our April than, as some would have it, with our March; and the intercalation must have been managed so as to bring up the month to that time. The Jewish months may, therefore, be arranged thus: — 1. *Nisan*, or *Abib* = April; 2. *Jyar*, or *Zif* = May; 3. *Sivan* = June; 4. *Tammuz* = July; 5. *Ab* = August; 6. *Elul* = September; 7. *Ethanim*, or *Tisri* = October; 8. *Bul* or *Marchesvan* = November; 9. *Chisleu* = December; 10. *Tebeth* = January; 11. *Sebat* = February; 12. *Adar* = March; (13. *Ve-adar*, intercalated).

9-14. (9, 10) **when . . . land**, anticipatory; third of four instances having no immediate application to Israel. **sheaf**,^f first and only mention of this law. Heb. *omer* = sheaf,^g or a measure,^h (12) **offer**,ⁱ as specially pertaining

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xxv. 11; Song i. 3; Ma. vi. 9; Luke xl. 2; Ps. cxv. 1; Is. xxvii. 8; Jo. xvii. 11; Re. xv. 3, 4.

the festivals

the Sabbath

a He. xii. 23; Re. vii. 9; Ge. xlix. 10.

b Nu. x. 8-10.

c Ex. xx. 8-10; Le. xix. 3; Is. lvi. 2, lviii. 13, 14; Ne. xiii. 15-22; He. iv. 9-5, 9.

“The day most calm; most bright; the fruit of this, the next world’s bud.”

the passover

d Ex. xii. 27, 43-49. xiii. 6-10. Ma. xxvi. 2, 19, 26-29.

e Ex. xxiv. 18; De. xvi. 1-8; Ex. xiii. 6-10; 1 Co. v. 7, 8.

Passover and unleavened bread not only looked backward, but forward. For the Apostle Paul writes, (1 Cor. v. 7, 8): “Purge out the old leaven. * * For our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ.” — *Ex. Bib.*

the firstfruits

f 1 Co. xv. 20; Jo. xii. 24; Col. i. 15-18; Ro. xi. 16; Ma. xxviii. 5, 6; Jo. xx. 17.

g De. xxiv. 19; Ru. ii. 7, 15.

h Ex. xvi. 16, 18, 36; Le. xix. 35, 36.

i He. ix. 11-14, 24; Ro. i. 23; Re. v. 6; Ro. vi. 9-10.

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a Le ii. 14-16.

b Ex. xxiii. 19; Mi.
vii. 1; De. xxvi. 2;
Mal. iii. 6

to the first sheaf, (13) **two . . deals,**^a *i. e.* ab. 7 quarts. (14) **neither . . ears,**^b *i. e.* the produce of fields in any form. **until . . God,** in all things God is to be first thought of.

Religious duty before personal gratification (v. 14).—I. God to be heeded rather than self. II. The soul to be cared for rather than the body. III. Eternity to be thought of more than time. IV. The principle of this law to be perpetually binding. V. Honoring God secures His blessing. Seek *first* the kingdom of God, *etc.*

The sheaf.—First it was reaped. And this was done in a very solemn and pompous manner according to the accounts the Jews give of it, which is this: The messengers of the Sanhedrin went out on the evening of the feast, and bound the standing corn in bundles that so it might be more easily reaped, and the inhabitants of all the neighboring villages gathered together there that it might be reaped in great pomp, and when it was dark, one said to them, "Is it sunset?" They said, "Yes." "With this sickle shall I reap it?" They said, "Yes." "In this basket shall I put it?" They said, "Yes." If on a Sabbath-day he said to them, "On this Sabbath-day shall I do it?" They said, "Yes." These questions were put and answered three times; then they reaped it, and put it into the basket, and brought it to the court.—*Hocking.*

pentecost

c Ex. xxxiv. 22.

"When living creatures were waved bef. Jehovah it is said that they were led to and fro bef. the tabernacle acc. to an estab. form."—*Spl. Com.*

d De. xvi. 9; Ex. xxxiv. 26; Nu. xv. 19-21, xxviii. 26; Ac. ii. -4, 41.
e Ge. iv. 15; Ps. lxxxix. 12; Pr. vi. 31.

f Nu. xxviii. 30;
2 Co. v. 19-21.

g Ex. xxix. 24; Nu. xviii. 12; De. xviii. 4; Jo. vi. 57.

h He. x. 25.

i De. xxiv. 19; Jo. xii. 8; Ja. i. 27; 2 Co. viii. 9.

feast of trumpets

j Nu. x. 7-10; Ps. lxxxii. 3; Is. xxviii. 13.

This "blowing of trumpets" was an announcement from the King of Israel to His people that the glad sabbatic month had begun, and that the great day of atonement, and the supreme festivity of the feast of tabernacles, was now at hand.—*Exp. Bib.*
Trumpets—though not the same prob-

15-22. (15) **seven . . complete,**^c *i. e.* seven weeks. (16) **Sabbath, week,** (17) **habitations,** not necessarily houses; but place of abode in a more general sense,—as country. (17) **they . . leaven,**^d bread of daily use; a thanksgiving for daily food. (18) **seven . . year,**^e *lit.* seven sheep of a yr. old. (19) **one . . goats,**^f *lit.* a shaggy he-goat. (20) **they . . priest,**^g *i. e.* for the priest's use. (21) **the . . day,**^h this feast of weeks. (22) **thou . . stranger,**ⁱ see xix. 9, 10.

Feast of first fruits.—The appointment of these feasts may be considered as—I. Commemorative: of the day on which they had come out of Egypt, and of the day on which they received the law. II. Typical: of the Resurrection, and of the descending of the Spirit on the Apostles. III. Instructive: of our obligations and duty towards God.—*Simeon.*

The Pentecost harvest festival.—"From each of the twenty-four districts into which Palestine was divided came a company. Each morning, while they were on the road to Jerusalem, their leader summoned them with the words, "Come ye, and let us go up to Zion, and unto Jehovah our God" (Jer. xxxi. 6), and they answered, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Ps. cxxii. 1). "First went one who played the pipe; then followed a sacrificial bullock, destined for a peace offering, his horns gilt and garlanded with olive branches; next came the multitude, some carrying the baskets with firstfruits, others singing the psalms which many writers suppose to have been specially destined for that service and hence to have been called 'The Songs of Ascent,' in our Authorized Version 'The Psalms of Degrees.' The poorer brought their gifts in wicker baskets, which afterwards belonged to the officiating priests; the richer theirs in baskets of silver or of gold, which were given to the temple treasury. . . . And so they passed through the length and breadth of the land, everywhere waking the echoes of praise. As they entered the city, they sang Ps. cxxii. 2, 'Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem.' . . . As they reached the temple mount, each one, whatever his rank or condition, took one of the baskets on his shoulder, and they ascended singing that appropriate hymn. 'Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in the firmament of his power' (Ps. cl.). As they entered the temple itself, the Levites intoned Ps. xxx., 'I will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.'"—*Edersheim.*

23-25. (24) **sabbath . . memorial,**^j *lit.* remembrance blowing, "the festival of the new year;" in later time, preparatory to the great day of atonement which came in ten days.

Triumphing in the law of the Lord.—Assuming that the feast of trumpets was a celebration of the giving of the law: we have—I. A vivid reminder of the giving of the law. "Sound of a trumpet," *etc.* II. A jubilant memorial of that event. The trumpet may not only recall the past; but express the joy and gratitude of the present. What nation in the world had such laws at that time? The best laws now have grown out of these.

The Jewish feasts.—Is it possible to believe that the whole Jewish nation

could ever have been prevailed on to observe these great feasts, and commemorate therein events which had never happened? Would the Jews, who were but too prone to rebel against God and constituted authority, have submitted, at vast expense and labor, to go up to Jerusalem from distant parts three times a year, and there with their gifts and offerings commemorate those great and marvellous works, which God in mercy had done for their forefathers, if no such works had been done for them? In all ages the Jews have had their Korahs, Dathans, and Abirams, as well as their Janneses and Jambreses; but not one of them ever has attempted to call in question the facts commemorated in those festivals; no, nor yet deny the truth of any part of the writings of Moses.

... These feasts the Jews religiously observe at this day in every part of the world where they are found. — *Barnes*.

26—32. (26, 27) on . . month,^a i. e. Tisri, see note vss. 4-8, on months. atonement, see xvi. afflict, see xvi. 29. (28) shall . . day, all time and thought to be taken up with the soul's state and need. (29) afflicted, humbled. (30) any . . day,^b thereby showing a disregard of the law; and a sinful care for temporal affairs. (31) no . . work, i. e. pertaining to usual calling. (32) ninth . . even, the sabbath of the tenth began at even on the ninth.

The day of atonement. — I. Its purpose. To secure for Israel the forgiveness of all sin: i. e. of those not provided for by other special offerings, etc. II. Its observance. By all the people. All had sinned. All guilty of more sin than they were even conscious of, or could remember. With profound contrition and humiliation. III. Its lesson. Not one sin to remain unpardoned. A reconciled God the joy of the people.

The atonement echo of the Kyffhauser.—He then took an immense tin speaking-trumpet, stationed himself on a rock, pointed the trumpet at an opposite ridge of the mountain, and bellowed forth four notes which sounded like the voice of a dying bull. But after a pause of silence, angels replied. Tones of supernatural sweetness filled the distant air, fading slowly upwards, until the blue, which seemed to vibrate like a string that has been struck, trembled into quiet again. It was wonderful! I have heard many echoes, but no other which so marvellously translates the sounds of earth into the language of heaven. — *Byways of Europe*.

33—38. (34) feast . . tabernacles,^c of tents or booths; from account of first celebration of festival after the return from Babylon, the Jews, made themselves booths upon the roofs of houses, in the courts of their dwellings, and of their sanctuary, in the streets of the Water-gate and the gate of Ephraim. These tabernacles they made of olive branches, pine branches, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of thick trees. (Neh. viii. 15-18). — *Hand. Com.* (35) offer . . Lord, special sacrifices for day consisted of a burnt-offering of thirteen bullocks, two rams, and fourteen lambs, with an appropriate meat and drink-offering, and a goat for a sin-offering (Num. xxix. 12-38). Whereupon were offered the peace-offerings, the vows and the free-will offerings which constituted the repasts of the people. (37) These . . feasts, passover, firstfruits, pentecost, trumpets, atonement, tabernacles. (38) besides . . sabbaths, sacrifices of sabbaths.

The grateful remembrance of the past. — I. The will of God that the people should remember all the way, etc. II. Historical crises and personal deliverances not to be forgotten. III. In prosperity remember and acknowledge past trial and poverty. IV. When the people lived in ceiled houses they were not to forget that they once dwelt in tents. V. Providential aids to memory. *Our memorial feast.*

The feast of tabernacles. — This was one of the great festivals at which all the male Jews were commanded to be present (Ex. xxxiv. 23; De. xvi. 16). It was to commence on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, just after the completion of their harvest; hence it was called the feast of ingatherings (Le. xxiii. 39; Ex. xxiii. 16.) Being designed to commemorate their dwelling in tents in the wilderness, it was also called the feasts of tents or tabernacles (Jo. vii. 2). All that were Israelites born were to dwell in booths during its celebration: for the construction of these temporary abodes the people were directed to take "boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook." These booths were erected around the temple, in public places, and on the flat roofs of the houses. In

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bly as used on this occasion — were also blown on other occasions, and, in particular, at the time of each new moon; but, according to tradition, these only by the priests and at the central sanctuary; while in this feast of trumpets every one blew who would, and throughout the whole land. — *Kellogg*.

day of atonement

a Nu. xxix. 7.

b Ep. ii. 7-9.

"The seventh month was one peculiarly distinguished in the Jewish year, no less than three of the annual festivals being assigned to it. On the first day was the Feast of Trumpets, on the fifteenth the Feast of Tabernacles, and on the tenth was the Day of Atonement." — *Lowe*.

feast of tabernacles

The feast of tabs. was instituted in memory of the journey through the wilderness; and therefore the people, during its continuance, dwelt in tents.

c 2 S. vii. 6; Ezra iii. 4.

"The ideal of religious life, which these set times of the Lord kept before Israel, was a religion of joy." — *Kellogg*.

Happiness is always involved in the simple doing of the will of God, now no less than in Eden. It is awakened, too, by occasional and sober review of His guidance and care. No life has much symmetry which neglects this. Waymarks, inscribed "Remember" were set up all

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along the course
of Israel's journey.
— *Lowee*.

So bright and daz-
zling was the
temple of Diana,
that the door-
keeper always
cried to them that
entered: "Take
heed to your eyes."
A full disclosure of
all God has pro-
vided for them that
love Him would
quench mortal
sense." — *Bib. Ill.*

a De xvi. 13; Ex.
xxiii. 16; 1 Co. xv.
23.

b Ne. viii. 14-17;
Jo. vii. 2, 3, 6, 14,
37-39; Zec. xiv. 16.

c "The omission
of the foreigners
in this command
is remarkable.
Per. the intention
was that on this
joyous occasion
they were to be
hospitably enter-
tained as guests."
— *Spk. Com.*

d De. viii. 2-9, 14-
16; Ps. lxxviii. 5, 6.
The thick shady
trees, suggested
the protection and
shelter of the cov-
enant of God. The
"palm" was an
emblem of victory
(Rev. vii. 9). The
"willows of the
brook" represent-
ed the thriving
condition of the
happy (Isa. xlv. 4).
The olive was a
symbol of peace
(see Neh. viii. 15).
— *Bib. Ill.*

addition to the ordinary sacrifices, other offerings were to be presented, though their number decreased with each of the six successive days (Nu. xxix). In our Saviour's time the celebration of the feast varied in some of its details. Having obtained branches of myrtle, palm, and willow, they proceeded to the temple for the morning service. One of the priests having, with a golden vessel, drawn water from the Pool of Siloam, entered, amid the sounding of trumpets; on pouring it forth upon the altar, the people sang the Psalms cxlii. to cxlviii. inclusive. When leaving the temple, they walked in suc-
cession round the altar, and, placing a willow branch by its side, repeated aloud Ps. cxviii. 25. This portion of the service being completed they withdrew amid the sounding of trumpets. At the hour of the evening sacrifice, they again assembled at the temple, when a further libation was made, amid "rejoicing for the pouring out of water." The language of the prophet, Isa. xii. 3, formed part of their evening song. A beautiful allusion to this is recorded by the evangelist, Jo. vii. 37, 38. — *Bible Treas.*

39-44. (39) also, law of feast of tab. amplified. (40) the . . trees, *lit.* fruit of the tree of beauty. branches . . brook, *i. e.* such trees as were at hand, the booth of more consequence than the tree. (41) statute . . gener-
ations, past historical crises, and national deliverances not to be forgotten.
(42) dwell . . days, a suff. long time to impress the mind of the young, and
express the gratitude of the aged. all . . born, to others *this* feast could sig.
very little. (43) that . . know, knowledge, the end of all; that all, by
reflecting upon providential history might be thankful for deliverance and
guidance and progress.

A feast of rejoicing.—I. In every aspect this festival was an expression of
the joyful side of religion. 1. This joy had its root in the sense of inward
peace which comes from the pardon of sin. This feast followed close upon
the Day of Atonement. 2. The joy was neither selfish nor lawless. Gifts for
the poor designated it; intimating that life has no true delight that can be
separated from either love or duty. II. This feast was a type of a greater
feast now preparing for God's people. The heavenly feast following "the
harvest which is the end of the world." John beheld the scene: "I looked,
and behold a great multitude, palms in their hand," etc. (Rev. vii. 9, 10).
— *Preacher's Com.*

The feast of tabernacles.—There is an interesting illustration of the observ-
ance of the feast of tabernacles in the village architecture here (El Bussah).
On the top of every house is a wattled booth of oleander boughs, sometimes
of two stories, with a wicker-work floor, in which the inhabitants sleep during
the hot weather, and thus continue to observe the Jewish feast. The boughs
and tenacious leaves of the oleander never shrivel or fall off and form an
effectual shade for many weeks. — *Tristram*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

oil for the
lamps

1-4. (2) Command, instruction as to daily service and ritual, this com-
mand same as in Ex. xxvii. 20. to . . burn, see i. 9. (3) without, *etc.*,
i. e. without the second veil, betw. the holy and most holy. (4) candlestick,
Ex. xxv. 31-39.

The golden candlestick.—Consider the golden candlestick as representing
the Church in—I. Its privileges. 1. The Church was justly exhibited under
that figure; 2. The priest whose duty it was to trim the lamps, prefigured
Christ. II. Its duties. The duties of the saints are to—1. Shine; 2. Be
receiving more grace from Christ in order to their shining with yet brighter
lustre. — *Simeon*.

The Christian a light-bearer.—Wherefore, O thou professor! thou lamp
carrier! have a care and look to thyself; content not thyself with that only
that will maintain thee in a profession, for that may be done without saving
grace. But I advise thee to go to Aaron, to Christ, the trimmer of our lamps,
and beg thy vessel full of oil of Him—that is, grace—for the seasoning of
thy heart, that thou mayest have wherewith not only to bear thee up now,
but at the day of the Bridegroom's coming, when many a lamp will go out,
and many a professor be left in the dark; for that will to such be a woful day.
— *John Bunyan*.

e Ps. cxix. 140, 130,
105; 2 Pe. i. 19.

f He ix. 3; Ex.
xxvii. 21.

g Ex. xxxi. 8,
xxxix 37; Re. iv. 5.

"Thus we are
taught that in the
highest sense it is
the office of the
Church to give
light in darkness."
— *Kellogg*.

5-9. (5) **bake . . thereof**, the shewbread.^a **two . . cake**, ab. 6 lb. 4 oz. of flour in ea. cake. (6) **rows**, or piles: the measure of the table settles this. **table**, see Ex. xxv. 23-30. (7) **frankincense**,^b that the frankincense may be offered on the altar as God's portion, instead of the bread which was given to the priests. Ex. xxx. 34. (8) **from . . Israel**, a cake for ea. tribe. (9) **and . . sons'**, see on ii. 3.

Bread of the presence. — Consecration must depend for its acceptance upon the perfections of Christ. It is "the altar that sanctifieth the gift;" and it was the golden *Table*, Christ's pure and glorious perfections, which rendered these loaves an accepted presentation. II. Consecrated offerings must be always our choicest and best. On the Golden Table no common bread might be placed. "Thou shalt take *fine flour*." These loaves represented, therefore, 1. The dedication of what was choicest. 2. A generous largeness in the act of consecration. The loaves were of *double* size. III. Consecration requires to be perpetually renewed. Every Sabbath fresh loaves were to be substituted. — *Preacher's Com.*

The symbolic meaning of the shew-bread. — "In general, therefore, the meaning of the offering of the shew-bread must be the same as that of the meal-offerings; like them it symbolized the consecration unto the Lord of the product of the labor of the hands, and especially of the daily food as prepared for use. But in this, by the twelve cakes for the twelve tribes it was emphasized that God requires, not only such consecration of service and acknowledgment of Him from individuals, as in the law of chap. ii., but from the nation in its collective and organized capacity; and that not merely on such occasions as pious impulse might direct, but continuously. In these days, when the tendency among us is to an extreme individualism, and therewith to an ignoring or denial of any claim of God upon nations and communities as such, it is of great need to insist upon this thought thus symbolized. It is not enough that individuals among us consecrate the fruit of their labors to the Lord. The Lord requires such consecration of every nation collectively; and of each of the subdivisions in that nation, such as cities, towns, states, provinces, and so on. Yet where in the wide world can we see one such consecrated nation? Can we find one such consecrated province or state, or even such a city or town?" — *Exp. Bib.*

10-16. (10) **son . . woman**, woman's name was Shelomith (vs. 11); son had accompanied the mother. Shelomith's husband, according to tradition, was the man whom the Egyptian smote (Ex. ii. 11); the Egyptian, the taskmaster of Shelomith's husband, was the one whom Moses in his indignation slew. This son was the offspring of an outrage upon Shelomith by the Egyptian taskmaster. (11) **blasphemed . . name**, perhaps cursed and reviled God as maker of law which shut him out of camp in tribe of his mother. (12) **mind . . Lord**, penalty for blasphemy^c not yet announced. (14) **hands . . head**, solemnly identifying offender. (16) **surely . . death**, great crime, outrageous offense, extreme penalty.

The slaying of the blasphemer. — Note from this narrative — I. The evil resulting from connection with the ungodly; "whose father was an Egyptian." II. The danger arising from indulgence in passionate anger. III. The blasphemy which, in this case, resulted from such indulgence. IV. The punishment which all like sin merits. — *Wayland*.

The sin of profanity — "There is not a sin in all the catalogue that is so often peremptorily and suddenly punished in this world as the sin of profanity. At New Brunswick, New Jersey, just before I went there as a student, a man on the railroad track in front of the college had uttered a horrible oath. He saw not that the rail-train was coming. The locomotive struck him and instantly dashed his life out. The peculiarity of the circumstance was that the physicians examining his body found hardly a bruise, except that his tongue was cut out! There was no mystery about it. He cursed God and died." — *Talmage*.

17-23. (17) **he . . man**,^d see Ex. xxi. 12. (18) **he . . beast**, see Ex. xxi. 33. 34. (19, 20) **man . . neighbour**,^e see Ex. xxi. 22-25. (21) see vs. 17, 18. (22) **law**,^f Heb., *mishpat* = judicial law. (23) **they . . camp**,^g see on vs. 10-16.

The sacredness of life and property. — This law to induce a careful regard for the life and property of other men. Hence — 1. Severe punishments. II.

B. C. 1490.

the shewbread

a Ex. xxv. 30. xxxv. 13, xxxix. 36; 2 Ch. xiii. 11.

b It was put into small golden cups, one of wh. was placed on ea. pile of bread.

The table on which the loaves of shewbread were laid was made of acacia wood overlaid with plates of pure gold, symbolic of those sacred and divine qualities of Christ's person and character, which form the basis of all accepted offerings. Only as ourselves or our gifts are laid upon Christ can they be allowed a place "before the Lord." — *Preacher's Com.*

law of blasphemy

"It is striking to notice that in the Hebrew text it is only said that he blasphemed 'The name'; what that was being left unwritten. On this omission the later Jews grounded their prohibition of the word Jehovah, under almost any circumstances." — *Geikie*.

c Ex. xx. 7.

lex talionis

d Ge. ix. 6; Nu. xxxv. 31; De. xix. 11, 12.

e Ma. vii. 1, 2, v. 38, 39, 18; Ro. xiii. 10.

f Ex. xli. 49; Nu. xv. 16; Le. xli. 24.

g He. x. 38-41.

B. C. 1490.

"It is said of the Hon. Robert Boyle, that he would never allow himself to mention the name of God without first making a solemn pause."

"Reverence for God lies at the very foundation of even common morality."—*Kellogg*.

Just penalties.—*Impartiality of law*. The civil law to affect all alike. The stranger to be protected as well as the naturalized Israelite. The foreigner would rejoice in the equal law of Israel. *The crime of blasphemy*.—Its punishment was death. I. This proves the enormity of the offense. II. Shows that he who could despise the sacred name was not judged fit to participate in human society. He who is wanting in respect for God will not show regard for man.

"*The name*."—The Romans used the word "numen" for a divinity, by a mere play on the word "nomen," "a name." Among the Egyptians there was a god whose name it was unlawful to utter; and it was forbidden to name or to speak of the supreme guardian divinity of Rome. Even to mention a god's name in taking an oath was deemed irreverent. At this day, moreover, the true name of the Emperor of China is kept a profound secret, never to be uttered—perhaps to impress his subjects with his unapproachable elevation above common mortals.—*U. Geikie*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

Sabbatical year

a Ex. xxiii. 10, 11, xx. 10, 11; He. iv. 10, 11; Is. xi. 6-10, lxxv. 25.

b Heb. *nezir'elka*, unshorn, unpruned. Prob. ref. to unshorn locks of Nazarite (Nu. vi. 5).

"Travelers tell us that in the Palestine of to-day, with its rich soil and kindly climate, the various food grains continuously propagate themselves without cultivation."—*Kellogg*.

year of jubilee

c Nu. x. 1-3, 7-10; Is. lxiii. 4, lxi. 2; Ps. lxxviii. 11; Mk. xvi. 15.

d Is. xxxv. 1-10; Re. vii. 13-17. Why were these sabbaths of the fields instituted? It was to benefit the land itself in the first instance, that the sabbaths of the fields were ordained. More than most soils, that of Palestine needed this complete periodical rest.—*Bib. Ill*.

1-7. (1) *Moses . . Sinai*, Israelites encamped in neighborhood of Sinai; remained in the region a year after the exodus from Egypt. (2) *keep . . sabbath*, septennial Sabbath, seventh year to be consecrated. (4) *rest . . land*, see Le. xxiii. 3. (5) *thy . . undressed, lit. thy Nazarite^b vine*. (6, 7) *meat*, during this Sabbath, what the land produced was to be food for all without distinction.

The harvest of the poor.—I. The poor cared for by God. II. All men reminded that they are the children of one Father, who is Lord of all, and God of the whole earth. III. The great lesson and joy of rest. By the Sabbath, etc., men constantly reminded of the rest of the future. IV. The earth to rest that man might rest.

Relieve the poor.—One stormy night, a gentleman was passing along the streets of a city, when suddenly a voice at his elbow said, "I am not fit for work; and I have eaten nothing to-day." It was a soldier, pale as if from recent sickness or too scanty food. He had lost both arms by amputation. The gentleman's first impulse was to give him something; but the trouble of unbuttoning his coat was too much; and he passed on. The thought of the poor man starving, perhaps, made him miserable; and if it had been possible to have found him he would gladly have done so. Three or four days after the occurrence the papers told the sad story of a discharged soldier, his wife, and two children, dying of starvation. They had nothing to eat for four days. The gentleman immediately hastened down town, and found the poor sufferers. There was the same wan face that he had repelled at the corner of the street. His wife and child had died; and he, with one little girl, was sobbing beside their dead bodies. Better give to many unworthy than refuse one that is really in need.

8-12. (8) *seven . . years, i. e. seven weeks of years; or, 49 years*. (9) *cause . . sound, lit. cause the sound of the cornet to go through*. *tenth, d* see Le. xxiii. 27. (10) *fiftieth*, counting fr. first yr. aft. preceding jubilee. (11) *jubile*, prob. fr. Heb. *yobel* = cornet, or sound of cornet. (12) *increase, i. e. spontaneous increase*.

The year of jubilee.—Notice the prescribed observances of this festive season. I. The general atonement preceding the jubilee: a solemn preparation for the blessings to be introduced. II. The restitution of alienated possessions. This was intended to prevent, as far as existing circumstances would allow, the ill effects of the fluctuations of property and power. III. The restorations of personal freedom. All slaves were released from slavery in this year; all debts, too, were considered as discharged. IV. The general exultation, to which this year of jubilee never failed to give rise.—*Gilpin*.

The property of the poor.—A Roman ambassador sent to Ctesiphon with rich presents, when admiring the noble prospect from the window of the royal palace, remarked an uneven piece of ground, and asked the reason why it was not rendered uniform. "It is the property of an old woman," said a Persian nobleman, "who has objections to sell it, though often requested by our king to do so; and he is more willing to have his prospect spoiled than to

commit injustice and violence." "That irregular spot," replied the Roman, "consecrated as it is by justice, appears more beautiful than all the surrounding scenery."

B. C. 1491.

13-17. (13) **return . . possession**, hence all sales or forfeitures of property were limited as to time. (14) **ye . . another**,^a the bargain to be fairly regulated by the certain surrender of property this year. (15) **years . . jubilee**, the more years, the less money. (16) **increase . . diminish**, the price to be determined by the number of years fr. the time of sale to the jubilee. (17) **not . . oppress**, by demanding possession before the time or retaining it after. **from . . God**, respect for God to be basis of all bargains.

restoration of property

^a Pr. xxviii. 15, 16; Ex. xviii. 21; Je. xxii. 16, 17; Lu. xii. 15; He. xiii. 5.

The Year-Sabbath. — Delineate this period under its evangelical aspects. I. The circumstances that ushered it in: in these there was a clear looking forward to the epoch of the Messiah. II. The observances by which it was attended: notice how strikingly these set forth the office and work of the Redeemer, and the manner in which His Gospel came into the world. III. Its benefits and advantages: these all symbolize the blessings conferred by Christ's redemptive work. 1. The universal extinction of debt. 2. The removal of all bondage; 3. The restoration of property; 4. The year devoted to harmony and repose; 5. The fulness and extent given to the proclamation of this year: "all the land." — *Ide.*

"Lord God, I thank thee that Thou hast been pleased to make me a poor and indigent man upon earth. I have neither house, nor land, nor money to leave behind me. Thou hast given wife and children, whom I now restore to Thee. Lord, nourish, teach and preserve them as Thou hast me." — *Luther.*

The year of jubilee. — It was in ancient Israel, as in the heavens above us, whose luminaries, after a certain period of time has elapsed, always return to the same place in the firmament, and the same relative position to each other. The sun, for instance — although changing his place daily — shall rise and set, twelve months from this date, at the same hour, and appear at his meridian in the same spot as to-day. Corresponding to that, or like the revolution of a wheel, which restores every spoke to its former place, society — whatever change meanwhile took place in personal liberty or hereditary property — returned among the old Hebrews to the very same state in which it was at the commencement of those fifty years whose close brought in the jubilee. — *Guthrie.*

"Poverty is the test of civility and the touchstone of friendship." — *Hazlitt.*

18-24. (18) **dwel . . safety**,^b obedience of divine law brings safety into the experience of both the individual and society. (19) **eat . . fill**,^c shall be kept from famine, improvidence being prevented. (20) **if . . say**,^d objection anticipated. God's blessing upon sixth year can overcome any lack in seventh. (22) **sow . . eighth**, ye shall sow, yet eat of the old produce. (23) **land . . mine**,^e God supreme owner; others had been ejected, they were only stewards. (24) **redemption**, provision favorable to seller who might desire to recover.

the land not to be sold

^b Ps. iv. 8; Pr. i. 33; Job v. 22-24; Je. xxiii. 6; Ro. viii. 31, 32; 1 Co. iii. 21-25; Ma. vi. 33; Mal. iii. 10.

The Sabbatical year. — This ordinance was given — I. To remind the Israelites that God was the great proprietor of all. II. To keep them from earthly-mindedness. III. To lead them to trust in Him. IV. To make them observant of His providential care. V. To typify the felicity of heaven. — *Simeon.*

^c Ps. xxxiv. 10; Phi. iv. 6, 7; 1 Pe. v. 7.

Practical reliance upon God. — A faithful and zealous Methodist minister in North Carolina writes to a friend in Calcutta: "There are two cotton factories here, and my charge consists chiefly of the proprietors, operatives, and others connected with the factories. The leading man takes a lively interest in our Church work, although weighed down by the cares of an immense business all the week. When the new factory was built, the building, with all its machinery, was solemnly dedicated, by a public religious service, to be used for the glory of God. Two years ago a great revival was in progress here. Mr. — stopped the factory that all hands might attend the meetings. He received an urgent order from New York for goods. He replied that the goods could not be furnished. They telegraphed from New York that they must have the goods. Then the wires flashed back the message: 'The Lord is at work; the factories will not run this week.' Would that we had more such men!" — *Indian Witness.*

^d 2 K. xix. 29; Is. xxxvii. 30.

^e Joel ii. 18; Is. lxii. 4; 1 Ch. xxix. 15; Ps. xxxix. 12; He. xii. 13; 1 Pe. ii. 11.

"It is not the expenditure of brain power, or the employment of arm muscle that will win you your bread; it is the blessing of God resting on you." — *Brown.*

25-28. (25) **poor**, the only thing that could justify a sale. **his . . it**,^f his rich relation, type of our Elder Brother and Redeemer. (26) **himself . . it**, his circumstances having improved. (27) **restore**, *i. e.* make an adequate compensation to the present holder. (28) **in . . out**, *i. e.* it shall go free: revert to original owner.

the poor man's Redeemer

^f Pr. xxiii. 10, 11; Is. xlvii. 4; Job xix. 25; Eccl. i. 7, 13, 14, iv. 30.

Glad facts of the jubilee. — I. God's sovereign right to the earth. He deter-

B. c. 149!

Jubilee (*Rom. Cath.*) every 25th year, for the purpose of granting indulgences. Boniface VIII instituted it in 1300, and ordered it to be observed every 100 years. Clement VI. reduced the interval to 50 years. Urban IV. to 30, and Sixtus IV. to 25.

houses in cities

"But inasmuch as God had assigned no landholding to the Levites in the original distribution of the land, in order to secure them in the privilege of a permanent holding, it was ordered that in their case their houses should be treated as were the landholdings of the members of the other tribes." — *Exp. Bib.*

α Nu. xxxv. 2-5; Ac. iv. 36, 37.

law of servitude

b De. xv. 7, 8; Ma. x. 8; Lu. vi. 35; Ac. xi. 29, 30; 1 Jo. iii. 17; Ja. ii. 15, 16.

c Ne. v. 7.

"In the case of a nation just starting on its career in a new country, nothing could well be thought of more likely to be effective toward securing an equal distribution of wealth among the people, than the legislation

mines when and whether its fields should be tilled and reaped. II. God's power to provide. He wills, and crops abound. III. Universal rest enjoined and enjoyed. Repose is the one law — for man, beast, and soil. IV. Atonement ushers in this consecrated year. When the scapegoat has borne sins out of sight, when the High Priest has sprinkled the mercy-seat, this holy season begins. — *Preacher's Com.*

Benevolent self-denial. — The salary of the Rev. Philip Skelton, an Irish clergyman, arising from the discharge of his ministerial duties and from tuition, was very small; and yet he gave the larger part of it away. Returning one Lord's day from public worship, he came to a cabin where an awful fire had occurred. Two children had been burnt to death, and a third showed but faint signs of life. Seeing the poor people had no linen with which to dress the child's sores, he tore his linen from his back piece by piece for their use, and cheerfully submitted to the inconvenience to which it exposed him. Some time after this he sold his library, though his books were the only companions of his solitude, and spent the money in the purchase of provisions for the poor. Some ladies hearing of this, sent him fifty pounds, that he might again obtain several of his most valued works; but while he gratefully acknowledged their kindness, he said he had dedicated the books to God, and then applied the fifty pounds also to the relief of His poor.

29—34. (29) house . . city, law of jubilee did not apply to buildings or man's creation, although a year was given in which to redeem. (30) and if, thus foreigners might become settlers and owners of house property in Canaan. (31) the . . villages, some land would prob. be attached to such houses. Foreigners with merchandise, or artisans, would not care to settle in villages. (32) the . . Levites,^a purchasers of such were tenants at will. (33) and . . possessions, the Levites had only the 48 cities wh. were assigned to them: they were not to lose the only thing they could call theirs. (34) field . . sold, even for a limited time; or under any circumstances.

Protection to trade. — I. Much of human progress depends on unfettered commerce. National intercourse, peace, etc., promoted by it. II. A wise legislation will make provision for the protection of the trader, artisan, manufacturer. III. This law directed to this end. The foreign merchant could securely hire or purchase a warehouse in the cities of Israel. — *Kellogg.*

The joy of landed proprietors. — Certainly a landed estate is "an animal with its mouth always open." But compare the physical perception and enjoyment of landed wealth with that of consols and securities. Can I get me rosy cheeks, health and good humor, riding up and down my Peruvian bonds? Can I go out shooting upon my parchment, or in summer sit under the shadow of my mortgage-deed, and bob for commas and troll for semicolons in my river of ink, that meanders through my meadow of sheepskin? Wherefore I really think that land will always tempt even the knowing ones, until some vital change shall take place in society; for instance, till the globe makes its exit in smoke, and the blue curtain comes down on the creation. — *Read.*

35—38. (35) brother,^b an Israelite. and . . decay, *lit.* his hand wavereth: fig. = unable fr. poverty, sickness, age, to help himself. relieve, *lit.* strengthen; fig. = help with gifts or loans. (36) no usury,^c no charge upon money loaned. (36) increase, profit upon products. but . . God, therefore be just and merciful. (37) nor . . increase, demanding more in return than the quantity lent. (38) I . . God, His compassion to the poor and needy as shown by that great deliverance, to be a perpetual motive and example.

Help for the poor. — I. The poor described. Those who have seen better days. This the most painful form of poverty. The present embittered by memories of the past. II. The help to be rendered. Loans without interest, or without heavy interest. Food also; as seed to sow his land. III. The motive to impel them to this duty. Their own poverty in the past and the help rendered them.

Equal distribution of wealth. — Probably the most prominent and important object of the regulations in this chapter was to secure, as far as possible, the equal distribution of wealth, by preventing excessive accumulations either of land or of capital in the hands of a few, while the mass should be sunk in poverty. It is certain that these laws, if carried out, would have had a marvellous effect in this respect. One chief cause of the excessive wealth of individuals among us, as in all ages, is the acquirement in perpetuity by indi-

viduals of a disproportionate amount of the public land. The condition of things in the United Kingdom is familiar to all, with its inevitable effect on the condition of large masses of people; and in parts of the United States there are indications of like tendency toward the similar disadvantage of many small landholders and cultivators. But in Israel, if these laws should be carried into effect, such a state of things, so often witnessed among other nations, was made forever impossible. — *Kellogg*.

39—46. (39) brother . . sold, * voluntary disposal of liberty on account of poverty. serve, not like heathen slave purchased or captured in war. (40) hired . . servant, ^b the master to treat him as one who disposes of his service for wages. (42) my . . Egypt, ^c God brought them out of that country and they belong to Him; whom God emancipates are free for ever. (43) thou . . rigour, like thy taskmasters of old. but . . God, who punished your tyrants; lest He punish you. (44) both, "It was the object of Moses, not at once to do away with slavery, but to discourage and mitigate it." ^d (45) of . . buy, ^e but not against their will. Kidnapping was a capital crime. (46) they . . ever, not to go out even in the jubilee.

The poor bondman.—I. A bondman, not because of crime, but poverty. II. A servant who had been once a master. Reverses of fortune. III. Not to be treated as a slave; or one whose poverty is the result of crime; but tenderly. IV. Both to remember the coming jubilee. So in the strange present we should remember the possible relations of the future.

Laws among other nations.— "Lycurgus, after having distributed the land essentially in equal parts, made it infamous for any one either to buy another's possession or to sell his own. The Dalmatae made a partition of their land every eighth year. With a view of equalizing the property of the citizens Phaleas of Chalcædon ordained that the rich should give marriage portions, but never receive any, while the poor should always receive but never give them. Yet even these and similar measures, imperfect and desultory compared with the complete and well-balanced law of the Pentateuch, were found impracticable, and for the most part remained a dead letter." — *Kalisch*.

47—50. (47) sojourner . . rich, by successful traffic, dwelling with God's people. (48) redeemed, ^f the Hebrew might be redeemed, but the stranger must be a bondman forever. (49) either . . or, any of his relatives. (50) reckon, the stranger was to be treated justly.

Foreign servitude.—I. Case supposed. A foreigner grown rich by traffic, etc. The possibility of this is a proof of the benign influence of the Mosaic law. II. Another supposed case. The Israelite grown poor while ministering to his neighbor's prosperity. III. The law of the case. The foreigners might buy the Israelite, but not to hold him in perpetual bondage. There shall be the possibility of an equitable redemption at any time. The law guarded the rights both of the foreigner and the native.

A faithful servant. —

Hear me, Ctesiphon! —

I had a fever once, and slaves
Affrighted fled me; — he usurp'd their place,
And sooth'd my dull ear with discourse which grew
By nice degrees to ravishment, till pain
Seem'd an heroic sense, which made me kin
To the great deeds he pictur'd, and the brood
Of dizzy weakness flickering through the gloom
Of my small curtain'd prison caught the hues
Of beauty spangling out in glorious change;
And it became a luxury to lie
And faintly listen. — *Talfourd*.

51—55. (53) rule . . vigour, the Israelite not to be a tacit spectator of cruel treatment. (54) out . . jubile, ^g if not redeemed by one of the ways mentioned, others were to submit to law of jubilee same as Hebrews. (55) me . . servants, ^h see vs. 38—47.

The degenerative and corrective forces of society.—I. The degenerative forces of society are in itself. Debt. Slavery. Poverty. Materialism. II. The corrective forces of society are from God. 1: Man is superior to property. The violation of this truth is the ruin of society, and it is violated

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which is placed before us in this chapter." — *Kellogg*.

a Ex. xxi. 2. "A man might not sell himself to lay up the money wh. was given for him; nor to buy goods; nor to pay his debts; but merely that he might get bread to eat. Neither was it lawful for him to sell himself as long as he had so much as a garment left." — *Maimonides*.

b Col. iv. 1; Ep. vi. 9; 1 K. ix. 22.

c 1 Co. vi. 19, 20, vii. 22; Ga. v. 1.

d Nu. xxxi. 9; De. xx. 14; Ex. xxi. 16, xii. 44, xxi. 20, 21, 26, 27.

e Is. lxi. 5, xiv. 2; De. ix. 5, 6.

f Ps. xlix. 6—8, 14, 15; Je. i. 33, 34; Is. xlix. 24—26, xli. 20, xlii. 13, 14; Jo. viii. 36; Ro. viii. 16, 17, 23.

"Extreme wealth or extreme poverty are certainly evils to the prevention of which our legislators may well give their minds." — *Kellogg*.

"We belong willing servants to the good by the bonds their virtues lay upon us." — *Sir P. Sidney*.

g Ps. xxxvii. 7, 11; Is. xxvi. 3, 4.

h Ep. vi. 5, 8.

"If thou art a master, be sometimes blind; if a servant, sometimes deaf." — *Fuller*.

"An extreme rigor is sure to arm everything against it." — *Burke*.

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"A desire to resist oppression is implanted in the nature of man." — Tacitus.

"Spare not the great for their might nor the mean for their misery. Causes must be heard, and not persons." — Trapp.

"We may safely say, that the intention and aim of these laws as regards the equal distribution of wealth in the community ought to be the aim of all wise legislation now." — Kellogg.

public worship of Jehovah

a De. xxvii. 15; Ps. xxvii. 7; 1 K. xi. 4, 5; Ps. cxv. 4-8; Is. xlv. 5.

b Is. lvi. 4-7.

c De. xi. 14; Je. v. 24; Joel ii. 23; Hos. vi. 3; Ja. v. 7.

d "Two wet seasons, called former and latter rain. The former beg. aft. the autumnal equinox and falls heavily in Nov.-Dec. The latter or spring rain is in March, and rarely lasts beyond two days." — Robinson. *Phy. Geog. of H. L.* 263.

e Le. xxv. 19; Joel ii. 19, 26.

f 1 Ch. xxii. 9; Ps. xxix. 11; Job xi. 19; Ps. iv. 8; 1 K. iv. 25.

g Is. xxxv. 9; Ex. v. 17, xiv. 15.

h Ez. xiv. 17, xxi. 3, 4.

No nation ever falls before a foreign foe—it always commits suicide. — Cumming.

every day. 2. God is the disposer of property. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." 3. Society has higher wants than property. Spiritual services. — *Homilist*.

Prevention of crime. — When we remember the close connection between extreme poverty and every variety of crime, it is plain that the whole legislation is as admirably adapted to the prevention of crime as of abject and hopeless poverty. Well might Asaph use the words which he employs, with evident allusion to the trumpet sound which ushered in the jubilee: "Happy the people that know the joyful sound!" *i. e.*, that have the blessed experience of the jubilee, that supreme earthly sabbatism of the people of God. Most significant and full of instruction, no less to us than to Israel, was the ordinance that both the sabbatic and the jubilee years should date from the day of Atonement. It was when, having completed the solemn ritual of that day, the high priest put on again his beautiful garments and came forth, having made atonement for all the transgressions of Israel, that the trumpet of the jubilee was to be sounded. Thus was Israel reminded in the most impressive manner possible that all these social, civil, and communal blessings were possible only on condition of reconciliation with God through atoning blood: atonement in the highest and fullest sense, which should reach even to the Holy of the Holies, and place the blood on the very mercy-seat of Jehovah. This is true still, though the nations have yet to learn it. The salvation of nations, no less than that of individuals, is conditioned by national fellowship with God, secured through the great Atonement of the Lord. Not until the nations learn this lesson may we expect to see the crying evils of the earth removed, or the questions of property, of land-holding, of capital and labor, justly and happily solved. — *Exp. Bib.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

1-6. (1) *ye . . image*,^a see Ex. xx. 4. (2) *keep*,^b see xix. 30. (3) *do . . them*, emphatic repetition. (4) *rain . . season*,^c rain periodical.^d (5) *threshing*, barley harvest middle of April, wheat in June. *vintage*, end of July, lasting till sowing time in October. *eat . . safely*,^e no stint or fear of famine. (6) *lie . . down*,^f picture of content, rest. *none . . afraid*,^g no enemies to oppress. *rid . . beasts*,^h vermin, beasts of prey. *neither . . land*,ⁱ foreign invasion, civil war.

Advantages which result to a nation from religion. — 1. Religion impels to industry, intelligence, self-respect, and social improvement. 2. Religion leads to avoidance of agitation and conflict, checks greed, ambition, and vainglory, and thus promotes a wise content among the people, and peaceful relationships with surrounding nations (*vs.* 6). 3. Religion fosters sobriety, energy, and courage, and these qualities will ensure the overthrow of tyranny and the defeat of invasion (*vs.* 8). 4. Religion nurtures the wise oversight of homes and families, the preservation of domestic purity, the development of healthful and intelligent children, and these will work out in a strong and increasing population (*vs.* 9). — *Jellie*.

Destruction of idols. — Mahmoud, the conqueror of India, reached Somnat, a temple of peculiar sanctity in Guzerat. Having overcome all resistance, he entered the temple. Facing the entrance was an idol five yards high. He instantly ordered it to be destroyed. Brahmins of the temple threw themselves down before him, and offered him an enormous ransom; but Mahmoud, after a moment's pause, declared that he would rather be remembered as the breaker than the seller of idols, and struck the image with his mace. His example was followed, and the image, which was hollow, burst with the blows, and poured forth a quantity of diamonds and other jewels, far more than the proffered ransom.

Thou too, heaven's commission'd warrior,
To cast down each idol throne
In thy heart's profaned temple,
Make this faithful deed thy own.

Still they plead, and still they promise,
Wilt thou suffer them to stand?
They have pleasures, gifts, and treasures,
To enrich thee at command.

Heed them not, but boldly strike them,
Let descend the faithful blow;
From their wreck and from their ruin,
First will thy true riches flow.— *Trench.*

7-13. (7) **chase** . . **enemies**, superior to, shall have power over.* (8) **five** . . **hundred**, proverb representing special superiority. (9) **respect** . . **you**,^c will have special regard for. **fruitful**, capable of increase. **establish**,^d make firm. (10) **eat** . . **store**, abundance laid away. **old** . . **new**, remove old because of new. (11) **tabernacle**,^e dwelling place. (12) **walk** . . **you**, Divine presence familiar, constant, visible. (13) **brought** . . **Egypt**, remembering the past would make them gratefully enjoy the present; and hopefully regard the future. **that** . . **bondman**, sad, demoralized, weary. I . . **yoke**,^f effectually, for ever. **upright**,^g joyous, free, released fr. heavy burdens.

God's people invincible. — (vs. 7-9). — I. Because of the enthusiasm which religion inspires. Historical illustrations. Fighting for God, truth, liberty. Cromwell's Ironsides. In the late Franco-Prussian war the Germans spoke of God and right while the French boasted about glory, etc. II. Because of the Divine aid which religion secures. The God of battles on the side of His people. III. See how this is proved by the facts of history. IV. What comfort is there here for the believer. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper."

Legend of St. James in battle. — In the year of our Lord 939, King Ramirez, having vowed to deliver Castile from the shameful tribute imposed by the Moors, of one hundred virgins delivered annually, collected his troops, and defied their king Abdelraman to battle.

"The king called God to witness, that, came there weal or woe,
Thenceforth no maiden tribute from out Castile should go.
'At least I will do battle on God our Saviour's foe,
And die beneath my banner before I see it so.'"

Accordingly, he charged the Moorish host on the Plain of Alveida or Clavijo. After a furious conflict, the Christians were, by the permission of Heaven, defeated, and forced to retire. Night separated the combatants; and King Ramirez, overpowered with fatigue, and sad at heart, flung himself upon his couch, and slept. In his sleep he beheld the apostle St. Jago, who promised to be with him next morning in the field, and assured him of victory. The king, waking up from the glorious vision, sent for his prelates and officers, to whom he related it; and the next morning, at the head of his army, he recounted it to his soldiers, bidding them rely on heavenly aid. He then ordered the trumpets to sound to battle. The soldiers, inspired with fresh courage, rushed to the fight. Suddenly, St. Jago was seen mounted on a milk-white charger, and waving aloft a white standard: he led on the Christians, who gained a decisive victory, leaving sixty thousand Moors dead on the field. This was the famous battle of Clavijo; and, ever since that day, "Santiago!" has been the war-cry of the Spanish armies. — *Mrs. Jameson.*

14-20. (14) **but**,^a the alternative is faithfully declared. (15) **all**, obeying only a part, or the whole but partially; picking and choosing to suit taste and convenience; minding the mere letter only. (16) **terror**,^b trembling, trouble. **consumption**, a wasting away. **burning ague**, fever and ague. **eyes** . . **heart**, extinguish eyes and cause life to depart as hope departs. **sow** . . **sin**,^c war threatened. (17) **set** . . **face**, make them feel his anger. (18) **and if**,^d light punishments abused shall be followed by greater. (19) **pride** . . **power**,^e the pride wh. power excites shall be humbled. **make** . . **iron**,^f no blessing, no answer to prayer, no rain. **your** . . **brass**,^g your land shall be sterile.

Human strength and skill vain without God's blessing (vs. 20). — I. The case supposed. Man, proudly self-reliant, depending upon his own toil. (III.) French Revolution; goddess of reason enthroned; Sabbath abolished, etc.) II. The result anticipated. Disappointment, poverty. III. The reason implied. The sources of prosperity under the control of the God of nature. He can seal the earth, and shut up the clouds.

The sky in the East. — If the Jewish nation departed from God and became reprobate, then, among other awful inflictions, such a change should be pro-

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reward of
obedience

a Ill. Conq. of Canaan. Cf. Jos. h. xxiii. 10; Gideon, Jud. vii. 22; David's worthies, 2 S. xxiii. 8, 18; 1 Ch. xi. 11, 18; cf. De. xxxii. 30. b 1 S. xiv. 6; Zec. xii. 8.

c Ps. xxv. 16, lxxix. 17; 2 K. xlii. 23. d Ge. xvii. 4-8; Ne. ix. 23.

e Jo. i. 14; see Gk. cf. Re. xxi. 3; Ex. xxix. 45, xxv. 8; Ez. xxxvii. 26, 27; 2 Co. vi. 16.

f Je. ii. 20; Ez. xxxiv. 27. g Jo. viii. 36; Ro. viii. 21; Ga. v. 1.

"To obey God in some things of religion and not in others, shows an unsound heart; like Esau, who obeyed his father in bringing him venison, but not in a greater matter, viz., the choice of his wife. Childlike obedience moves toward every command of God, as the needle points that way which the lodestone draws."

— *T. Watson.* "Our nation will never fall before a foreign foe as long as it is a nation that fears God, and works righteousness, and counts the sunshine of His favor more precious than gold and silver, and whatsoever things may be weighed or bought." — *Cumming.*

warnings for
disobediencefirst and
second
warning

h 2 K. xviii. 15; Am. iii. 1, 2. i De. xxviii. 65-67. j Mi. vi. 15.

k Ju. ii. 14; La. ii. 17.

l Fr. xxi. 1; Is. xxiv. 5; Ez. vii. 24.

m De. xi. 16, 17. n Ho. ii. 8, 9; Is. v. 1-7.

"He only who endures to the end

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shall be saved. Or no avail will it be to have entered on the way of righteousness, if we turn from it. The rewards of heaven are not secured to any individual by an immutable decree. Through the mercy of God and the merits of a Saviour, they are conferred only on those who do His commandments; and when we cease to do His commandments, we forfeit our title to these rewards."—*Bishop Hobart.*

third and fourth warning

a De. xxxii. 24; Ez. v. 17; Je. viii. 17, ii. 5.

b 2 Ki. xvii. 25, ii. 24; 1 K. x. 35, 36; xiii. 21—24

c Ju. v. 6; 2 Ch. xv. 5; Is. xxxiii. 8.

d Je. ii. 20, v. 3; Am. iv. 6—12.

e 2 S. xxii. 27; Ps. xviii. 26.

f Ez. v. 17, vi. 3, xiv. 17, xxix. 8, xxxiii. 2

g Nu. xiv. 12; De. xxviii. 21; Je. xiv. 12, xxiv. 10, xxix. 17, 18; Am. iv. 10.

h Ps. cv. 16; Is. iii. 1; Ez. iv. 16, v. 16, xiv. 13.

i Is. ix. 20; Mi. vi. 14; Hag. i. 6.

fifth warning

j Ez. viii. 18; Is. lix. 18; Je. xxi. 5; De. iv. 24.

k 2 K. vi. 29; Lam. iv. 10. *Josephus Wars* vii. 2, gives an acc. of one Mary, who in the height of the famine, during the siege of Jerus. by Titus, killed her infant child, roasted, and had eaten part of it, when disc. by the soldiers. Cf. De. xxviii. 53; Ex. v. 10. l Is. xvii. 9.

duced on their heaven as if the blue concave overhead were to be converted into a huge metallic reflector, casting down rays of the fiercest light and heat. It is this oppressively splendid aspect of the sky that is the first of the two leading ideas in the passages quoted above; and such an appearance we might almost term the ordinary one during an Indian hot season. It was not, however, merely the heaven, but the earth that was to become like iron and brass. The idea seems to be not now of metallic lustre, but of metallic hardness. In a country like our own, where we rarely have a week without rain, the soil has never time to acquire the hardness of which it is capable. Throughout the interior of India, however, with the exception of a few showers about the new year, no rain falls between November and the middle of June. The cotton soil, which during the wet weather was a tenacious clay, now daily increases in hardness, becoming at the same time covered with a network of cracks, as it contracts under the rays of the sun. A friend informs me, that when in this state he has failed to make a sensible impression on it with a pickaxe. Trees languish and lose their green color; herbs have yet scarcely begun to appear; and the whole country is in process of becoming a desert, when, in the middle of June, the monsoon or rainy season sets in, overspreading the earth, with a rapidity to which we find no parallel in northern lands, with a carpet of the liveliest green. Were the rains withheld for a few years, India would become like the Sahara, its fields converted into barrenness, its cities silent, its inhabitants perished, — an awful monument of the Divine wrath. And it was of such a judgment as this that the passages in Leviticus and Deuteronomy were designed to tell. — *Fam. Treas.*

21 26. (21) contrary, recklessly, heedlessly. (22) send . . you,^a literally fulfilled,^b which . . children, make you childless. ways . . desolate,^c decline of commerce, no travelers to and fro; robbers. (23) things,^d judgments. (24) will . . sins,^e my severity shall be proportioned to your rebellion. (25) sword,^f symbol of war. avenge . . covenant, shall take vengeance for breaking of covenant. cities . . pestilence,^g from overcrowding. (26) broken . . bread,^h cut off supply of food. ten . . oven, *i. e.* one oven shall suffice for ten families. they . . weight, care, anxiety, hunger, suspicion; presiding at the redistribution. ye . . satisfied,ⁱ having not enough.

The punishment of obstinacy (vss. 23, 24). — I. The character described. One who obstinately persists in evil courses; "will not be reformed." This may apply to — 1. A nation; 2. An individual. Such obstinacy may be the effect of — (1) A proud confidence in human wisdom and resources; (2) Of a rooted love of sin. It betrays — (1) Great blindness of mind; (2) Great hardness of heart. II. The Divine procedure in relation thereto. 1. Opposition: "I will walk contrary," etc., nature and providence armed against the rebellious. 2. Punishment — (1) Severe; (2) Proportionate; (3) Increasing.

Obstinacy. — An obstinate man does not hold opinions, but they hold him: for when he is once possessed with an error, it is like a devil, only cast out with great difficulty. Whatsoever he lays hold on, like a drowning man he never loses, though it do but help to sink him the sooner. His ignorance is abrupt and inaccessible, impregnable both by art and nature, and will hold out to the last, though it has nothing but rubbish to defend. It is as dark as pitch, and sticks as fast as anything it lays hold on. His skull is so thick that it is proof against any reason, and never cracks but on the wrong side, just opposite to that against which the impression is made, which surgeons say does happen very frequently. The slighter and more inconsistent his opinions are, the faster he holds them, otherwise they would fall asunder of themselves; for opinions that are false ought to be held with more strictness and assurance than those that are true — otherwise they will be apt to betray their owners before they are aware. He delights most of all to differ in things indifferent; no matter how frivolous they are, they are weighty enough in proportion to his weak judgment; and he will rather suffer self-martyrdom than part with the least scruple of his freehold, for it is impossible to dye his dark ignorance into a lighter color. — *Butler.*

27—31. (27) if . . me, after these four plain warnings. (28) fury,^j persistent rebellion will meet with increased anger. (29) ye . . sons, literally fulfilled,^k (30) will . . places,^l raised spots devoted to idolatrous worship. images, prob. of Baal and Astarte, the deities of the sun and moon. cast

.. idols,^a the gods and their devotees shall be overwhelmed together. **my** .. **you**, deep and unutterable loathing. (31) **make** .. **waste**, the cities themselves shall be converted into ruins and desolation.

Waste cities. — By the concurring testimony of all travellers, Judea may now be called a field of ruins. Columns, the memorials of anc. magnificence, now covered with rubbish, and buried under ruins, may be found in all Syria. Fr. Mt. Tabor is beheld an immensity of plains, interspersed with hamlets, fortresses, and heaps of ruins. — *Keith*. *Fulfilment of this prophecy.* — "How, since Old Testament days, this prophecy has been continually illustrated in Israel's history, is, or should be, familiar to all. As apostacy has succeeded to apostacy, judgment has followed upon judgment. To a Nebuchadnezzar succeeded an Antiochus Epiphanes; and, after the Greco-Syrian judgment, then, following the rejection and crucifixion of their promised Messiah, came the Roman captivity, the most terrible of all; a judgment continued even until now in the eighteen hundred years of Israel's exile from the land of the covenant, and their scattering among the nations, — eighteen hundred years of tragic suffering, such as no other nation has ever known, or, knowing, has yet survived; sufferings which are still exhibited before the eyes of all the world to-day in the bitter experiences of the four millions of Jews in the empire of the Czar, and the persecutions of Anti-Shemitism in other lands." — *Exp. Bib.*

32-35. (32) **bring** .. **desolation**,^b "I myself will bring;" ruin of cities and sanctuaries extending to whole country. **astonished**,^c beholding the overthrow. (33) **scatter**,^d disperse inhabitants far and wide as captives and sufferers. (34) **enjoy** .. **sabbaths**, pass through rest periods, rid of defiant transgressors. (35) **as long**,^e during days of desolation.

Palestine an astonishment (vs. 32). — Why, among many wonders in the world, may the ungodly be astonished at Judea. I. Because, believing in nature, they here find a land to which nature has been most beneficent, failing to yield its increase, — a land that once flowed with milk and honey. II. Because, disbelieving in God, they yet see His word verified. The land is depopulated and covered with ruins. Meanwhile other lands (as England), once the hunting-grounds of barbarians, have become the seats of civilization and Christian power.

Prediction and fulfilment. — "Two particulars yet remain in which this predicted experience has been unique. The one is the predicted survival of exiled Israel as a nation in the land of their enemies, their indestructibility throughout centuries of unequalled suffering; the other, the extraordinary fact that their land, so rich and fertile, should during the whole period of Israel's banishment remain comparatively unoccupied and untilled. As regards the former particular, we may search history in vain for a similar phenomenon. Here is a people who, at their best, were few in number and in material resources; who now have been scattered from their land for centuries, yet never merging in the nations with whom they were mingled, or losing in the least their peculiar racial characteristics and distinct national identity. All history records no other instance of the kind. No less remarkable and significant is the long-continued depopulation of the land of Israel. For it was and is by nature a richly fertile land; and at the time of this prediction it was upon one of the chief commercial and military routes of the world, and its possession has thus been an object of ambition to all the dominant nations of history. Surely one would have expected that if Israel should be cast out of such a land it would at once and always be cultivated by others. But it was not to be so." — *Exp. Bible*.

36-42. (36) **send** .. **hearts**,^f downcast, sad, despairing. **sound** .. **chase**,^g most beautiful poetic expression indicative of excessive fear. (37) **they** .. **another**,^h hasty and tumultuous flight. (38) **and**,ⁱ the lost ten tribes, for example. (39) **pine** .. **away**,^j because of iniquity. (40) **confess**,^k humble acknowledgment of sin and error; no reformation or restoration without this. (41) **I** .. **them**, admission of trial, as judgments fr. God. **accept**,^l as justly deserved. (42) **remember**,^m practically in mercy.

The bow in the cloud. — The way was left open for the rebellious to return. 1. It was the way of reflection. 2. It was the way of confession. 3. It was the way of humiliation. They were not to return proudly, feeling they had not been rewarded according to their iniquities. The way is still open for the

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a Ez. vi. 8-5, 13.

"It is better to have a lion at the head of an army of sheep, than a sheep at the head of an army of lions." — *De Foe*.

the land
an astonish-
ment

b Je. ix. 11, xxv. 11.

c De. xxviii. 37; 1 K. ix. 8; La. iv. 12.

d De. iv. 27, xxviii. 64; Je. ix. 16; Ps. xlii. 11; Ez. xii. 15.

e 2 Ch. xxxvi. 21. Fr. Saul to Babylonish captivity about 490 years; hence there were 70 sabbaths of years. Now the Babylonish captivity lasted 70 years, and during that time the land rested. This is Houbigant's view. "But there is no authority for this singular assertion regarding the neglect of the Jews." — *Bonar*, cf. 2 K. xix. 26; Je. xxxiv. 17.

promises to
penitents

f Am. v. 3; Ez. xxi. 7.

g Pr. xxviii. 1.

h Is. x. 4; Jos. vii. 12 1; Ju. ii. 14.

i De. iv. 27, xxviii. 65.

j Ez. xxiv. 23; 2 Ch. xxxvi. 16; Ps. lxxvi. 7.

k Hos. v. 15; Zec. x. 9; Ez. xx. 43; Je. xxix. 12, 13; 1 K. xviii. 47-50; Lu. xv. 18; 1 Jo. i. 9; 1 K. xxi. 29.

l Ne. i. 9; Ps. lxxix. 1-5, lxxx. 1-7, lxxxv.

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4-7; Ezr. ix. 4-9; Ex. ii. 24, 25; Ps. cvi. 45. cxxxvi. 23; Ho. xi. 8, 9.

the restoration of the covenant

a Je. xxv. 11; 2 Ch. xxxvi. 19-21.

b Am. ix. 9; De. iv. 31; 2 K. xiii. 23.

c Ro. xi. 1, 2; Ps. xcvi. 3; Am. ix. 11-15.

d De xxxiii. 2; Jo. i. 17.

The regulations of this chapter have to do with special vows, which were obligatory on no one (Deut. xxiii. 22). Therefore the law which regulates the making and keeping of vows is not unfitly made to follow as an appendix, the other legislation of the book. — *Kellogg*.

"The Levitical law closes with offers of mercy, the last words of the law are words of entreaty and promise." — *Jellie*.

the commutation of vows

of persons vowed

e 1 S. ii. 11, 19; Ro. xii. 1; Ps. cxvi. 12-14.

f Samuel was thus devoted by his mother. See also Absalom's pretended vow, 2 S. xv. 8. May not this law of commutation of vows throw light on the possible results of Jephthah's rash vow?

g Under this provision might not Jephthah have redeemed his dau.? h Thus Sam., a Levite, was not re-

viled to return; for the New Testament teaches that these are the steps in the ladder of life, out of sin to holiness, from earth to heaven, from self to God; viz.: Repentance, conversion, consecration. — *Jellie*.

The desolation of Palestine. — It bears no traces of Israel's land. The heel of the Gentiles has broken all its ancient monuments to pieces, save what could not be effaced, — the sea, the mountain, the valley, the river, the lake. But the minaret of each village you pass tells you that the land is "trodden down of the Gentiles." Only four Jewish cities remain, — Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, Safet; and in these Israel has but a remnant. The 480 synagogues of Jerusalem, and the 400 of Bethel, with the multitude of similar sanctuaries throughout the land, are no more. . . . Go where you will, death reigns; for the "life from the dead" has not yet come. Salem, the city of the living, is now but the tomb of the dead. As is the centre, so are the extremities; as is Jerusalem, so are Beersheba and Sidon. Place your finger anywhere, on body or limb, you feel no throbbing life. Pass round and through the land, you find it still the same. There is no pulse in any of its veins, for the great heart that sent these pulses out has long since ceased to beat. — *Bonar*.

43-46. (43) and . . sabbaths,^a not suffer from over-tillage. (44) and yet,^b the hist. of Jews proves this. (45) remember,^c if the sins of fathers are visited on the children, so also covenant mercy is not forgotten. (46) statutes . . laws,^d restatement of character of what has been previously given, and of the nature of a conclusion.

If the rebellious returned to the Lord in His own appointed way He would graciously receive them. 1. He would do so for the sake of their fathers. He would remember His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 2. He would do so for the sake of His name. "For I am the Lord." He had purposed, as well as promised, to deal mercifully with them. 3. He would do so for the sake of the land. He had selected Canaan as the arena where He would specially display His glory to men, and He would not allow it to lie waste forever. 4. He would do it for the sake of His covenant. "I will remember My covenant." — *Preacher's Com.*

The advantage of submission. — "It is recorded of Edward I., that, being angry with a servant of his in the sport of hawking, he threatened him sharply. The gentleman answered, it was well there was a river between them. Hereat the king, more incensed, spurred his horse into the depth of the river, not without extreme danger of his life, the water being deep and the banks too steep and high for his ascending. Yet, at last recovering land, with his sword drawn, he pursued the servant, who rode as fast from him. But finding himself too ill-horsed to outstride the angry king, he reined, lighted, and, on his knees, exposed his neck to the blow of the king's sword. The king no sooner saw this but he put up his sword and would not touch him. A dangerous water could not withhold him from violence; yet his servant's submission did soon pacify him." — *Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

1-7. (1, 2) when . . vow,^a *lit.* a man when he shall signalize a vow: *i. e.* make a special vow. persons,^b *i. e.* those so devoted. (3) thy estimation, Moses was to set valuation or fix terms for redeeming the persons. male, valuation begins with male and regulated according to worth of services. (4) female,^c the age^d mentioned as well as what follows indicates that the vow is made by a parent for a child or another person. (7) price declines as years increase.

Equitable compensation. — I. The Divine rule. Compensation to be exacted on the ground of human ability and relations. II. A lesson for arbitrators. They should study the principle of this rule, and consider the circumstances of parties.

Paying vows. — Once being on a journey in the East, we discerned a miserable-looking object lying in the road before us, which, covered with dirt and dust, we could scarcely conceive to be a human being. When we came nearer, we found a poor infatuated creature, who having bound himself by a vow that he would travel to some sacred city, measuring his length on the ground the whole way, was now engaged in the fulfilment of his vow. We

watched him for some time in silence. He lay on his breast at full length with his mouth in the dust, holding a stick at arm's length, with which he marked the ground; then rising, and touching the spot marked with his feet. He again prostrated himself on the ground. Intent on his task, he seemed to take no notice of us or of surrounding objects. We noticed that his nose, chest, knees, and stick were actually worn away. On asking him the reason of all this, he stopped a moment to look at us, and, on repeating the question, answered that it was a vow. He had already been two or three months on his way, and that his journey would not be finished for as long a time. We gave him a piece of money, and asked him to go no farther; but he mournfully shook his head, and, clasping his hands together, entreated that we would not hinder him.

B. C. 1491.

deemed, but, fr.
his childhood was
employed in the
service of the
sanctuary.

8-13. (8) if . . estimation, you having appraised him too high. (9) all . . holy, *i. e.* set apart for service of God. (10) alter . . good,^a changes on one pretext would pave the way for other changes. it . . exchange, *i. e.* the original offering and what was proposed to exchange for it. (11) unclean, the clean could neither be redeemed nor exchanged. (12) so . . be, priest's word final, to settle all disputes. (13) add, which shows that the priest's valuation was not extravagant.

of beasts
vowed

a Mal. i. 14; Ps.
lxxvi. 11, lxxvi. 12-
15; Jon. ii. 9.

The poor man's final appeal (vs. 8). — This verse teaches — I. That assessors may be mistaken. II. That the poor are not to be unjustly mulct in damages. III. That God would be regarded as the poor man's friend — the priest, God's representative, was to decide according to equity. IV. The principle equally applies to the rich who had been assessed too lightly.

Redemption of a singular vow. — The following is recorded as an historical fact: "Abd-al-Muttalib once vowed that if he should be so greatly blessed as to have ten sons, one should certainly be devoted to Allah. In process of time, the number was fulfilled, and the reluctant father gathered his offspring in the Kaaba, and cast lots for the one to be sacrificed. The lot fell upon Abdalla, the beautiful son of his old age. The sacrificial knife was solemnly prepared;" and, like Abraham, he stood ready for the awful deed. But the lad's sisters came to the rescue. They knew that the Arabs offered camels in sacrifice, and in their abounding grief they entreated their father to cast lots between their brother and ten of these valuable creatures. He consented; but, to their sorrow, the lot fell a second time on the favorite boy. The number of beasts was then doubled, and the lot cast again; but still it fell upon the lad. Time after time trial was made, as the sorrowing sisters and the troubled father became more and more desperate in their anxiety to save the dear one. At last one hundred camels had been proffered, and then, to their great joy, the lot fell upon the beasts. Abdalla was saved. God had set his own value upon the devoted boy, and when an equivalent was provided he was free. — *Robert Spurgeon*

"The loving heart
will ask not only
what *must*, but
what *may*, be done;
and the sacrifices
offered in the
flames of love are
acceptable to God
(2 Chron. vi. 8).
These are the
principles which
underlie the laws
concerning singu-
lar vows." — I. A.
M.

"I made a solemn
vow before God,
that if General Lee
were driven back
from Pennsylvania
I would crown the
result by the decla-
ration of freedom
to the slaves" —
Abraham Lincoln.

14-18. (14) sanctify . . house, devotes it to service of God by a vow; perhaps proposes that its value shall be given to support the priests or service of sanctuary. (15) add . . fifth, this implies that priests value being low, more must be paid to reclaim. (16) seed, quantity required for sowing, possible productiveness. homer, five and a half bushels. (17) from . . jubilee, fifty shekels the valuation for time to next jubilee. (18) abated, proper reduction.

of houses
and land

The Law of God leaves ample room for the play of spontaneous devotion. — We may, when animated by gratitude for His kindness, or penetrated with a sense of His goodness and grace, freely and spontaneously bring to the altar of our Lord (1) our possessions, (2) our time and labor, (3) our children (whom we may surrender to His service in distant and dangerous scenes), (4) any precious thing which we are not bound to give, but which we voluntarily and joyfully lay at His feet. — *Pulpit Com.*

A vow fulfilled. — "I remember that when we arrived at the hotel at White Mountains, the sun was just reclining his head behind Mount Washington, with all that glorious drapery of an American sunset, of which we know nothing in this country. I felt that I should like to be walking with my God on this earth! I said, 'What shall I render to my Lord for all His benefits to me?' I was led further to repeat that question which Paul asked under other circumstances, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' The answer came

"Distributive justice belongs to magistrates or rulers, and consists in distributing to every man that right or equity which the laws and the principle of equity require. Commutative justice consists in fair dealing in trade and mutual intercourse between man and man." — *Maunder.*

B. C. 1491.

conditions of redemption of land

α Nu. xviii. 14; Ez. xlv. 29.

β 1 S. ii. 3; Pr. xvi. 11; Is. xxvi. 7; Ac. iv. 34-37, v. 1-5. Said Anne of Austria, the Queen of France, to her implacable enemy, Cardinal Richelieu, "My lord cardinal, there is one fact which you seem to have entirely forgotten. God is a sure paymaster. He may not pay at the end of every week, or month, or year; but I charge you, remember that He," pays in the end."

redemption of firstlings, and of things devoted

c Ex. xiii. 2, 12, 13; De. xv. 19. d 2 Ch. v. 1; 1 Ch. xxix. 1-9. e Ge. xiv. 18-20, xxviii. 20-22; Nu. xviii. 21.

f Of the remaining nine parts, another tenth part was to be taken and brought to Jerusalem, and there eaten by the owners (De. xii. 6), though this second tithe was every third year distributed to the poor (De. xxviii. 29).

The law of the tithe, as regards the moral element of the law, is still in force. If any ask how much should the proportion be, one might say that by fair inference the tenth might safely be taken as an average minimum of giving, counting rich and poor together (see 2 Cor. vii. 7-9). —Kellogg.

immediately. It was this: 'It is true thou canst not bring the many thousands thou hast left in thy native country to see this beautiful scenery; but thou canst create beautiful scenes for them.' * * * He pondered the thought, prayed over it, and the next day resolved to carry it into execution. On his return to England he took immediate steps for the fulfilment of his purpose; the design of the proposed park was entrusted to the late Sir Joseph Paxton, and on the 14th of August, 1857, it was publicly opened. It covers twelve and a half acres of ground, and its entire cost was upwards of £30,000." —*Memoir of Sir Francis Crossley.*

19-25. (19) it . . him, as his. (20) if . . man,^a in that case neither the priest nor original owner had any power over the field till the year of jubilee. (21) when . . out, of the possession of its owner. (22) which . . possession, i. e. part of his inheritance. (23) give . . Lord, irrecoverable. (24) field, see xxv. 28. (25) gerahs . . shekel,^b see on Ex. xxx. 13; xxxviii. 24.

The redemption of property. — Note the regulations according to which property might or might not be redeemed. I. If redeemed it was at the price of the estimation, plus one fifth. The effect of this would be—1. That the original estimation was not to be exorbitant; 2. That the fifth now added should compensate the lender. II. If undersold it was not to be redeemed (vs. 20). This—1. To avoid complications in proving ownership; 2. To prevent fraudulent sales and hazardous speculation.

A wise judge. — A case was tried before a young *cadi* at Smyrna, the merits of which were as follows: A poor man claimed a house which a rich man usurped. The former held his deeds and documents to prove his right. But the latter had provided a number of witnesses to invalidate his title. In order to support their evidence effectually he presented the *cadi* with a bag containing 500 ducats. When the day arrived for hearing the cause, the poor man told his story, and produced his writings, but could not support his case by witnesses. The other rested the whole case on his witnesses, and on his adversary's defect in law, who could produce none; he urged the *cadi*, therefore, to give sentence in his favor. After the most earnest solicitations, the judge calmly drew out from under his sofa the bag of ducats which the rich man had given him as a bribe, saying to him very gravely, "You have been much mistaken in the suit, for if the poor man could produce no witnesses in the confirmation of his right, I myself can produce at least five hundred." He then threw away the bag with reproach and indignation, and decreed the house to the poor plaintiff.

26-30. (26) no . . it,^c bec. they belonged to God already. (27) sold, no profit to be made of it. (28) devoted,^d anything which by the law belonged to the Lord could neither be sold by the officials of the sanctuary nor be redeemed by the vower. (29) surely . . death, in extreme cases, where death was proper and right, there was no alternative. (30) tithe . . land,^e of the soil or what grows on it, firstfruits being deducted.^f

Unredeemableness of things devoted. — I. The principle on which this is based is change of ownership. It was man's, it is now God's. Will a man rob God, by taking back what, being devoted to Him, is now His? II. The lesson for us. Property that we have vowed to the Lord is no longer ours. This applies to breach of promise; as when one's word is pledged for certain amounts in aid of religious enterprises.

Tithes. — I know of two men who started business with this view: "We will give to God one-tenth of our profits." The first year the profits were considerable; the tithe was consequently considerable. The next year there was increase in the profits, and, of course, increase in the tithe. In a few years the profits became very, very large indeed, so that the partners said one to another: "Is not a tenth of this rather too much to give away? Suppose we say we will give a twentieth?" And they gave a twentieth; and the next year the profits had fallen down; the year after they fell down again, and the men said to one another, as Christians should say in such a case, "Have not we broken our vow? Have we not robbed God?" And in no spirit of selfish calculation, but with humility of soul, self-reproach and bitter contrition they went back to God and told Him how the matter stood, prayed His forgiveness, renewed their vow, and God opened the windows of heaven and gave back to them all the old prosperity. — *Parker.*

31-34. (31) will . . redeem, he must add^a a fifth to the value. (32) under . . rod,^b for purpose of counting and tithing. Ezek. xx. 37 refers to customs, God bringing his own into bond of covenant. (33) good . . bad, owner in tithing not to pick out good from bad, but take animals as they come. (34) commandments,^c final solemn reiteration.

The sacred persuasives to generosity in Church maintenance. — That as the gospel is superior to the law, and Christ to Moses, so should Christian generosity surpass Jewish. II. That as to Jews Zion was dear, and for her they lavished vast wealth, so should Christians bring, with yet grander bountifulness, of their substance to the cause and Church of their blessed Lord. III. That it is beyond question a New Testament obligation on all believers to support the ministry and maintain the ordinances of the gospel (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14). — *Preacher's Com.*

Passing under the rod. — When a man was to give the tithe of his sheep or calves to God, he was to shut up the whole flock in one fold, in which there was one narrow door, capable of letting out one at a time. The owner, about to give the tenth to the Lord, stood by the door with a rod in his hand, the end of which was dipped in vermilion or red ochre. The mothers of those lambs or calves stood without; the door being opened, the young ones ran out to join themselves to their dams, and as they passed out the owner stood with his rod over them, and counted 1, 2, 3, etc., and when the *tenth* came, he touched it with the colored rod, by which it was distinguished to be the tithe calf, sheep, etc., and whether poor or lean, perfect or blemished, that was received as the legitimate tithe.^d It is probably in reference to this custom that the prophet, speaking to Israel, says (Ez. xx. 37):—"I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the word of the covenant;" i. e. you shall be once more claimed as the Lord's property, and be in all things devoted to his service, being *marked* or *ascertained* by special providences and manifestations of His kindness to His peculiar people." — *Buch.*

B. C. 1490.

taking tithes
of cattle

a Mal. iii. 8.

b Nu. xviii. 21,
xxxi. 30, 37-41.

c Ps. lxxvii. 20.
Amid all the secularities and unbelief and disobedience of the times, let us seek to maintain communion with God and bring our individual offerings, and we shall certainly find that His thoughts of love expressed in the feasts of the old covenant will be fulfilled for us. — *Bib. III.*

d Rabbinical explanation.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

[347]

Introduction.

I. Title. NUMBERS, fr. the LXX. Ἀριθμοί whence the Vulg. *Numeri*, of wh. our Numbers is the first instance of the trans. of the title of a book. Sometimes the Jews called it *Va-ye-dabbér*, "and he spake," fr. the first word of the Heb.; but more usually they employ the fifth word of the first ver., *Bemidbar*, "in the desert," as more descriptive of the contents of the bk. **II. Author**, probably MOSES (xxxvi. 13). Most of the reasons for the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch apply esp. to the authorship of this bk. In addition — 1. The list of the stations is assigned to Moses (xxxiii. 2). 2. The characteristic blending of narrative and legislative matter sugg. a contemporary writer. 3. The author must have had a most intimate knowledge of Egyptian customs, etc.; cf. viii. 7 ff.; v. 11-35; xix. 1-10; xiii. 22. 4. Abundant proofs that the writer and his companions were in the desert. 5. Accounts of, and refs. to, places which cannot have been written subsequently to the time of Moses; cf. xxi. 13, etc. **III. Period**, 38 yrs. and 3 mos., i. e. fr. 1st day of 2nd mo. of 2nd yr. aft. Exod. (i. 1) to 1st day of 5th mo. of 40th yr., when Aaron died (cf. xx. 22; xxxiii. 38; De. ii. 14). **IV. Contents**, the principal items treated of in this bk. are — the numbering of the Israelites, the appointment and consecration of the Levites to the service of the Tab., the institution of certain ceremonies and offerings, the marching to the land of Moab and the circumstances that there occurred (*Pinnock*). **V. Scope**, to transmit to posterity, for a perpetual example, the providential care of the Almighty over the Israelites during their wanderings in the wilderness, and the temptations and murmurings there by wh. they provoked and offended their Heavenly Protector; so that, at length, "He sware in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest" — Ps. xcv. 11 (*Horne*). The wanderings of the Israelites, with wh. a considerable portion of the bk. is occupied, ill. the providential care of God over His people, and His hatred to sin (*Lytton*). **VI. Types of Christ**. 1. The water fr. the rock (cf. xx. 11; 1 Co. x. 4). 2. The brazen serpent (cf. xxi. ; Jo. iii. 14).

Synopsis.

(According to Horne.)

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- II. Census of Levites, and appointment to their services.....iii. iv.

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- I. Purification of camp.....v.
- II. The Nazarites.....vi.
- III. The princes' offerings to Tab.....vii.
- IV. Consecration of Levites.....viii.
- V. Celebration of Passover.....ix.
- VI. Camp regulations.....x.

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- IV. The spies sent forth, etc.....xiii.
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- VII. 5th murmuring.....xvi. 1-40
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9. List of encampments...xxxiii. 1-49
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CHAPTER THE FIRST.

1-4. (1) **tabernacle** . . congregation, *R. V.*, "tent of meeting." A movable tent-temple designed for a wandering people.^a **first** . . month, a month aft. setting up of Tab.^b in . . after, the interval being occupied with building the Tab. and giving the Law, etc. (2) **sum**, number, whence title of this bk. **families**, including the houses^c of several fathers. **polls**, heads. (3) **from** . . upward, etc., the former numbering^d being for the purpose of collecting the atonement money, prob. this numbering was the more formal registering for military service of those who had been numbered bef. "According to the Jewish writers, sixty was the age when they were considered to be exempt from military service, but this is nowhere stated in the Scriptures."—*Bush*. (4) **with** . . you, as assistant in this work of numbering the people. **head** . . fathers, not necessarily firstborn, but some one noted for wisdom, valor, or other distinguishing trait.

The design of this census.—1. For the organization of the army. 2. To manifest the Divine faithfulness. 3. For the promotion of order. 4. They are severally and distinctly numbered, ea. tribe by itself, th. in time to come it might be certainly known of what tribe and family the promised Messiah should be born.—*W. Attersoll*.

The Israelites dealt largely in statistics. At all the great turning points in their history a census was taken. This Book of Numbers owes its name to the fact that it records two census-takings; one at the beginning, the other at the close of the forty years' sojourn in the wilderness.

5-10. (5) **Elizur**^e (*God is rock*). **Shedeur** (*darting of fire*). (6) **Shelumiel** (*friend of God*). **Zurishaddai** (*my rock is the Almighty*). (7) **Nahshon** (*enchanter*). **Amminadab**^g (*kindred of the prince*). (8) **Nethaneel** (*given of God*). **Zuar** (*smallness*). (9) **Eliab** (*to whom God is father*). **Helon** (*strong*). (10) **Elishama**^h (*whom God hears*). **Ammihud** (*kindred of Judah*). **Gamaliel** (*recompense of God*). **Pedahzur** (*whom the rock delivers*).

Royal example of diligence.—When Lysander, a Lacedæmonian general, brought magnificent presents to Cyrus, he was shown, and much admired, the royal gardens. Cyrus told him, in answer to his inquiries, that he had himself drawn and entirely marked out the plan of the gardens, and had planted many of the trees with his own hands. "What!" exclaimed Lysander with astonishment, and viewing Cyrus from head to foot; "is it possible, that with those purple robes and splendid vestments, those strings of jewels and bracelets of gold, those buskins so richly embroidered,—is it possible that you could play the gardener, and employ your royal hands in planting trees?" "Does that surprise you?" said Cyrus; "I assure you that, when my health permits, I never sit down to my table without having fatigued myself either in military exercise, rural labor, or some other toilsome employment, to which I apply myself with pleasure." Lysander, still more amazed, pressed Cyrus by the hand, and said, "You are truly happy, and deserve your high fortune, since you unite it with virtue."

11-16. (11) **Abidan** (*father of the judge*). **Gideon** (*a cutting down*). **Ahiezer** (*bro. of the help*). **Ammishaddai** (*kindred of the Almighty*). (13) **Pagiel** (*event of God*). **Oeran** (*afflicted*). (14) **Eliasaph** (*whom God added*). **Deuel** (*invocation of God*). (15) **Ahira** (*bro. of evil*). **Enan** (*having eyes*). (16) **renowned**,ⁱ *lit. the called of the congregation*, probably composing a national council or diet. **congregation**, gen. meaning the entire mass of Israelitish nation, but sometimes its representatives. Aaron is said to speak to "the whole congregation" (*Ex. xvi. 10*), which must refer to its representatives. **princes**, *lit. one lifted up*, not necessarily bec. of noble birth, but by virtue of ability or heroic traits. **thousands**, *R. V. marg.* "families."

Census-takers (*vs. 16*).—I. They were renowned men. Renowned, prob., for prudence and sagacity as well as faith. II. They were renowned rather than rich, not because they were rich. III. Such men always needed in the cause and Church of God. IV. The service of God the way to the highest and most lasting renown.

Example of diligence.—The Rev. T. Carter, one of the Puritan ministers, once came unexpectedly behind one of his acquaintances, who was busily engaged in his trade as a tanner. He gave him a pleasant tap on the shoulder.

B. C. 1490.

the census
commanded
to be taken

a *Ex. xxvi.*b *Ex. xl. 17.*c *Ex. vi. 14 ff.*

d *Ex. xxx. 11 ff.*, the first numbering had relation to religion; this, the second, to war; the third, 38 yrs. later in the steppes of Moab (*xxvi*) for the division of Canaan among the tribes acc. to the num. of their fams. (*xxxiii. 54*). The num. now was 603,550; then it was 601,730 being a decrease at the end of the 40 yrs.

census
officers

e *Nu. ii. 10; vii. 30, 35; x. 18.*

f *Bro.-in-law of Aaron* (*Ex. vi. 23*) and ancestor of K. David.

g *Ru. iv. 19, 20; 1 Ch. ii. 10; Lu. ii. 22, 23.*

h *Grandfather of Joshua* (*1 Ch. vii. 26, 27*).

"Order is a lovely nymph, the child of Beauty and Wisdom; her attendants are Comfort, Neatness, and Activity; her abode is the valley of happiness; she is always to be found when sought for, and never appears so lovely as when contrasted with her opponent—Disorder."—*Dr. Johnson*.

i *Ex. xviii. 21.*

"Take a heretic, a rebel, a person that hath an ill cause to manage; what he is deficient in the strength of his cause, he makes up with diligence; while he that hath right on his side, is cold, indiligent, lazy,

a. c. 1490.

inactive, trusting that the goodness of his cause will not fail to prevail without assistance. So wrong prevails, while evil persons are zealous, and the good remiss." — *Jeremy Taylor*.

the census taken

Reuben

a Is. xliii. 1; Jo. x. 3; Re. vii. 4.

"The num. of the people was not an act sinful in itself, as Moses did it by Divine appointment; but David incurred guilt by doing it without the authority of God." — *Port. Com.*

b Ge. xli. 8, 9.

"If a man be endowed with a generous mind, this is the best kind of nobility." — *Plato*.

Simeon, Gad, Judah

c Ge. xxix. 33; xli.

d Ge. xxx. 10, 11; xli. 16.

e Ge. xxix. 35; xli. 12.

f Ge. xlix. 10.

g "Each is designated by adding the name of the ancestors of his tribe, the people of wh. were called 'Ben-i-Reuben,' 'Ben-Levi,' — sons of Reuben, sons of Levi, acc. to the custom of the Arabs still, as well as other nations, wh. are divided into clans, as the Macs of Scotland, the Aps of Wales, and the O's and Fitzes of Ireland" — *Chalmers*.

The good man looked behind him, started, and said, "Sir, I am ashamed that you should find me thus employed." Mr. Carter replied, "Let Christ, when He cometh, find me so doing." "What!" said the good man, "doing this?" "Yes," said Mr. Carter: "faithfully performing the duties of my calling." — *Cheever*. *Duty imperative*. — The conservation of duty to the public ought to be much more precious than the conservation of life or being, according to that memorable speech of Pompeius Magnus. When, being in commission of purveyance for a famine at Rome, and being dissuaded, with great vehemence and instance by his friends about him, that he should not hazard himself to sea in an extremity of weather, he said only to them, "*Necesse est ut eam, non ut vivam.*" — *Lord Bacon*.

17—21. (17) which . . names,^a i. e. the aforesaid. (18) pedigrees, i. e. traced their descent fr. the tribes of Israel respectively. (19) numbered, the Heb. means to *inspect, review*, so that it was not so much a new census, as one had been taken just bef., but a mobilization of fighting men in view of the speedy conquest of Caanan. in . . Sinai, see Ex. xix. 2. (20) generations, etc., "generations" denotes a larger number than "families," and "families" than "houses," while "houses," or households, comprised all the individuals pertaining to each. — *Bush*. all . . war, the fugitives fr. Egypt were to be the conquerors of Canaan. (21) those . . them, etc.^b at the next num. they were 2,770 less. Reuben, the firstborn, is the *seventh* in numerical strength; placed first because the firstborn.

Able to go forth to war. — I. Hitherto fugitives, henceforth warriors. II. All who were able, without exception, were numbered; no excuses, no cravens. III. Though able, they were not to go forth till the word of command was given. IV. Though able, it was God who gave the victory.

Pride of ancestry. — The obscurity of Lord Tenterden's birth is well known, but he had too much good sense to feel any false shame on that account. We have heard it related of him, that when in an early period of his professional career, a brother barrister, with whom he happened to have a quarrel, had the bad taste to twit him on his origin, his manly and severe answer was, "Yes, sir, I am the son of a barber; if you had been the son of a barber, you would have been a barber yourself." *An honest pedigree*. — Dr. Livingstone, the famous explorer, was descended from the Highlanders, and he said that one of his ancestors, one of the Highlanders, one day called his family around him. The Highlander was dying; he had his children around his death-bed. He said, "Now, my lads, I have looked all through our history as far back as I can find it, and I have never found a dishonest man in all the line, and I want you to understand you inherit good blood. You have no excuse for doing wrong. My lads, be honest."

22—27. (22, 23) the . . Simeon, etc.,^c third in numerical strength. (24, 25) the . . Gad, etc.,^d Gad alone consists of *thousands, hundreds, and five tens*. This tr. stands *eighth* in numerical strength. (26, 27) the . . Judah, etc.,^e of whom Shiloh was to come,^f and the most numerous.^g

God keeps and guides. — In his address, "Lessons from the Angelus," the late Prof. Henry Drummond related the following incident: Two Americans who were crossing the Atlantic met in the cabin on Sunday night to sing hymns. As they sang the last hymn, "Jesus lover of my soul," one of them heard an exceedingly rich and beautiful voice behind him. He looked around and, although he did not know the face, he thought he knew the voice, so when the music ceased, he turned and asked the man if he had not been in the civil war. The man replied that he had been a Confederate soldier. "Were you at such a place on such a night?" asked the first. "Yes," he replied, "and a curious thing happened that night which this hymn has recalled to my mind. I was posted on sentry duty near the edge of a wood. It was a dark night and very cold and I was a little frightened because the enemy were supposed to be very near. About midnight, when everything was very still and I was feeling homesick and miserable and weary, I thought I would comfort myself by praying and singing a hymn. I remember singing this hymn:

"All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring,
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing."

After singing that a strange peace came down upon me, and through the long night I felt no more fear."

"Now," said the other, "listen to *my* story. I was a Union soldier and was in the wood that night with a party of scouts. I saw you standing, although I did not see your face. My men had their rifles focussed upon you, waiting the word to fire, but when you sang out,

" 'Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing,'

I said, 'Boys, lower your rifles; we will go home.'"
Praying soldiers.—During the progress of the battle at Gettysburg, a young soldier picked up a "Soldier's Prayer-book," covered with blood, and soiled from the trampling of feet, and placed it in his blouse-pocket. Later in the day he came to a wounded sergeant, who said, "Friend, I must die; I am not prepared to die; can you not pray for me?" "No," replied the young man: "I have never prayed for myself; and how can I ask mercy for you?" "Young man," said the sergeant, "I am dying! May be God will hear you. Pray for me, quick! I have not long to live. Pity a fellow-soldier, and help him to plead for pardon." At this moment the young man thought of the book in his pocket, drew it out, and found the prayer for a dying soldier, knelt by his side, and repeated the words. The sergeant thanked him, closed his eyes, and died. The young man hastened to other parts of the field; but everywhere he heard the voice of the dying soldier, "Pray for me." The thought of praying for others, and not for himself, fastened conviction upon him, which resulted in prayer for himself, and his clear conversion.

28—33. (28, 29) the . . Issachar, *etc.*,^a the *fifth* in numerical strength. (30, 31) the . . Zebulun, *etc.*,^b the *fourth* in number. (32) Joseph,^c a fruitful bough. Note the number, collectively, of the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. the . . Ephraim, *etc.*,^d (33) the *tenth* in order of number.

Christian soldiers.—The story of the six thousand six hundred Christians comprising the Theban legion is, that having been led over the Alps by Maximin, they were ordered to sacrifice to heathen gods, and at the same time, informed that their work was to extirpate the Christians in Gaul. They unanimously refused both, and were ordered to be decimated. Those upon whom the lot fell rejoiced at this their great honor. Thrice was this repeated, when the tyrant, unmoved by such heroism, ordered a general massacre. The army was let loose upon the noble band. The Christian soldiers made no resistance. They threw down their arms; they were cut down with the sword, shot with arrows, trampled with horses, hung upon trees, till not one remained alive. *Love of country.*—Whatever strengthens our local attachments, is favorable both to individual and national character. Our home, our birth-place, our native land,—think for a while what the virtues are which arise out of the feelings connected with these words, and if you have any intellectual eyes, you will then perceive the connection between topography and patriotism. Show me a man who cares no more for one place than another, and I will show you in that same person one who loves nothing but himself. Beware of those who are homeless by choice; you have no hold on a human being whose affections are without a tap-root. The laws recognize this truth in the privileges they confer upon freeholders; and public opinion acknowledges it also in the confidence which it reposes upon those who have what is called a stake in the country. Vagabond and rogue are convertible terms; and with how much propriety may any one understand who knows what are the habits of the wandering classes, such as gypsies, tinkers, and potters. — *Southey*.

34—39. (34, 35) the . . Manasseh, *etc.*,^e the *twelfth* in order of number. (36, 37) the . . Benjamin, *etc.*,^f the *eleventh* in order of number. (38, 39) the . . Dan, *etc.*,^g the *second* in order of number.

Universal patriotism.—Patriotism, or love of country, is a sentiment which pervades almost every human breast, and induces each individual to prefer the land of his birth, not because it is better than another country, but merely because it is his country. This sentiment may be illustrated by a variety of anecdotes. Many of the Swiss, on account of the poverty of their country, are induced to seek military service in foreign lands. Yet, in their voluntary exile, so strong is their affection for their native hills, that whole

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A great chasm opened in the Roman Forum, which the sooth-sayers said could not be filled but by that which was most valuable to the State. Marcus Curtius, an eminent soldier, mounted his war-horse, and, full-armed, rode into the gulf, a noble sacrifice for his country.

Issachar,
Zebulun,
Joseph

a Ge. xxx. 17, 18; xlv. 13.

b Ge. xxx. 19-21, xlv. 14:

c Ge. xxx. 22-24.

d Ge. xlviii. 8-14, 20.

Ephraim, the larger tribe, as had been predicted.

"I fancy the proper means of increasing the love we bear our native country is to reside some time in a foreign one." — *Shenstone*.

"The noblest motive is the public good." — *Virgil*.

Manasseh,
Benjamin,
Dan

e Ge. xlviii. 3-4, 20.

f Ge. xxxv. 16-20; xlv. 21, 22.

g Ge. xxx. 5, 6; xlv. 23.

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"The desire of power may exist in many, but its gratification is limited to a few. The desire of superiority or of praise may be misdirected, leading to insolent triumph on the one hand, and envy on the other. Even the thirst for knowledge may be abused, but the desire of moral improvement commends itself to every class of society.—*Abercrombie*.

"It must be owned that we are not able to account for the method of Divine Providence in many instances; and whosoever is not abandoned of all modesty must readily acknowledge that it is reasonable it should be so"—*Bradford*.

Asher,
Naphtali

the whole
census

a Ge. xxx. 12, 13;
xlv. 17, 18.

b Ge. xxx. 7, 8; xlv.
24-27.

c Ex. xii. 37;
xxxviii. 26.

"Including women, children, and old men, together with Levites, the whole pop. of Israel, on the ordinary principles of computation, amounted to about 2,400,000."—*Port. Com.*

"The knowledge of warfare is thrown away on a general who dares not make use of what he knows. I commend it only in a man of courage and resolution; in him it will direct his

regiments have been said to be on the point of desertion, in consequence of the vivid recollections excited by one of their national songs. A French writer informs us that a native of one of the Asiatic isles, amid the splendors of Paris, beholding a banana tree in the Garden of Plants, bathed it with tears, and seemed for a moment to be transported to his own land. The Ethiopian imagines that God made his sands and deserts, while angels only were employed in forming the rest of the world. The Maltese, insulated on a rock, distinguish their island by the appellation of "The Flower of the World." The Javanese have such an affection for the place of their nativity, that no advantages can induce them, particularly the agricultural tribes, to quit the tombs of their fathers. The Norwegians, proud of their barren summits, inscribe upon their rix dollars, "Spirit, loyalty, valor, and whatever is honorable, let the world learn among the rocks of Norway." The Esquimaux are no less attached to their frigid zone, esteeming the luxuries of blubber oil for food, and an ice cabin for habitation, above all the refinements of other countries. Such are some of the exhibitions of this universal sentiment in less refined nations. In a state of higher civilization, it becomes a more exalted passion, and is thus beautifully expressed by Scott:

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand?
If such there be, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth, as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power and self,
The wretch concentrated all in pelf,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprang,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.—*Goodrich*.

40-46. (40, 41) the .. Asher, *etc.*,^a the *ninth* in order of number. (42, 43) the .. Naphtali, *etc.*,^b the *sixth* in order of number. (44) numbered, *Heb.*, *mustered*, see vs. 19 above; in round numbers, units omitted. (45) all .. Israel, hale, vigorous men. (46) were .. fifty,^c on this basis the total census of the people may be approximately estimated.

The first army of Israel.—I. Its number. One of the largest on record. II. Its material. None less than 20 years of age. All able, *i. e.* healthy, athletic men. III. Its organization. Twelve divisions and these subdivided; families, *etc.* IV. Its equipments. V. Its guarantee of success. "The Lord saveth not by the multitude of a host."

The census of Israel.—Statistics show that, out of 10,000 inhabs. of any country, ab. 5,580 are over 20 yrs. of age. This is the case in Belgium, where out of 1,000 inhabs. 421 are under 20 yrs. of age. Acc. to the Danish census of 1840, out of 1,000 inhabs. there were in Denmark 432 under and 568 over 20 yrs. of age. In Schleswig 436 under and 564 over. In Holstein 460 under and 540 over. In Lauenberg 458 under and 542 over. According to this standard, if there were 600,000 males in Israel above 20 yrs. of age, there would be in all 1,000,000 or 1,100,000 males, and therefore including the females more than 2,000,000.—*Delitzsch*. *Unchristian war.*—The absolute inconsistency of war with the gospel was the prevalent belief of the early Christians. Justin Martyr, A. D. 140, quoting the prophecy of Isaiah, says, "That these things have come to pass, you may be readily convinced; for we who were once slayers of one another do not now fight against our enemies." Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, 167, discusses the same prophecy, and proves its relation to our Saviour by the fact, that the followers of Jesus had disused the weapons of war, and no longer knew how to fight. Tertullian, 200, indeed alludes to Christians who were engaged in military pursuits, but on another occasion informs us that many soldiers quitted those pursuits in consequence of their conversion to Christianity; and repeatedly expresses his own opinion that any participation in war is unlawful for believers in Jesus, not only because of the idolatrous practices in the Roman armies,

out because Christ has forbidden the use of the sword and the revenge of injuries. Origen, 230, in his work against Celsus, says, "We no longer take up the sword against any nation; nor do we learn any more to make war. We have become, for the sake of Jesus, the children of peace. By our prayers, we fight for our king abundantly, but take no part in his wars, even though he urge us."—*Orvine*.

47—50. (47) *Levites, etc.*,^a the priestly caste have, in all countries, been exempted fr. military duty by custom: these were exempted by Divine command. (48, 49) *for, etc.*, the Levites kept their own register, and the males were reckoned fr. a month old and upwards.^b (50) *shall . . . Levites, etc.*,^c the duties of their office fully occupied their time. **tabernacle of testimony**, so called bec. it contained the Ark of the Covenant, within wh. were tables of the Law, called "tables of testimony."

Non-combatants. -- Principle of exclusion from the warrior class. 1. The Levites were the visible representatives of a kingdom which is not of this world. 2. On that ground David was rejected as the builder of the temple. 3. The services of religion as needful for a people's well-being as the services of the field. 4. The true Christian minister is called of God to his work. 5. The work of the Christian minister demands his entire devotion thereto.^d

Preparation for duty. — The very heathen themselves would not admit any to come to their religious services, unless they were first prepared; as that of Æneas to his father Anchises, upon his return from the wars, *Tu genitor cape sacra manu*, therefore they had one that cried out to the people, "All you that are unclean and profane depart hence, and come not near us." And shall Christians, then, who have learned better things, touch holy things with unholy hands or unholy hearts? — *Spencer*.

51—54. (51) *and . . . forward*, when a forward march was made the tabernacle was taken apart and carried by the Levites. *Levites . . . up*, military drill and duly would have involved neglect and disorder in the discharge of religious matters. *stranger, i. e.* one not of the tribe of Levi. *shall . . . death*, a threat that was more than once fulfilled.^e (52) *every . . . camp*,^f *i. e.* the camp of his tribe; this to preserve order, discipline, readiness for affairs. (53) *but . . . testimony*,^g they were to be near the scene of duty, not non-residents. *wrath, of God, upon . . . Israel*, for pressing too closely upon holy things. *charge, care, custody*. (54) *so . . . they*, their prosperity depended upon their obedience.^h

The Divine body-guard (vs. 53). — The place of the Levites. Near the tabernacle. All around it. I. To be near the sphere of their work. II. To protect the tabernacle from unholy intrusion. III. To protect the people from the consequences of wilful or thoughtless familiarity with holy things.

Order. — Order is heaven's first law. God himself is the example of it, and by nothing does He bless His creatures more than by the steadiness of the order of nature, and the regularity of the seasons. What uncertainty is there in the ebbing and flowing of the tides? What deviations in the changes of the moon? The sun knoweth his going down, and his rising up. Even the comet is not eccentric; in traversing the boundlessness of space, he performs his revolutions of fifty or a hundred years to a moment. And in all the works of God, what seems disorder is only arrangement beyond our reach; for "in wisdom He has made them all." — *W. Jay*.

All nature is but art unknown to thee;
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood." — *Pope*.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1—9. (1-2) *standard*,ⁱ Heb. *degel*, this marked the division. The twelve tribes were arranged into four divisions, and each was distinguished by a banner; comp. *vss.* 3, 10, 18, 25. *ensign*, Heb. *oth*, one for ea. fam. *far . . . off*, or over against: ab. 2,000 cubits.^k (2) *east*, post of honor: fronting the Tab. Judah, the most numerous, headed the march; a foreshadowing of the future distinction of Judah (*see xlix. 8, 9*) *throughout . . . armies*, that is, in the order of their several bodies, like our brigades, regiments, *etc.* *Nahshon*, it will be observed that the men chosen to lead the tribes are the

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martial spirit, and teach him the way to the best victories." — *Fuller*.

the Levites excepted, and their charge

a Ge. xxix. 34; xvi. 11.

b Nu. iii. 15; xxvi. 62.

c Ex. xxxviii. 21.

"Religion is for the man in humble life, and to raise his nature, and to put him in mind of a state in which the privileges of opulence will cease, when he will be equal by nature, and may be more than equal by virtue."

— *Burke*.
d 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4.

e Nu. xvi. 23, 24, 31-35; 1 S. vi. 19; 2 S. vi. 6, 7.

f Nu. xxiv. 5, 6.

g Nu. viii. 19; xviii.

5; 1 Ch. xxiii. 32;

2 Ch. xiii. 10, 11.

h Ps. xix. 8, 11.

Religion is no more exacting than philosophy. Far from prescribing to the virtuous man any sacrifice that he could regret, it spreads a secret charm upon its requirements, and secures him two inestimable advantages — profound peace during life and sweet hope at the moment of death.

"Order is the sanity of the mind, the health of the body, the peace of the city, the security of the state. As the beams to a house, as the bones to the microcosm of man, so is order to all things." — *Southey*.

arrangement of the camp

the camp of Judah

i Song. vi. 4, 10.

k Josh. iii. 3, 4.

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"Tradition appropriates the four cherubic forms (Ez. i. 26, x. 1; Re. iv. 4), the lion, man, ox, eagle, to the camps of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan respectively; and this as to the first, has a certain support fr. Ge. xlix. 9 (cf. Re. v. 5), and as to the third, fr. De. xxxiii. 17." — *Spk. Com.*

the camp of
Reuben

—
place of the
tabernacle

α Ge. xlix. 3, 4; 1
Ch. v. 1, 2.

β Ge. xlix. 5, 7.

γ 2 S. vii. 5, 6; Re.
xxi. 3; Jo. ii. 21.

"We must have kings, we must have nobles; nature is always providing such in every society; only let us have the real instead of the titular. In every society some are born to rule, and some to advise. The chief is the chief all the world over, only not his cap and plume." — *Emerson.*

the camp of
Ephraim

δ Ge. xlix. 22.

same as those chosen to preside over the numbering, showing them to be men of preëminent distinction. (4) *host*, see i. 26, 27. (5) *next*, on the one side and under Judah's standard. (6) *host*, i. 28, 29. (7) *then, etc.*, on the other side, and also under the standard of Judah. (8) *host*, i. 30, 31. (9) *all, etc.*, *i. e.* including in one camp the three tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; these three were all born of Leah, which made it natural that they should be mustered under one banner. **these . . forth**, the vanguard.

An army with banners (vs. 2). — I. The banners of Israel: 1. They were numerous; 2. They were the rallying points of the various divisions; 3. They marked the camping ground. II. The standards of the church: 1. One among us. Christ, an ensign for His people — (1) Centre of union; (2) Leads on to victory. 2. One over us; the banner over us is love: (1) Teaching that we go forth to peaceful conquests; (2) That there should be union beneath its sacred folds; (3) That every true soldier of Christ will be provided with provisions to recruit his strength, with medicine to heal his wounds, with a retiring pension to reward his valor.

The most prominent banner. — It is narrated that when, in the time of the Crusades, the lion-hearted Richard I. of England, the Emperor of Austria, and the King of France were jointly waging war against the valiant heathen, Saladin, a jealousy sprang up in the camp between England and Austria, and one morning the British banner was found lying in the dust on St. George's Mount — a distinguished point on which it had long waved — and the banner of Austria was planted in its stead; impetuous Richard, who was confined to his tent through severe illness, no sooner heard of it than he strode forth alone, and before the assembled hosts hurled Austria's ensign to the ground, and caused the lion once more to take the prominence, remarking, "Your banners may be arranged around mine, but must never take its place." So may it be in our preaching. Let the Lion of the tribe of Judah alone have the prominence. — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

10-17. (10) *Reuben*,^a with his bro. Simeon, and the son of his mother's handmaid — Gad. (11) *host*, see i. 21. (12, 13) *Simeon, etc.*,^b see i. 22, 23. (14) *Reuel*, or *Deuel*, prob. a transcriber's error. (15) *host*, see i. 24, 25. (16) **All . . camp, etc.**, *i. e.* these three tribes of Reuben, Simeon, Gad. (17) **then . . forward, etc.**,^c the meaning seems to be that on the march, *i. e.* the setting forward, Judah went first, then Reuben, then the Tab. and Levites; then the rest.

The vanguard of Israel. — I. The happiness of each in being in the line of march; the honor of Judah in being placed at the head. II. Yet God was the true vanguard of Israel, who was also their rearward. III. The present leader of the church is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. "Leader of Israel's host," etc.

The tribal standard. — Mr. Harmer thinks the standards of the tribes were not flags, but little iron machines carried on the top of a pole, in which fires were lighted to direct their march by night, and so contrived as sufficiently to distinguish them from one another. This is the kind of standard by which the Turkish caravans direct their march through the desert to Mecca, and seems to be very commonly used by travelers in the East. Dr. Pococke tells us that the caravan with which he visited the river Jordan set out from thence in the evening soon after it was dark, for Jerusalem, being lighted by chips of deal full of turpentine, burning in a round iron frame, fixed to the end of a pole, and arrived at the city a little before daybreak. But he states also, that a short time before this, the pilgrims were called before the governor of the caravan by means of a white standard that was displayed on an eminence near the camp, in order to enable him to ascertain his fees. In the Mecca caravans they use nothing by day but the same movable beacons in which they burn those fires, which distinguish the different tribes in the night. From these circumstances Harmer concludes that, "since traveling in the night must in general be most desirable to a great multitude in that desert, and since we may believe that a compassionate God for the most part directed Israel to move in the night, the standards of the twelve tribes were moveable beacons, like those of the Mecca pilgrims, rather than flags or anything of that kind." At night the camp was illuminated by large wood fires; and a bituminous substance secured in small cages or beacons, formed of iron hoops, stuck upon poles, threw a brilliant light upon the surrounding objects. — *Munroe.*

18-24. (18) *west . . Ephraim*,^d all desc. fr. Rachel. (19) *host*, see i. 32,

33. (20, 21) **and, etc.**, see i. 34, 35. (22, 23) **Then, etc.**,^a see i. 36, 37. (24) **All . . camp, etc.**, including the three tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin.^b **go forward**, in Heb. same word as translated in vs. 9, 16, "set forth;" *lit.* means to break up.

The sons of Rachel. — I. Divinely chosen to be each other's companions. Natural ties not to be overlooked in the journey to the heavenly Canaan. II. The least strong numerically, this division had a safe place assigned to it. Divine care for the weak. III. Their protection and valor formed themes of grateful remembrance in Israel. Ps. lxxx. 2.

The order of gracious operations. — "A discussion arose between some members of a Bible-class, in reference to the first Christian exercise of the first converted soul. One contended that it was penitence or sorrow, another that it was fear, another love, another hope, another faith, for how could one fear or repent without belief? Elder G——, overhearing the discussion, relieved the minds of the disputants with this remark: 'Can you tell which spoke of the wheel moves first? You may be looking at one spoke, and think that it moves first, but they all start together. Thus, when the Spirit of God operates upon the human heart, all the graces begin to affect the penitent soul, though the individual may be more conscious of one than another.'" — *Spurgeon*.

25-31. (25, 26) **the . . Dan, etc.**,^c see i. 38, 39. (27, 28) **and . . Asher, etc.**,^d see i. 40, 41. (29, 30) **then . . Naphtali, etc.**,^e see i. 42, 43. (31) **all . . Dan, etc.**,^f i. e. including the three tribes of Dan, Asher, Naphtali; they are named aft. Dan, the eldest of Jacob's children by the handmaids. "The collective encampment enclosed a large open square, in the centre of which stood the tabernacle. The position which the tabernacle thus occupied still remains the place of honor in grand oriental camps, and is usually occupied by the king or general. * * * The Jewish writers say that the circumference of the entire encampment was about twelve miles; a statement which seems sufficiently moderate, when we recollect the hollow square in the centre, and consider the vast extent of ground required for the tents of two millions of people." — *Pict. Bible*.

The place of the Danites. — The Danites occupied — I. The hindmost place; but what mattered the position, since they were as truly part of the host as were the foremost tribes. II. A very useful place. Stragglers have to be picked up upon the march, and lost property has to be gathered from the field. III. A place of danger. There are foes behind as well as before. Attacks may come from any quarter. — *Spurgeon*.

Power of example. — During the campaign of Julius Cæsar against Britain, B. C. 55, at one time the barbarians rushed into the water to attack the invading fleet. The Roman soldiers, encumbered with heavy weapons, hesitated to cast themselves into the sea, to contend, under fearful odds, tumultuous waves, and light-armed enemies. At this point, he who bore the eagle of the tenth legion, having besought the help of the gods, sprang into the water, crying, "Jump out, soldiers, unless you wish to betray the eagle to the enemies; I certainly, shall have performed my duty to the state and my commander." His noble example was followed, the eagle saved and the battle won.

32-34. (32). **those, etc.**,^g see i. 46. (33) **Levites, etc.**,^h see i. 47. (34) **children, etc.**,ⁱ see ii. 1.

Organization of Israel in the wilderness. — I. Israel organized. God a lover of order. II. Organized in the wilderness. The desert and the wandering might have supplied excuses for confusion. III. Organized with purpose: 1. The association of the tribes in divisions; 2. The locating of the tribes in the camp and on the march; 3. The results of this in training the people to habits of order and obedience.

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^a Ge. xlix. 27.

^b Ps. lxxx. 2.

"The body of man has many members; but there is only one spirit occupying it. So the church has many members, varying in gifts and graces; but there is only one Spirit pervading, possessing, impelling the whole."

the camp of Dan

^c Ge. xlix. 16, 17.

^d Ge. xlix. 20.

^e Ge. xlix. 21.

^f Nu. x. 25.

"The Church of Christ, which is partly militant and partly triumphant, resembles a city built on both sides of a river. There is but the stream of death between grace and glory." — *Toplady*.

"A Christian being only a traveler through the world, must expect a traveler's fare, — bad roads sometimes, bad weather, and bad accommodation; but, since his journey is short, and his city is in heaven, all his actions, sufferings, prayers, and conversation turn that way." — *Bogatsky*.

summary of the whole

^g Ex. xxxviii. 26; Nu. xi. 21.

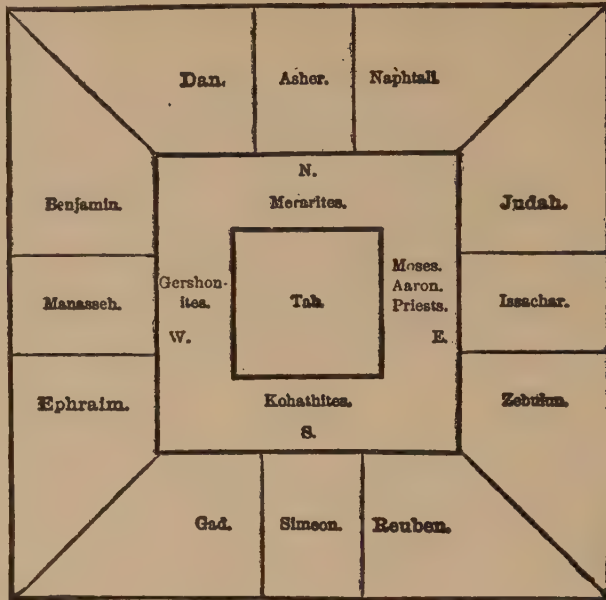
^h Nu. xxiv. 2, 5, 6.

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"It is more to the honor of a Christian soldier by faith to overcome the world, than by a monastical vow to retreat from it; and more for the honor of Christ to serve Him in a city than to serve Him in a cell."—*M. Henry.*

If you have entered upon the greatest of all journeys can it be possible that you do not know by experience whether it is begun?

Probable plan of the encampment.



B. C. 1491.

house of
Moses and
Aaron

a Le. viii. 1 ff.

b 1 Ch. xxiv. 2.

"The over-secure and self-confident person placeth his fond presumption on the rock of God's promise, and thereby draws as certain a ruin upon himself as he who ventures to go over a deep river without any other bridge than his own shadow."

—*Spurstone.*

"This fatal, destructive sin, which is the very masterpiece of the devil, and the gate of hell."—*South.*

Levi consecrated to the service of the Tabernacle

c Ps. lxxvii. 51; cv. 36; Lu. ii. 23; Ps. lxxxix. 27; Re. i. 5; Col. i. 13-15; Ja. i. 18; He xii. 23.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-4. (1) generations, *i. e.* the offspring of Aaron, the genealogy of the Levites, and the narrative of the events and transactions that occurred in respect to them. (2) names, *etc.*, see Ex. vi. 23. (3) consecrated, *a lit.* whose "hand he filled;" *i. e.* he filled their hands with duties by conferring office on them. (4) Nadab, *etc.*,^b see Le. x. 1, 2. sight . . father, *i. e.* under the supervision of Aaron.

Training for the priesthood (vs. 4).—Eleazar and Ithamar—I. Were obedient to parental instructions. II. Were warned by the fate of their brethren. This Scripture gives, 1. An example of the widest difference of character and destiny in children of the same parents. 2. An example of wicked sons descending from a godly parent.

So from the heights of will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends.
From the same cradle's side,
From the same mother's knee,
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the peaceful sea! — *O. W. Holmes.*

5-13. (5, 6) bring . . near, *etc.*, they were now to be initiated into their duties; it is to be noted that the priests were not always confined to the Levites, for we sometime read of "priests and Levites," and Samuel, the chief priest, was not of the house of Levi. (7) they . . charge, carry out his instructions. (8) keep, take charge of. instruments, curtains, boards, *etc.* (9) give, as servants and helpers. (10) they, only they, but in the disorganized condition of the period of Joshua and the judges, this was often violated. shall . . office, discharge priestly duties. stranger, by *stranger* here is to be understood those not of the seed of Aaron, and yet experience interpreted it more widely "to all such as were called of God." death, either by the magistrate or by God as in the case of Korah and his band (see xvi. 31 ff.) (11-13) and, *etc.*, see Ex. xiii. 2, 12, 15. mine, because Jehovah had saved them when he slew the firstborn of Egypt.

The charge of the Levites. — Comprised — I. A formal introduction to the priest. II. A strict injunction to obey him. III. A general indication of duty, within the sphere of which personal duties were afterwards specifically stated. IV. Universal consecration of the tribe to the service of the tabernacle.

Duty of consecration: —

Thyself and thy belongings
Are not thine own so proper, as to waste
Thyself upon thy virtues, them on thee,
Heaven doth with us, as we with torches do;
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd,
But to fine issues; nor nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks and use. — *Shakespeare.*

14-21. (14-21) number,^a special for Levites. fathers, if mother was a Levite and father of another tribe, the son was not a Levite. every, etc., being devoted to their office from childhood. (16) commanded, he was faithful in all his house. (17) sons . . names, see Ex. vi. 16. (18) Gershon, see Ex. vi. 17. (19) Kohath, see Ex. vi. 18. (20) Merari, see Ex. vi. 19. (21) was . . Shimites, so called fr. their founders, see vs. 18.

The ecclesiastical census. — Note the circumstances in which it differed from the preceding census. I. This of one tribe, that of many. II. This in regard to three branches, that several. III. This in respect of religious duties, that in view of secular service. IV. This of all males from a month old, that from twenty years. The children all taught that from their infancy they belonged to God and were dedicated to a holy life.

Sincere obedience. — A soul sincerely obedient will not pick and choose what commands to obey, and what to reject, as hypocrites do. An obedient soul is like a crystal glass with a light in the midst, which shines forth through every part thereof. A man sincerely obedient lays such a charge upon his whole man, as Mary, the mother of Christ, did upon all the servants at the feast (John ii. 5), "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." Eyes, ears, hands, heart, lips, legs, body and soul, do you all seriously and affectionately observe whatever Jesus Christ says unto you, and do it. — *T. Brooks.*

22-26. (22) those . . them, i. e. of the Gershonites. (23) westward, see plan, p. 380. (24) Eliasaph (whom God added). Lael (of God, i. e. created). (25, 26) charge, etc.,^b their care included the curtains, cords, and textile parts generally.^c tabernacle . . tent, tabernacle here means prob. edifice as a whole; tent, the inner set of ten curtains, see Ex. xxvi. 1.

Allotted duties. — I. They differ in importance, yet there was no vain ambition. II. They differed in labor, yet there was no complaining. III. They differed in nature, yet were all undertaken with equal cheerfulness. IV. They differed according to the wise will of God.

The beauty of order in duty. — Linnæus, the great Swedish botanist, observing the beautiful order which reigns among flowers, proposed the use of a floral clock, to be composed of plants which open and close their blossoms at particular hours: as for instance the dandelion, which open its petals at six in the morning, the hawkweed at seven, the succory at eight, the celandine at nine, and so on; the closing of the flowers being marked with an equal regularity so as to indicate the progress of the afternoon and the evening.

"Thus has each hour its own rich hue,
And its graceful cup or bell,
In whose colored vase may sleep the dew,
Like a pearl in an ocean shell."

Would it not be a lovely thing if thus with flowers of grace and blossoms of virtue we bedecked every passing hour; fulfilling all the duties of each season and honoring Him who maketh the outgoings of the morning and the evening to rejoice! Thus with undeviating regularity to obey the influence of the Sun of Righteousness, and give each following moment its due, were to begin the life of heaven beneath the stars. — *Spurgeon.*

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The Puritans visited their flocks by house-row; their visits were short; they talked a little for God, and then concluded with prayer to God.

God does not expect any good in us but what He has wrought in us.

the ecclesiastical census

^a De. xxxii. 8, 9; Ps. cxlviii. 4; Lu. xii. 7.

The great abuse in the parable of the talents, was, that the slothful servant knew his master's will, and yet did it not.

If you are a true Christian, you go about Christ's business as earnestly as if it were your own.

"Obedience is the performance of the commands of a superior." — C. Buck.

the census and charge of Gershon

^b 1 Co. xii. 3.

^c Ex. xxvi. 1, 7, 14, 36; xxvii. 9, 16; xxxv. 18.

If God gives Himself to us in promises, we must give ourselves to Him in duties.

If your being is from yourself, then you may live to yourself; but it is from God therefore you are bound to live unto God.

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the census
and charge
of Kohath

a Ex. vi. 22; Le. x.
4.

b 1 Co. xii. 18-21.

c Ex. xxv. 10, 23, 31;
xxx. 1.

d Ex. xxvi. 31-33.

"Duties are ours,
events are God's.
This removes an
infinite burden
from the shoulders
of a miserable,
tempted,
dying creature.
On this consideration
only can he
securely lay down
his head and close
his eyes in peace."
— Blair.

the census and
charge of
Merari

the place of
Moses and
Aaron

e 1 Co. xiv. 33.

f Ex. xxvi. 15, 19,
26-28, 37; Nu. vii. 8.

g 22,000, yet the
nums. of vss. 22,
28, 34 = 22,300.
Some think the
omitted 300 were
the firstborn already
devoted to God;
others that round
nums. are here given.
"The most prob.
conjecture is that as
Heb. letters are
employed for
figures, one letter
was, in the course
of transcription,
taken for another
of like form but
smaller value." —
Dr Jamieson.

"Stern duties
need not speak
sternly. He who
stood firm before
the thunder, wor-
shipped the 'still
small voice.'" —
Dobell.

27-32. (27) Amramites, *etc.*, so called fr. their founders; *see vs.* 19. These were given chief place bec. Moses and Aaron belonged to their family. (28) keeping . . sanctuary, these had the chief *place* and *charge*. (29) southward, *i. e.* to the right, *see plan*, under Num. ii. 34. (30) Elizaphan, or Elzaphan,^a this man was of the youngest family of Kohathites, and Heb. writers say that jealousy of Korah on account of this man's precedence led to his rebellion. (31) charge, *etc.*,^b the holy vessels.^c hanging,^d the veil. (32) chief . . chief, the heads of these three fams. received directions fr. Eleazar.

Second in order but first in honor. — I. Gershon, the firstborn, has to resign the post of distinction to a younger brother. II. The order of birth gives no advantages in the service of God. III. Younger brothers may hence be encouraged. IV. Many families live in the names of younger sons. (*III.* fr. biographies of the great and good.)

Service for all. — There is something for all to do, but by different instruments — one by his organ, another by his piano, another by his paint-brush, another by his sculptor's chisel, another by his plough, another by his carpenter's tools, another by his trowel — every man by that to which he is called in the providence of God, that he may give some expression to the inwardness that is waked up in him. There are rude workmen who have, back of their hand, back of their skill, a soul that is trying to express itself in the realities of life. This is the ordination which makes true manhood and true genius. — Beecher.

"There's something for us all to do

In this great world of ours ;
There's work for me ; there's work for you,
Heaven sends no idle hours :
We have a mission to perform,
A post of trust to fill ;
Then rouse the soul and nerve the arm,
And lend the lofty will."

33-39. (33) these . . Merari,^e so called aft. their founders; *see vs.* 20. (34) numbered, *etc.*, the smallest of these Levitical fams. (35) Zuriel (*my rock is God*). Abihail (*father of might*; *i. e.* mighty). northward, *i. e.* to left, *see plan* ch. ii. 34. (36, 37) charge, *etc.*,^f the heavy timber framework of the Tab., and court. (38) east, the headquarters of the leader and priests, in Script. the east has always the precedence because the sun rises there, and the sun has always been considered the most striking symbol of Deity. (39) numbered, *etc.*,^g Levi, though reckoned fr. childhood, by far the smallest tribe.

Shoulders for burdens — I. We have in the selection of the family of Merari for the heaviest work of portage a proof of the wisdom and goodness of God. The smallest of the families of Levi (*cf. vss.* 22, 28, 34), yet containing the largest number of able-bodied men (*cf. iv.* 36, 40, 44). II. A hint for us that we should lay the heaviest burdens on the strongest shoulders.

The heart in the service of God. — God marks how I speak, and how you hear, and how we pray in this place; and if it come not from the heart, He repels it as fast as it goes up, like the smoke which climbs towards heaven, but never comes there. Man thinks when he hath the gift, he hath the heart too; but God, when He hath the gift, calls for the heart still. The Pharisee's prayer, the harlot's vow, the traitor's kiss, the sacrifice of Cain, the feast of Jezebel, the oblations of Ananias, the tears of Esau are nothing to Him, but still He cries, Bring thy heart or bring nothing.

Contentment in humble service. —

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do in any thing,
To do it as for Thee :

All may of Thee partake :
Nothing can be so mean,
Which with this tincture (for Thy sake)
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine :
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and th' action fine. — George Herbert.

40-43. (40) **number**, *i. e.* gather them together, so that they might be numbered. The two words "number" in this verse are different in the Heb.; the first means to muster, to gather; the second has the idea of counting. (41) **instead, etc.**, it was found that the numbers nearly tallied. (42, 43) **numbered, etc.**, there were 273 for whom were no substitutes, hence they had to be redeemed.^a

The redemptive relation of the Levites.—I. The number of the firstborn of Israel to be taken—total 22,273. II. In the place of these the Levites were devoted, their number being 22,000 (strictly 22,300, but 300 were prob. firstborn of Levi; and hence not reckoned for this redemptive purpose). III. The doctrine of substitution here taught.

Illustration of redemption.—Some children had a beautiful white pet lamb, which was stolen from them and sold to the butcher. The children discovered the lamb first as it was being led to the slaughter. They tried to get possession of it, but the butcher would not give it to them. A gentleman, seeing the grief of the children, said, "Give them the lamb: I'll pay for him." The price was paid, the lamb was saved. This is redemption. The lamb was helpless: the children could not redeem it, but a generous man did. This is what Christ has done for us.

44-51. (44, 45) **cattle**, the cattle not numbered; or exchanged head for head. (46) **those, etc.**,^b see on vs. 43. (47) **five shekels**, this became the fixed price of redemption, see xviii. 16. **shekel**... **gerahs**, a shekel was worth 54½ cents: a gerah 2½ cents. (48) **money**,^c *lit. silver* 1,365 shekels. **the... them**, the 273, vs. 46. (49) **them... Levites**, 22,000 (50, 51), see vs. 48.

Redemption of the remnant of the firstborn of Israel.—I. Here are 273 for whom no personal substitutes were found. II. But this remnant are not unprovided for: a money compensation is accepted. III. Hence the whole are cared for; and all Israel representatively take their places in the services of religion. IV. What many did for Israel, One—Jesus Christ—has done for us. All are provided for.

All things centre in redemption.—The whole system of things around us seems to me to be constituted with a view to redemption—which comprehends the discipline and education of souls. The wilderness was there waiting, and all the physical order of the world. That was before man and was made for man. And it is all set to the same keynote of struggle, toil, and suffering. There is not a bit of rock or a blade of grass—there has not been from the creation—which is not a mute memorial of struggle, wounds, and death. All things travail, not simply because man has sinned, but because the redemption of the sinner is the work for which "the all" has been prepared by the Lord. When the Lord looked on from the height of His eternal throne, "to the habitable parts of the earth, and His delights were with the sons of men," was it Eden which he looked on to with solemn joy, or Calvary? Was it glad intercourse which he foresaw with the loyal and loving children of Paradise, or sad, costly, but fruitful communion with the struggling, suffering children of the wilderness? Was it Eden, or Ararat, Canaan, Egypt, Sinai, Jerusalem, Calvary, and Christendom, that His glance comprehended? Was it the fruit of Eden, or the fruit which His tears and blood would win from these, that He then set before His sight? Man and all things were made in concert, to form part of the same great system, of which man's life was to be the key-note, and man himself was to be the head. And the whole system, the whole structure of man and of the world, is molded to be the theatre of the redemption of the sinner. Not in Eden but there on Calvary, and in heaven, which is the child of Calvary, we see realized the whole idea of God.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

1-8. (1, 2) **sum**, number, *lit. take the head*. of . . **Kohath**, who having charge of the holy vessels, take precedence; for reason of precedence see note on iii. 27. (3) **from** . . **old**,^d a specific period in the prime of life. (4) **service**, duty, labor, office. **the . . things**, *i. e.* their duty shall concern these things. (5) **when** . . **forward**, when the moving cloud gave the signal. **Aaron, etc.**, the packing to be reverentially done by the priests; the prohibition of any but the high priest entering the holy of holies, and that but once

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the census of the firstborn of Israel

^a Nu. xviii 15, 16. "22,273 is a small prop. of the num. of male adults, the usual prop. being about one in four. But, Ex. xiii. 1, 2, the law ordered the dedication of the first-born *thence-forward*. In this case the diff. lies in there being so many firstborn males in one year. The Divine blessing, and suddenly revived energies of a newly enfranchised people may acc. for it."

Levi taken in place of the firstborn

^b Le. xxvii. 6, 25.

^c 1 Pe. i. 18, 19; Ep. i. 4-7.

"The work of redemption will eventually clear up these two great truths, wh. some at present deny; viz., that man is a hell-deserving sinner, and Christ the one and only Saviour."

Systems and worlds are moving through space in different directions, and each one of them in its proper orbit; just so the whole body of Christians may be engaged in the various departments of life, and yet all adhering to Christ, as a centre of influence.

If you are a Christian indeed, your body is a spiritual temple, and Christ is the Shekinah th tfills it.

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the service of Kohath

the setting out of the camp

^d Nu. viii. 24.

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vs. 4 "After the priests had covered the most holy things and made them ready, then only were the Kohathites to lift their burden. It appears from a comparison of vs. 16, 28, and 33, that the ministry of the Kohathites was superintended by Eleazar, as was that of the other two families by Ithamar." — *Spk. Com.*

a Nu. x. 21; De. xxxi. 9; 1. Ch. xv. 2, 4, 5, 12-15; Jos. iii. 9, 11-13; 1 Ch. xlii. 6-10.

"The area of duty, which is committed to each of us by the sublime code of evangelical morals, is confessedly larger than our scanty powers can occupy. Accordingly, one resource only remains open to us, — to throw ourselves, with all our infirmities, on the Divine help." — *Bishop Shuttleworth.*

Duties may be good crutches to go upon, but they are bad Christs to lean upon.

b Le. xxiv. 2; Ex. xxx. 34, 23-25.

c 1 S. v. 1-11; Ex. xix. 21; 1 S. vi. 19.

"As there is a foolish wisdom, so there is a wise ignorance in not prying into God's ark, not inquiring into things not revealed. It is

a year, admitted of an exception when the tabernacle was removed. **the . . vail**, wh. cut off the holy of holies. (6) **a . . blue**, used for this purpose only. Rabbi Bechai intimates that this *blue*-colored cloth spread over the ark was an emblem of the skies which are spread as a curtain between us and the Majesty on high. — *Bush.* **put . . thereof**, only when ready for departure did the Kohathites approach; the staves were never wholly drawn out: the Heb. for "*put in*" — dispose, arrange. (7) **the . . bread**, the corn required for this might prob. be obtained in the desert; spies were sent into the land of Canaan (*see* xiii. 2 ff.) and brought fruit back, and prob. if corn were not obtainable in the desert, it was gotten in that way. **continual bread**, the old was exchanged for new every Sabbath. (8) **off . . skins**, or sealskins.

Priestly care of the holy vessels. — I. The holy things to be first cared for in marching. II. The priests themselves to attend to this. **Learn** — the essentials of religion to have the chief and first care of ministers of religion.

Legend of duty. — There is a beautiful legend illustrating the blessedness of performing our duty at whatever cost to our own inclination. A beautiful vision of our Saviour had appeared to a monk; and in silent bliss he was gazing upon it. The hour arrived at which it was his duty to feed the poor of the convent. He lingered not in his cell to enjoy the vision, but left it to perform his humble duty. When he returned, he found the blessed vision still waiting for him, and uttering these words, "Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled."

9-15. (9) **they . . blue, etc.**, the candlestick to be separately and carefully packed. (10) **bar, i. e. a bier**. (11) **staves, see vs. 6**. (12) **all . . ministry**, prob. official vestments or utensils and vessels not elsewhere particularly specified. (13) **take . . altar**, the altar to be cleansed. (14) **they . . thereof, etc.**, all things belonging to the altar to be packed with it. (15) **when . . end, etc.**, and not before. The priests alone might touch; and they were to see that everything was finally adjusted. **lest . . die**, this to inspire a deep and habitual reverence for the holy things. **burden**,^a the things to be carried.

The bearing of the vessels of the Lord. — I. All to be carefully packed by the priests. II. Then, and not before, the Kohathites were to approach. III. They were simply to bear, but not to handle. IV. All this to promote profound reverence for Him whom all worship: and respect for the priests who, alone, might touch with impunity.

Formal reverence for the sanctuary. — When Colonel Turner, a gallant cavalier, was hanged for burglary, he told the crowd gathered round the gallows that his mind received great consolation from the thought that he had always taken his hat off when he went into a church. *Performance of duty.* — My duties are then upright with God, when they turn me into the very nature of themselves. It was St. Hierom's praise of Neopolitan, that by his reading, and daily meditation, he made his breast the very library of Christ. This is the praise of a Christian, when he shall so hear that the word abideth in him; that it is, as it were, incorporated into him; when he shall so read as that he shall make himself a living epistle, so that the world may reap or gain in his life what he hath read before in the world; when he shall so bless God as to make himself His praise; when he shall so pray as that every petition shall, as so many living veins, run through his practice; when his duties shall be the fire, and his life the incense; this is the only sweet acceptable sacrifice: till worship is distilled into practice, it is but an empty cloud; till duties are vital in our walkings, they are but dead performances. Lord, therefore let my duties receive life from Thy spirit, and let my walkings receive life from those duties.

16-20. (16) **Eleazar, the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the O. T.**, has, "And Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was bishop." **oil, etc.**,^b *see* Ex. xxv. 6. (17, 18) **cut . . off, etc.**,^c by exposing them to sin. "Those who do not what they can to keep others from sin, do what they can to cut them off." — *Henry.* (19) **do . . die**, a hint of our being our brother's keeper. **Aaron . . in**, into the holy place. **appoint . . burden**, "the Levites are to be warned that they do not each other's work, as that the singer help not to do the porter's work, nor the porter's the singer's." — *Maimonides.* (20) **covered**, by the priests alone.

Unrighteous curiosity forbidden (vs. 20). — 1. Guard against curiously inquiring into Divine secrets. 2. Be humble, seeing that we are surrounded by mys.

teries, countless and deep. 3. Be reverent in all our inquiries into Divine things. *Secrets lie all about us.*—1. In the material universe. 2. In the arrangements of Providence. 3. In the economy of redemption. 4. In the character and contents of the future.

Sinful curiosity.—Be not curious to search into the secrets of God; pick not the lock where He hath allowed no key. He that will be sifting every cloud, may be smitten with a thunderbolt; and he that will be too familiar with God's secrets may be overwhelmed by His judgments. Adam would curiously increase His knowledge; therefore Adam shamefully lost His goodness: the Bethsemites would needs pry into the ark of God, therefore the hand of God slew about fifty thousand of them. Therefore hover not about this flame, lest we scorch our wings. For my part, seeing God hath made me His secretary, I will carefully improve myself by what He has revealed, and not curiously inquire into, or after, what He hath reserved.—*Cawdray.* To each his own duty.—Every one has his own burden to bear. No one else then can carry your burden than you. Seek your place. Take the lowest one, then assuredly you will come in time to the right one. The lowest place in the tabernacle service is better than the highest among the ungodly (Ps. lxxiv. 10).

21-28.^a (24) *serve . . burdens*, former refers to their ministry in Tab. while it stood, and the latter denoting carrying of edifice and furniture when being removed. (25) *curtains*, the ten fine curtains that formed the inward hangings of the Tab. (26) *all . . service, i. e.* all that is to be done by them. (27) *and . . appoint*, the same Heb. word elsewhere rendered *number*, wh. we have rendered *muster*. (28) *under . . hand, i. e.* under the direction.

Man's lot chosen for him (vs. 27).—I. Every man has some burden to carry. II. Men would be choosers of their own burdens. III. If this were permitted the effect would be disastrous to the individual and to society. IV. God in His grace and providence settles all controversy. V. Let each man bear his own burden.

Duties and events.—Duties are ours, events are the Lord's; when our faith goeth to meddle with events, and to hold a court (if I may so speak) upon God's providence, and beginneth to say, "How wilt thou do this and that?" we lose ground; we have nothing to do there, it is our part to let the Almighty exercise His own office, and steer His own helm; there is nothing left us but to see how we may be approved of Him, and how we may roll the weight of our weak souls in well-doing upon Him who is God omnipotent; and when what we thus essay miscarieth, it shall neither be our sin nor error.—*Rutherford.*

29-33. (29) *number, i. e. muster.* (31) *boards . . thereof*, the charge of this family was most cumbersome of all, so they had wagons, see vii. 8. (32) *and . . name*, these articles were so numerous, and many so small, that an inventory was needed lest they become displaced or lost.

Helpers in small matters.—I. The pins and cords might be regarded as little things. II. These little things were necessary to the completion and perfection of the whole. III. Those who helped in these small matters rendered essential service. IV. Willing helpers in small matters to receive the respect of others. Learn—1. Not to refuse help in religion because you cannot do some great thing; 2. The least good thing done with a willing mind shall not lose its reward; 3. Divine legislation respecting little things shows their relative importance.

The power of little things.—Little things are seeds of great ones. Little cruelties are germs of great ones. Little treacheries are, like small holes in raiment, the beginning of large ones. Little dishonesties are like the drops that work through the bank of the river; a drop is an engineer; it tunnels a way for its fellows, and they, rushing, prepare for all behind them. A worm in a ship's plank proves, in time, worse than a cannon-ball.—*H. W. Beecher.*

It is little;

But in these sharp extremities of fortune,
The blessings which the weak and poor can scatter
Have their own season.

It is a little thing to speak a phrase
Of common comfort, which by daily use
Has almost lost its sense; yet on the ear

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happy for me that God makes me of His court, though not of His council."—*Bp. Hall.*

"Curiosity is a kernel of the forbidden fruit, which still sticketh in the throat of a natural man, sometimes to the danger of his choking."—*Fuller.*

the service of Gershon

a Ma. xxv. 14, 15; Lu. xix. 12, 13

"I could write down twenty cases," says a pious man, "when I wished God had done otherwise than He did; but which I now see, had I had my own will, would have led to extensive mischief."

the service of Merari

"Do little things as if they were great, because of the majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, who dwells in thee; and do great things as if they were little and easy, because of His omnipotence."—*Pascal.*

"The most ordinary and unimportant actions of a man's life will often show more of his natural character and his habits than more important actions, which are done deliberately, and sometimes against his natural inclinations."—*Abp. Whately.*

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"Says a quaint but forcible author, there is not a man or a thing now alive, but has tools to work with. The basest of created animalcules, the spider itself, has a spinning jenny and warping mill and power-looms within its head; the stupidest of oysters has a Peplu's digester with a limestone house to hold it in."—*E. L. Ma-
goon.*

the number
of Merari
for service

number of
Levi for
service

*a Delitzsch: Spk.
Comm.* "What a poor few were these to the other tribes! God's portion is ever the least."—*Trapp.*

purification
of the camp

*b Le xiii. 45, 46;
Nu. xii. 9-14; 2 Ch.
xxvi. 21; 2 K. vii.
3; Mk. i. 40-42;
Lu. v. 12-14.*

"As an owl peeps at the sun out of a barn, but dares not come near it, so, likewise, some Christians peep at religion, and will not come to it, but stand aloof, pink-ing and winking, as though they were more afraid of God than the devil."—*Candray.*

Of him who thought to die unmourn'd 'twill fall
Like choicest music; fill the glazing eye
With gentle tears; relax the knotted hand;
To know the bonds of fellowship again;
And shed on the departing soul a sense
More precious than the benison of friends
About the honor'd death-bed of the rich,
To him who else were lonely, that another
Of the great family is near and feels. — *Talfourd.*

34-41. (34, 35) numbered, here mustered for service; hence the age. In previous chap. they are reckoned fr. a mo. old. It will be noted that out of 22,300 Levites only 8,580 are fit for service, others too young, or old, or otherwise disqualified. (36, 40) **two . . fifty, etc.,** comp. the number of ea. fam. with the work to be done by that fam. (41) **all . . service, all, ea.** to do something; *service*, hence of working age.

Division of labor in the service of the tabernacle. — I. The work divided into three departments, and each referred to a distinct family. II. Each family consisted of working and relieving parties. III. The distribution of the work among so many made each man's burden light. Learn — If each in the church, the family, etc., would do something — 1. All the work would be done; 2. No one person would be overburdened.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;

Honor and shame from no condition rise.
Act well your part, there all the honor lies. — *Pope.*

42-49. (42-45) numbered . . Merari, etc., by far the largest fam. and heavier work. (46-48) **all, etc.,** "a num. wh. bears a just prop. to the total num. of male Levites of a mo. old and upwards."^a (49) **every . . service, etc.,** the work and the worker adapted to ea. other.

Divine regard for the work and the workers (vs. 49). — I. God would have all the work well done. II. He would have each worker in his place doing his own work. III. It is for the happiness of a people to see the wisdom of God's way, and cheerfully take their allotted places.

Number and service. — By this diversity of number among the Levite families, God sheweth His wisdom, saith an interpreter, in fitting men for the work whereunto He hath appointed them, whether it requireth multitude or gifts (1 Co. xii. 8-12). It is reported that in Luther's house was found written: *Res et verba Philippus, res sine verbis Lutherus, verba sine re Erasmus*, "Melancthon hath both matter and words; Luther hath matter but wants words; Erasmus hath words, but wants matter." Every one hath his own share: all are not alike gifted. — *Trapp.*

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1-4. that . . leper,^b not only were the chosen people to be a favored, but also a holy people. "According to the idea which underlies the priest law, leprosy did not typify sin; it meant sin. In no single place indeed is this directly affirmed. Yet the belief connecting bodily afflictions and calamities with transgressions implied it, and the fact that guilt offerings had to be made for the leper when he was cleansed." — *Exp. Bib.* **defiled . . dead,** "this provision appears to rest on the idea that death was no 'debt of nature,' but unnatural, the result of the curse of God." — *Exp. Bib.*

Sanitary measures. — I. The importance of strict sanitary regulations in a camp of two millions of souls. II. These can only be secured by enforcing individual responsibility. III. This to be urged on the highest ground — the presence of God. Learn — 1. To preserve cleanliness in churches, chapels, schools, etc.; 2. Especially aim after moral cleanliness; 3. God will not dwell with those who are morally unclean and spiritually dead.

Skin diseases. — "The Egyptian and Syrian climates, but especially the rainless atmosphere of the former, are very prolific in skin diseases. . . . The Egyptian bondage, with its studied degradations and privations, and especially the work of the kiln under the Egyptian sun, must have had a

frightful tendency to generate this class of disorders; hence Manetho (*Joseph. cont.*, Ap. I. 26) asserts that the Egyptians drove out the Israelites as infected with leprosy—a strange reflex, perhaps, of the Mosaic narrative of the ‘plagues’ of Egypt, yet also probably containing a germ of truth. The sudden and total change of food, air, dwelling, and mode of life, caused by the Exodus, to this nation of newly emancipated slaves may possibly have had a further tendency to skin disorders, and novel and severe repressive measures may have been required in the desert-moving camp to secure the public health, or to allay the panic of infection.”

5-10. (5, 6) when . . . Lord, an injury done to man is a sin ag. God. (7) confess,^a penitential acknowledgment. By doing this the penalty is diminished. recompense, *etc.*,^b the offender to make restitution. In case no confession is made, but guilt is established by legal process, the penalty is more severe. See Ex. xxii. 1. (8) man, the injured party; being dead. kinsman, to represent him in paying and receiving debts. let . . . Lord,^c ag. whom, in fact, the sin had been committed. The sinner not to be advantaged by death of the injured. (9, 10) his,^d i. e. the priests.

The sinner's acceptance.—In order to this three things were enjoined as necessary. I. Confession. A humble acknowledgment of guilt in the sight of God. II. Recompense. As a test of true repentance the sinner was to make restitution. III. Atonement. Not till this was made was the sinner accepted in the sight of God.

Substitutionary restitution.—A coal merchant in one of our American cities was approached by a minister in regard to the salvation of his soul. The merchant declared it an impossibility for him ever to become a Christian. He gave as a reason his mode of business. For a long term of years, he had, according to a too general custom, given short weight. He had thus grown rich, and now felt the inconsistency of seeking religion without restitution. This was impossible: many of his customers were dead, others beyond his knowledge. The thought of the poor who had paid for coal they had never received rested heavily on him. He asked the minister if he thought the substitution of a gift to the poor would be acceptable to God. The minister advised him to try it. A large donation, more than equal in amount of his unjust gains, was accordingly made, and the merchant sought God in earnest. He was happily converted, and is to-day a prominent member of the church.

11-15. (11, 12) if . . . him,^e conjugal infidelity. (13) neither . . . man-ner, “in the very act.” (14) he . . . defiled,^f case of warrantable suspicion. or, *etc.*, case of groundless jealousy. (15) then . . . priest, together with witnesses if there were any. If she confessed she was not put to death, but divorced with loss of dowry. If not, they proceeded to investigate. barley, a coarse and common thing, half the price of fine flour, and only eaten by the very poor (see 2 K. vii. 1), suited to her suspected crime. no . . . thereon, these being symbols of grace and joy. for, *etc.*, hence the choice of offering. remembrance,^g the ordeal, apart fr. supernatural effects, being likely to result in exposure of guilt fr. confusion of the woman. But this was to bring it bef. the Lord, to be judged by Him. It also brought iniquity to remembrance in the minds of others beside the guilty one, bec. of its heinousness.

Iniquity brought to remembrance.—Here a peculiar case is referred to. But of all sin it is true—I. That the presence of God is the place where sin should be remembered. II. That there the merits of the Saviour may be remembered too. III. That if iniquity be not brought to remembrance in the presence of God, and His forgiveness sought, it will, unpardoned, be remembered forever.

Jealousy.—Of all the pangs of which humanity is susceptible, jealousy is the worst; for most frequently it is an effect without a cause—a monster engendered in the imagination of its victim; and feeding alike upon its heart and brain, it withers the rose upon the cheek of beauty, dethrones reason from its judgment-seat, and gives the reins to passion; it is the punishment of Tantalus without his crime. To the jealous mind madness would be a relief, and death a blessing; it takes a martyr's pleasure in its torments, and adds to their intensity by the ingenious skill with which it adduces proofs from air-drawn nothings, adding fuel to the flame by which it suffers. Jealousy is a passion against which persuasion and argument are equally vain; the proofs which convince but tend to confirm its fatal error.

B. C. 1490.

confession,
recompense,
atonement

a Jos. vii. 19; Pr. xxviii. 13; Ps. xxxii. 5; Da. ix. 4; Ma. iii. 5, 6; 1 Jo. i. 9.

b Le. vi. 5; Lu. xix. 8.

c Le. vi. 6.

d Le. x. 13; vii. 7-14; 1 Co. ix. 13, 14.

“If we do not restore that which we have injuriously detained from another, our repentance is not real, but feigned and hypocritical.”—*St. Augustine.*

the law of
jealousies

e Ex. xx. 14; Le. xviii. 20; Pr. vii. 6-10.

f Pr. vi. 26-35.

g 1 K. xvii. 18; He. x. 3.

“The process prescribed has lately been illus. from an Egyptian romance wh. refers to the time of Rameses the Great. In the story one takes a leaf of papyrus, and on it copies out every word of a certain magical formula. He then dissolves the writing in water, drinks the decoction, and knows in consequence all that it contained.”—*Syk. Com.*

B. C. 1490.

the oath of cursing

a Ex. xxx. 18.

h Delitzsch, who adds that it was "an allusion to the fact that dust was eaten by the serpent as the curse of sin, and therefore as the symbol of a state deserving a curse. (Mi. vii 17; Is. xlix. 23; Ps. lxxii. 9.)"

results of guilt or of innocence

c Ga. iii 13; 2 Co. v. 21.

Proverbs on Jealousy: "Love expels jealousy." — *French*. "Love demands faith, and faith steadfastness. It is better to have a husband without love than with jealousy." — *Italian*.

"It is said that jealousy is love; but I deny it; for though jealousy be produced by love, as ashes are by fire, yet jealousy extinguishes love, as ashes smother the flame." — *La Reine de Navarre*.

summary of law of jealousies

d Je. xxiv. 9; 2 Co. xi. 2; Ex. xxxiv. 14.

16—22. (16) **Lord**, the supreme judge; to whom alone all secrets are known. She was arraigned at the altar of burnt-offerings, standing before the door of the tabernacle. (17) **holy water**,^a fr. the laver nr. the altar. Holy because from the laver, which was a sacred vessel. **earthen vessel**, cheap and coarse, like the offering. **dust**, etc., "to impregnate this drink with the power of the Holy Spirit that dwelt in the sanctuary."^b (18) and . . **head**, "a sign of her being deprived of the protection of her husband." **hands**, she, herself, was to make the offering. **bitter water**, so-called because it was fraught with conviction which brought bitter suffering. (19) **gone aside**, *lit.* gone astray from, etc. (20—21) **thigh**, etc., "The punishment shall come fr. the same source as the sin." **rot**, *R. V.*, "fall away." So also in *vss.* 22 and 27. (22) **Amen**, expressing her willingness that God should do to her acc. to her desert. Her refusal to take the oath would amount to a confession of guilt.

The oath of cursing. — This old custom is now obsolete; yet oaths of cursing are not uncommon. I. The blasphemous imprecations of the profane swearer. II. The solemn asseverations of innocence sometimes made by the guilty in courts of justice. III. The dreadful consequences that must ensue from a profane challenging of the justice of God.

Trial by ordeal. — In Africa when a man suspects that any of his wives have bewitched him, he sends for the witch-doctor, and all the wives go forth into the field, and remain fasting till that person has made an infusion of the plant called "goho." They all drink it, each one holding up her hand to heaven, in attestation of her innocence. Those who vomit it are judged innocent, while those whom it purges are pronounced guilty, and put to death by burning. — *Dr. Livingstone*.

23—28. (23) **book**,^c parchment; or prob. a wooden tablet. **blot . . water**, the characters written were scraped off and the scraping put into the water so that the woman drank the words of execration. (24) **drink . . curse**, *i. e.* causeth the curse to take effect if she is guilty. and . . **bitter**, *i. e.* they shall work in her the evil and bitter effects of the curse. (25) **take . . hand**, the barley meal, *vs.* 15. "The priest took the ministering vessel wherein the meat-offering was, and put it upon her hands, and the priest put his hands under hers, and waved it." — *Maimonides*. (26) **memorial**, the part burnt. (27) **the . . people**, her sin being exposed they shall pronounce her accursed. (28) **then . . free**, etc., free fr. imputation of guilt, she shall return to her husband, and . . **seed**, the surest indication of Divine favor given to a Jewish woman.

The sinner a social curse. — I. Because of evil example. II. Because of the anger of God. III. Because of the violation of law, order, and decency. IV. Because of the offense to public sentiments of morality.

Retribution. — The Emperor Charlemagne was desirous to have a magnificent bell cast for the church which he had built at Aix-la-Chapelle. The artist Tancho, who had cast one very much admired for the church of St. Gall, was employed by the emperor, and furnished at his own request with a great quantity of copper, and a hundred pounds weight of silver, for the purpose. Tancho, being of a covetous disposition, kept the silver for his own use, and substituted in its room a sufficient quantity of highly purified tin, with which he furnished a most admirable bell, and presented it to the emperor. The historian adds, however, that it being suspended in the tower, the people were unable to ring it. Tancho himself being called in, pulled so hard that the iron tongue fell on him and killed him. — *Ranken*.

Unperceived approach of retribution. —

There is no strange handwriting on the wall,
Thro' all the midnight hum no threatening call,
Nor on the marble floor the stealthy fall
Of fatal footsteps. All is safe. Thou fool,
The avenging deities are shod with wool! — *W. A. Butler*.

29—31. (29) **this . . jealousies**, by which adultery was discovered and punished. While this ordeal was practiced among half-civilized heathen, yet here it receives sanction of God, and the supernatural agencies become infallible. (30) **spirit**, etc., *i. e.* "a jealousy so violent, as if it were carried along with a spirit: or some supernatural cause." (31) **guiltless**, not conniving at his wife's sin, nor harboring jealousy without striving to free himself fr. it,^d **this . . iniquity**, *i. e.* the consequences of her sin.

The jealousy offering.—Consider the use of this law. — 1. To show the importance He attaches to domestic morality. 2. To teach them that He was looking on and knowing their most secret sins. 3. To train them to cultivate a tender conscience, and to acknowledge its authority. 4. To restore confidence between husband and wife where it was wrongly shaken. 5. Though this custom is done away with, God is still the same, and will bring all secret sin into the light. — *David Lloyd.*

The evils of suspicion.—If thou begin to suspect evil of another, the next thing is to conclude it, and the next to report it. This suspicion is a strange shadow, that every action of another will cast upon our minds, especially if we be beforehand a little disaffected towards them. Thus, very dreams increased suspicion against Joseph in his brethren. And if once a man be out of esteem with us, let him then do what he will, be it never so virtuous and commendable, suspicion will still be the interpreter; and where suspicion is the interpreter of men's actions slander and detraction will be the gloss and comment upon them. Indeed, suspicion is always too hasty in concluding; and many times our jealousies and distrusts, upon very small occasion, prompt us to conclude that which we have thus surmised is certainly come to pass: and so we take shadows for enemies, and report that confidently for truth which yet we never saw acted but only in our own fancies. — *Bishop Hopkins.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1-6. (1, 2) *Nazarite*, a separated one. to . . Lord, voluntarily renouncing the occupations and pleasures of the world, to devote themselves wholly to the Divine service. (3) *wine*,^a *i. e.*, strong drink made from any kind of fruit, like dates, *etc.*, wh. tends to excite animal desire. any . . grapes, "a drink made of grape-skins macerated in water." — *Spk. Com.* (4) *days, etc.*, the vow was taken for a defined period. from . . husk, all appearance of evil to be abstained from. (5) *there . . head*,^b abundant hair denoting vital strength; the unshaved head indicated that all strength, *etc.*, were devoted to God. The strength was not intrinsically in the hair. It was a symbol of subjection to God, as the long hair of the woman is a sign of subjection to her husband (1 Cor. xi. 5-10). (6) *he . . body*,^c whereby uncleanness might be contracted. Death refers the mind to sin, and that which is pure cannot come in touch with sin without pollution.

Total abstinence.—This vow of the Nazirite was—I. Voluntarily made. II. Limited to a set period. III. To be rigidly observed. "From the kernels even to the husk." IV. To receive countenance from religious offices. V. But the Nazirite was not to enforce his vows upon others. VI. His vow was probably undertaken to correct personal defects, or for self-mortification.

A faithful abstainer.—The Rev. Canon Wilberforce was once in the neighborhood of the London docks, in a little room as black as a chimney, but, through the preaching of the gospel, many souls have been born there. He asked if any would get up and say what God had done for their souls. An old sailor rose and said how bad he had been; felt that he was even a devil's castaway; but six years ago, in that little room, he was led to see that he was a great sinner, but that Christ was a great Saviour, and that on the cross was nailed every one of his sins. "I signed the pledge and threw away my pipe, and have been upheld by God, because every morning I pray that I may be protected." Returning recently from Hong Kong, this old sailor had an accident and was badly scalded, and was very ill. When he began to recover the doctor said, "You must take some port wine." "No," said the old sailor, "I am a teetotaler." "But," said the doctor, "you need it to strengthen you." "Doctor," said the old man, "do you think I shall die if I don't take the wine?" "Yes," said the doctor. "Then," said the sailor, "when you get into the St. Katherine's Docks, go round to the little room and tell them that the old man died sober." But he did not die, and is alive to this hour to testify of the sufficiency of God's grace to keep him.

7-12. (7) *unclean, etc.*, *i. e.* by touching, mourning or burying them; duty to God to be preferred bef. heeding the strongest natural inclinations. the . . head, *i. e.* the mark of it in unshaven locks; it was the crown of the Nazirite. (8) *all, etc.*,^d on no one; nor on any account must the vow be forgotten. (9) and . . consecration, touching the dead person when overcome by sudden surprise or being near him when suddenly stricken. he . . head,

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"The trial by red water, which bears a general resemblance to that here prescribed by Moses, is still in use among the tribes of West Africa." — *Spk. Com.*

vow of
Nazirite

his rules

^a Ju. xiii. 4, 5; Lu. i. 15; Am. ii. 12.

^b Ju. xvi. 17; 1 S. i. 11.

^c Nu. xix. 11, 16.

"A large promise without performance is like a false fire to a great piece, which dischargeth a good expectation with a bad report. I will forethink what I will promise, that I may promise but what I will do. Thus I shall be careful in my promises, and just in their performance. I had rather do and not promise, than promise and not do." — *Warwick.*

"Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken." — *Shakespeare.*

renewal
of vow

^d Ro. i. 1; Jo. xvii. 15-19.

B. c. 1400.

Elizabeth Fry's motto, the first to come to her mind as she awoke in the morning from her slumber, and the last as she lay down at night was, "What can I do for the Lord Jesus Christ?"

We often omit the good we might do in consequence of thinking about it, that which it is out of our power to do.

fulfilment of vow

a Le. i. 2, 3.

b Le. i. 4, 10-13; iv. 32, 33; iii. 1.

"Temperance and proper diet keep the mind and body quiet."

"Great men should drink with harness on their throats."
—Shakespeare.

summary of the law

c Ac. xviii. 18; xxi. 23-26.

Popish votaries are so far fr. the abstinence of Nazirites, that they eat of the best, and drink of the sweetest; the most generous wine in Louvain and Paris is known by the name of *Vinum Theologicum*, the divines, those Sorbonists, do so whiff it off."—Trapp.

"His life is parallel'd e'en with the stroke and line of his great justice;

shall not be excused on the ground of accident. (10) *bring, etc.*, see on Le. xv. 14, 15, 29 ff. (11) *shall . . day*, consecrate it to God afresh. (12) *trespass . . offering*, proper offering for involuntary sins. *days . . lost*, they were to *fall out* of the reckoning: *i. e.* the days of separation were to begin afresh.

Unexpected defilement.—1. Let godly men watch and pray lest they be ensnared by temptation and fall into sin. "Be sober, be vigilant," etc. 2. Let those who, in an unguarded hour, have fallen into sin be encouraged to return penitently unto God through Jesus Christ.

Good works will not save.—"God," said a minister to a little boy who stood watching a caterpillar spinning a very beautiful cocoon. "God sets that little creature a task to do, and diligently and skillfully he does it; and so God gives us work to perform in His name and for His sake. But were the insect to remain satisfied forever in the silken ball that he is thus weaving, it would only become his tomb. No; forcing a way through it, and not resting in it, will the winged creature reach sunshine and air. He must leave his own work behind, if he would soar and shine in freedom and joy. And so it is with the Christian. If he rests in his own work, whatever that may be, he is dead to God and lost to glory; he is making of what he may deem virtues a barrier between himself and his Saviour."

13—17. (13) *when . . fulfilled*,^a *i. e.* the time for wh. he had taken the vow. The original law contemplated a vow for a certain period, not for life. (14) *and . . offering, etc.*,^b the design of them is well expressed by Patrick: "A *burnt-offering*, as an acknowledgment of God's sovereign dominion. A *sin-offering*, imploring pardon for any omissions of which he might have been guilty during his vow; and a *peace-offering*, in thankfulness to God, who had given him grace both to make, and to keep, and to fulfil this vow" (15) *meat, etc.*, see Le. ii. 1, 2. (16) *sin, etc.*, the most sanctified times are not without sin. (17) *meat, etc.*, see vs. 15.

Self-offering.—

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and "beautiful" for Thee.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever *only*, ALL for Thee.—F. R. Havergal.

18—21. *at . . tabernacle*, that it might be publicly known that he had completed his vow. *hair . . fire*,^c not the fire of the altar, but the fire under the pot in which the peace-offering was boiled. (19) *the . . ram*, the left shoulder. *hands, etc.*, to teach the duty of practical gratitude. (20) *after . . wine*, being fully absolved from his vow. (21) *beside . . get*, in addition to what the law required, he was to present freewill offerings acc. to his means. "In addition to the possible cost of repeated cleansings which might be needful during the period of separation, the expense of those offerings must have been to many in a humble station almost prohibitory. We cannot help concluding that under this law, at whatever time it prevailed, Naziritism became the privilege of the more wealthy. Those who took the vow under the appointed conditions must have formed a kind of puritan aristocracy."—*Exp. Bib.*

Nazirite spirit.—Vows of abstinence have, of course, been common among all religions. Mingled with much of superstition, self-will and pride, they have sprung in the main from noble impulses and yearnings after a higher life, prompted by the Holy Spirit of God; and it may be said with some confidence, that in spite of all reproaches (deserved or undeserved), such voluntary vows of abstinence have done more than anything else to save religion from becoming an unreal profession. Hair offerings, on the other hand, springing from a simple and natural sentiment, have been common enough amongst the heathen. Compare the sacred lock of Achilles ("Iliad," xxiii. 142, sqq.), and the various use of the tonsure in pursuance of vows among the ancient Egyptians (Herod., ii. 65) and amongst modern Mahomedans and

Christians. The physical fact on which all these hair offerings rest is that the hair is the only portion of oneself which can be conveniently detached and presented.

The Christian Nazirites — There is room and need in the Christian church not only for men separated by the authority and call of the church to official service, but for men also who are moved to separate themselves to free and unofficial service. Robert Haldane of Airthrey was not an ordained minister, never held a pastoral charge, never administered the sacraments, yet he devoted his whole time and wealth to the cause of Christ. Selling Airthrey castle, he purchased a mansion-house where he could live at less expense, and he thenceforward lived for the diffusion of true religion at home and abroad. Blessed be God, Mr. Haldane was not singular in this sort of separation. It answers exactly, under the Christian and spiritual dispensation, to the separation of the Nazirite under the law. Without doubt men and women separated thus to God will have a great part to play in the victorious progress of the kingdom of Christ. It should be the constant prayer of the church that Christ would of her young men, raise up not only prophets (he is doing that), but Nazirites also.

22-27. (23) wise . . bless,^a this shall be the formula of the priestly benediction. Heb. writers say that as the word Lord (Jehovah) in this benediction is differently printed each time, some mystery is concealed in it, which might have reference to the trinity. (24) thee,^b Israel collectively. (25) make . . shine,^c behold with approving smile. be . . thee, grant the proofs of His special favor. (26) lift . . thee,^d look upon thee with thoughtfulness, love, sympathy, etc. and . . peace,^e tranquillity of heart and life. It is a striking fact that the distinctive ideas conveyed in the three portions of the blessing — preservation, enlightenment, peace — bear a relation by no means fanciful, to the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. — *Exp. Bib.* (27) put . . Israel,^f in this three-fold way it was to be pronounced as the source of blessing and seal of covenant relation. and . . them,^g *i. e.* I will ratify the blessing so pronounced.

The significant form of the benediction. — (1) The triple use of the sacred Name is significant. (2) The use of the singular number in reference to the subjects of the blessing is significant. "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee," etc. Six times we have the pronoun in the singular number. May we not take it as indicating the regard of God for the individual?

Valued because of the giver. — When the soldiers returned from that great succession of blunders, the Crimean War, those who had specially distinguished themselves were marshaled in a line to receive the crosses or medals which rewarded their valorous merit from the Queen. As she passed along the line she took the decorations one by one from a salver carried by her side and pinned it to the breast of the happy recipient. As she was pinning one on it slipped from her hand and fell to the ground. A little girl who was near, picked it up and was proceeding to pin it on the soldier's breast, when he stepped a pace back and said, "No; I do not value that piece of metal. It is the hand which bestows it I value." So with the gifts which God give us here, though they are of themselves of priceless value, yet even more precious is the knowledge that they are bestowed by our heavenly Father.

Who are the blessed ? —

Who are the blest ?

They who have kept their sympathies awake,
And scatter'd joy for more than custom's sake —
Steadfast and tender in the hour of need,
Gentle in thought, benevolent in deed ;
Whose looks have power to make dissension cease —
Whose smiles are pleasant, and whose words are peace :
They who have lived as harmless as the dove,
Teachers of truth and ministers of love ;
Love for all moral power — all mental grace —
Love for the humblest of the human race —
Love for that tranquil joy that virtue brings —
Love for the Giver of all goodly things ;
True followers of that soul-exalting plan
Which Christ laid down to bless and govern man :
They who can calmly linger at the last,

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he doth with holy abstinence subdue that in himself which he spurs on his power to qualify in others." — *Shakespeare.*

the priestly benediction

a 1 Ch xxxiii. 13; Le. ix. 22.

b Ps. v. 12; cxv. 12; cxxxiv. 3; cxxxviii. 3; Pr. x. 22.

c Da. ix. 17; Ps. xxxi. 16; xxx. 7; 2 Co. iv. 4.

d Ps. lxxxix. 15; iv. 6; xvi. 11.

e Ps. xxix. 11; Is. xxvi. 3; Jo. xiv. 27; 2 Th. iii. 16; Ph. iv. 6, 7.

f De xxviii. 10; Da. ix. 19.

Acc. to Maimonides the Sacred Name has never been used even in the solemn benediction of the sanctuary since the days of Simon the Just.

g Ep. i. 3-5; Ga. iii. 14; Ep. ii. 19.

B. C. 1490.

princes' offering for the tabernacle

a Ex. xi. 2; Le. viii. 10, 11.

b Nu. i. 4-16.

"Of Thine own we offer unto Thee," said Justinian, when he had offered up, in the temple of Sophia, at Constantinople, a communion table that had in it, said the author, all the riches of land or sea."—*Trapp*.

"In defiance of all the torture, of all the might, of all the malice, of the world, the liberal man will ever be rich; for God's providence is his estate, God's wisdom and power are his defense, God's love and favor are his reward, and God's word is his security."—*Dr. Barrow*.

distribution of the princes' offering

c Nu. iv. 25.

d Nu. iv. 31, 32.

princes' offering for the altar

e 1 Ch. xxix. 6-10, 13-16.

f Ea. prince offered (1) a silver dish, Ex. xxv. 29; (2) a silver bowl; (3) a golden spoon, Ex. xxv. 29; (4) a bullock, a ram, and a sheep for a burnt-offering; (5) a goat for a sin-offering; (6) two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five sheep for a peace-offering

Survey the future, and recall the past;
And with that hope which triumphs over pain,
Feel well assured they have not lived in vain;
Then wait in peace their hour of final rest:—
These are the only blest!—*Prince*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1—5. (1) on . . that,^a *lit.* at the time that. anointed it, with oil, *see* Ex. xxx. 23-28. (2) princes, *etc.*,^b as examples to the rest: acc. to their means. Perhaps the same men spoken of in ch. i. (3) before . . Lord, bef. the door of the tab. wagons, prob. litters. and . . oxen, two to ea. litter: one bef. and one behind. for . . ox, *i. e.* ea. prince presented an ox. they . . tabernacle, a voluntary offering. (4) Lord . . Moses, who might hesitate to employ animals in work to wh. men had been appointed. The targum of Palestine stated that Moses at first was unwilling to receive them. (5) that . . congregation, thus those who, not being Levites, were not permitted to work at the tab. themselves, would help those who did the work. to . . service, *i. e.* according as every one had a greater or less burden to carry.

Conscientious reception and use of gifts for religious purposes.—I. They who hold the most honorable positions should be most liberal in contributions to worthy objects. II. Great influence involves great obligation.

Prayer as a gauge of liberality.—A gentleman canvassing for an important benevolent enterprise was about to call on a certain wealthy professor of religion who was more devout than generous. Ignorant of this fact, he asked his last contributor how much he thought the man would give. "I don't know," was the reply; "if you could hear him pray you'd think he would give all he is worth." The collector called on the rich man, and to his surprise received a flat refusal. As he was taking his leave, it occurred to him to repeat what he had been told. "I asked a man," said he, "how much you would probably give, and he replied, 'If you could hear that man pray, you'd think he would give all he is worth.'" The rich man's head dropped, and his eyes filled with tears. He took out his pocket-book and handed his visitor a liberal contribution.

6—9. (7) two, *etc.*,^c the hangings, *etc.*, not being cumbrous or heavy. (8) four, *etc.*,^d they having charge of the heavier portions. (9) because, *etc.*, *see* on Nu. iv. 15. upon . . shoulders, because of the greater honor and dignity of the ark and the law contained in it. A springless wagon might injure it.

Considerate distribution.—I. It was due to the givers that the best use possible should be made of their presents. II. It was due to the recipients that the gifts should be wisely distributed. III. It was due to God that by the use of offerings to His glory the service of His house should be most effectively aided.

10, 11. (10) and, *etc.*,^e encouraged by the acceptance of one offering, they presented another, thus showing their generosity. offering . . altar, "The occasion must have been one of great and striking solemnity, and, from the account here given, reminding us strongly of the annual festival of Nurooz in Persia, when the king sits in great state and glory, with the nobles of his court attending in their most gorgeous attire, and thus receives in succession a long series of costly offerings from his princes.—*Pict. Bib.* (11) each . . day, hence the presentation lasted twelve days: this fr. the nature and quantity of the gifts.^f for . . altar, not in the sense of being dedicated for the first time, for seven days had been spent in that ceremony. It had been set apart and sanctified, but now for the first time used.

The princes' offering.—I. They all offered. II. They all offered alike. III. They all offered things suitable and valuable. IV. They all offered on the day and in the order appointed by God.

Reasons for not giving to God.—A voluntary collector for one of the great benevolent interests of the day called lately, in pursuance of his duty, upon a gentleman with whom he was acquainted, a business man and a Christian, but one who had hitherto excused himself from making liberal contributions on the plea that he "could not afford it." This plea, from a man of undoubted

wealth, had probably seemed almost incredible to our friend the collector; but as he now sat in view of the sumptuous suite of parlors, awaiting the appearance of their proprietor, the truth flashed upon him. He felt that the plea had been sincere; the explanation was before him. On the gentleman's entrance, he mentioned the errand on which he had come, adding, "But I see, sir, that you really cannot afford it, and I cannot think of presenting any claim upon you. Such a scale of expenditure as I see indicated by everything around me, can indeed leave you little, if anything, to spare for the cause of Christ. I must look elsewhere for support to our operations. Good morning, sir!" The collector left, but the arrow he had lodged did not. It was not long before the rich steward sought him with acknowledgements for the cutting reproof, which had made a profound and abiding impression upon his conscience. He had made up his mind that he could afford to give, and could not afford to squander. He presented the collector a cheque for £200, with the assurance that the style of his household should be no longer a scandal nor an incumbrance to his piety. — *Arrive*.

12-14. (12) *Nahshon*,^a see i. 7. It will be noticed that in every other instance in this chapter, the title "prince" is prefixed to the name of the person designated; here omitted because the distinction of offering first is itself an indication of superiority. (13) *charger*, dish. *weight*, etc.,^b ab. 44 lbs. (14) *spoon*,^c or cup, a vessel holding incense, called a spoon from its convexity.

Egyptian spoons. — In all probability the spoons here offered are analogous to those so frequently depicted on the Egyptian temples as borne in the hands of the king. Made of some precious metal in the shape of an outstretched arm, the hand forming the bowl, these spoons, filled either with a vase of burning incense or a terra-cotta cone, emblematic of a mountain, were presented in symbolic adoration to Amun Ra, the supreme, or Osiris, Kneph, and Chonso, the primary gods of Egypt. Nor is it unlikely that the spoons dedicated by the princes were part of the fear-extorted gifts of their oppressors on the terrible eve of the exodus. — *Bib. Treas.*

15-17. (15) *one*, etc., see Le. 1. 2. (16) *one*, etc., see Le. iv. 23. (17) *and*, etc., see Le. iii. 1.

Ways of giving to God. — There is a pompous way of giving. There is giving such that everybody is attracted to see it. It is made to be a great thing. A man comes and asks you to contribute something to this or that worthy cause. You put yourself in such an attitude that he is obliged to work his way by degrees. So he reminds you of how many good traits you may have, and plays upon your vanity. You smile, and become more and more placated. He pats you and flatters you; and at last brings you into a state into which you say, "Well, I don't know but I will," and you give your gift. But the injunction of the Apostle is that everybody that gives shall give with simplicity. What is giving with simplicity? Why, it is giving just as if giving was so natural that when a man gave he did not think of changing his countenance, his manners or his air at all; but did it quietly, easily, beautifully. When you are going around for proper help, some men give so that you are angry every time you ask them to contribute. They give so that their gold and silver shoot you like a bullet. Other persons give with such beauty that you remember it as long as you live; and you say, "It is a pleasure to go to such men." There are some men that give as springs do. Whether you go to them or not, they are always full; and your part is merely to put your dish under the ever-flowing stream. Others give just as a pump does, where the well is dry and the pump leaks. — *Beecher*.

18-23. (18) *Nethaneel*. see i. 8 (19-23) *he*, etc.,^d see vs. 13-17.

Giving. —

We might all of us give far more than we do.
Without being a bit the worse;
It was never yet loving that emptied the heart,
Nor giving that emptied the purse.

The sun gives ever; so the earth —
What it can give so much 'tis worth;
The ocean gives in many ways —

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"It is another's fault if he be ungrateful; but it is mine if I do not give. To find one thankful, I will oblige a great many that are not so." — *Seneca*

Nahshon

a Le. iii. 23, 32.

b Ex. xxx. 13.

c Ex. xxx. 34, 35
Charger. Ma. xiv. 8; Mk. vi. 25.

"A charger, or great platter, wherein meat is carved." — *Mazonomum*.

"A crown is safer kept by benefits than arms; these will silence the barking tongue. Gifts are the greatest usury, because a two-fold retribution is an urged effect that a noble mind prompts us to; and it is said we pay the most for what is given us." — *J. Beaumont*.

"Presents which our love for the donor has rendered precious, are never the most acceptable." — *Ovid*.

Nethaneel

d Ma. x. 8.

"An Irish bishop having lost his way, once called at the cottage of a poor woman for direction, when he found her just finishing her dinner of cold water and

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a crust of dry bread, but, in the height of thankfulness, praising God as if in the midst of unbounded mercies, as she said, "What, have all this and Christ besides! — Bowes.

Gives paths, gives fishes, rivers, bays;
So, too, the air, it gives us breath —
When it stops giving, comes in death.
Give, give, be always giving:
Who gives not is not living.
The more you give,
The more you live.

God's love hath to us wealth upheaped;
Only by giving it is reaped.
The body withers, and the mind,
If pent in by selfish rind,
Give strength, give thought, give deeds, give self,
Give love, give tears, and give thyself;
Who gives not is not living.
The more we give,
The more we live.

Eliab

a Is. xxxii. 8; 2 S. xxiv. 22, 23.

"There be three usual causes of ingratitude, upon a benefit received — envy, pride, covetousness; envy, looking more at others' benefits than our own; pride, looking more at ourselves, than the benefit; covetousness, looking more at what we would have than what we have." — *Bp. Hall*

b Ac. xx. 35.

"Our superfluities should give way to our brother's conveniences; and our conveniences to our brother's necessities, yea, even our necessities should give way to their extremity for the supplying of them." — *Venning*.

Shelumiel

c 2 Co. ix. 5-7.

"Self-denial is an excellent guard of virtue, and it is safer and wiser to abate somewhat of our lawful enjoyments than to gratify our desires to the utmost extent of what is permitted, lest the bent of nature towards pleasure hurry us further." — *Townson*

Eliasaph

d Ex. xxxv. 29.

24-29. (24) Eliab, *see* i. 9. (25-29) his, *etc.*,^a *see* vss. 13-17.

Motives for giving to God. — When we do give, in what spirit and with what feeling is it? Oh, my brethren! put down what you give from vanity, that your name may appear creditably along with others; put down what you give from indolence, because you are entreated to do so, and in order to rid yourself of those troublesome applicants; put down what you are surprised into giving, and in reality give with regret, like one who submits to a disagreeable necessity when he is not skilful enough to avoid it; put down what you give through weakness, from no other motive than the purely negative one that you had not the courage to refuse; put down what you give in ill-humor, secretly indulging angry feelings either against those who have appealed to you, or those on whose behalf the appeal has been made; then put down what you give cheerfully, and in the spirit of those words of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." — *Dr. Coulin*.

30-35. (30) Elizur, *see* i. 5. (31-35) his, *etc.*,^b *see* vss. 13-17.

Seven ways of giving. — 1. *The careless way.* — To give something to every cause that is presented without inquiring into its merits. 2. *The impulsive way.* — To give from impulse — as much and as often as love and pity and sensibility prompt. 3. *The lazy way.* — To make a special effort to earn money for benevolent objects by fairs, festivals, etc. 4. *The self-denying way.* — To save the cost of luxuries and apply them to purposes of religion and charity. This may lead to asceticism and self-complacence. 5. *The systematic way.* — To lay aside as an offering to God a definite portion of our gains — one-tenth, one-fifth, one-third, or one-half. This is adapted to all, whether poor or rich; and gifts would be largely increased if it were generally practiced. 6. *The equal way.* — To give to God and the needy just as much as we spend on ourselves, balancing our personal expenditure by our gifts. 7. *The heroic way.* — To limit our expenses to a certain sum, and give away all the rest of our income. This was John Wesley's way.

36-41. (36) Shelumiel, *see* on i. 6. (37-41) his, *etc.*,^c *see* vss. 13-17.

The measure of giving. — Hohannes, the blind missionary of Harpoot, tells of a place where the board had spent much money with little result, where he was sent. It was a poor place. The people were to raise six hundred piastres; and the board was to pay the balance of his salary. The people said they could not raise that sum; a neighboring pastor said it was impossible, they were so poor. After much anxiety, the missionary laid the case before God in prayer, when it was impressed upon him that each should give his tenth. He proposed it to the people, and they agreed to it. The money was easily raised, and amounted to more than the entire salary. That people never prospered so much before; their crops were abundant, and their satisfaction great. They not only supported their preacher and school teacher, but gave two thousand piastres to other purposes.

42-47. (42) Eliasaph, *see* on i. 14. (43-47) his, *etc.*,^d *see* on vss. 13-17.

Giving to God heartily. — A noble-hearted Christian merchant one morning received news of a failure involving him in a loss of no less than a hundred thousand pounds. A minister called to ask a subscription for an important

object. But, hearing of the merchant's loss, he apologized and prepared to go. The pious merchant took him kindly by the hand, and said, "The wealth I have is not mine, but the Lord's. Perhaps He is going to put it into other hands, so I must make a good use of what remains to me." He then doubled the subscription he had intended to give. It is related of Andrew Fuller that, on a begging tour for the cause of missions, he called on a certain wealthy nobleman to whom he was unknown, but who had heard much of Fuller's talents and piety. After he had stated to him the object of his visit, his lordship observed that he thought he should make him no donation. Dr. Fuller was preparing to return, when the nobleman remarked that there was *one man* to whom, if he could see him, he thought he would give something for the mission, and that man was Andrew Fuller. Mr. Fuller immediately replied, "My name, sir, is Andrew Fuller." On this the nobleman, with some hesitation, gave him a guinea. Observing the indifference of the donor, Mr. Fuller looked him in the face with much gravity, and said, "Does this donation, sir, come from *your heart*? If it does not, I wish not to receive it." The nobleman was melted and overcome with this honest frankness, and taking from his purse ten guineas more, said, "There, sir, these come from *my heart*." Men should give to the cause of missions cheerfully. They should do good with a good motive. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." — *Whitecross*.

48-53. (48) seventh day, the ceremonies were not interrupted by the Sabbath. Jehovah is also Lord of the Sabbath. Elishama, *see on i. 10.* (49-53) his, *etc.*,^a *see on vss. 13-17.*

A bountiful giver. — In Scotland I was attending a missionary meeting, and you know in Scotland it is the fashion to give money at the door coming in or going out. Going away from the meeting, a poor servant came and dropped in a sovereign. The deacon standing there said, "I am sure you can't afford to give that." "Oh! yes, I can." "You will have to go without clothes." "Oh! no, I shan't." "Do take it back," he said. She replied, "I must give it." The deacon then said, "Take it home to-night, and if, after thinking of it during the night, you choose to give it, you can send it." The next morning I sat at breakfast, and there was a little note came, and it contained two sovereigns. The good deacon said, "You won't take it!" I said, "Of course I shall, for if I send it back, she will send four next time." — *Scott*.

54-59. (54) Gamaliel, *see on i. 10.* (55-59) his, *etc.*,^b *see vss. 13-17.*
Giving to God repaid. — John Wesley and a servant when traveling stopped at a house of a poor woman who had just lost her cow, and who was broken-hearted because it was her only means of support. Wesley asked his servant how much money they had, and he replied, "Fifty dollars." "Give it all to the woman," said he. They journeyed on, and the next place they stopped at the people handed him ninety dollars. Wesley in surprise turned to his servant and said, "How is this? There ought to be one hundred, for we gave away fifty." "Ah," said the servant, "I did not dare give the woman more than forty-five; I thought we ought to keep five dollars for ourselves!"

60-65. (60) Abidan, *see on i. 11.* (61-65) his, *etc.* *see on vss. 13-17.*

Give cheerfully. —

Give! as the morning that flows out of heaven;
Give! as the waves when their channel is riven;
Give! as the free air and sunshine are given;
Lavishly, utterly, joyfully give.
Not the waste drops of thy cup overflowing,
Not the faint sparks of thy hearth ever glowing,
Not a pale bud from the June roses blowing;
Give as He gave thee who gave thee to live.

66-71. (66) Ahiezzer, *see on i. 12.* (68-71) his, *etc.*,^d *see vss. 13-17.*
Benefits of liberality. — I never prospered more in my small estate than when I gave most, and needed least. My own rule hath been, first, to contrive to need myself as little as may be, and lay out none on need-nots, but to live frugally on a little; second, to serve God in my place, upon that competency which He allowed me to myself, that what I had myself might be as good a work for common good as that which I gave to others; and, third, to do all the good I could with all the rest, preferring the most public and the

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"The ant is a type of selfishness in that it works purely for itself; the bee is a type of beneficence, because it works for the good of others. Christians, like the bee, should direct their labors for the good of the public and the glory of Christ, then shall they be rewarded in themselves with the honey of heaven's blessing, and be the means of giving to others the honey of the gospel." — *John Bate*.

a Ex. xxxv. 20-24.

"Thou must be emptied of self before thou canst be filled with the Spirit." — *Thorn-ton*.

Gamaliel

b 2 Ch. xxiv. 8-11.

"Your gift is princely, but it comes too late, and falls like sunbeams on a blasted blossom." — *Suckling*.

Abidan

c Mk. xii. 41-44.

"Thou shalt learn the wisdom early to discern true beauty in utility." — *Longfellow*.

Ahiezzer

d 2 Co. viii. 1-4.

Sydney Smith recommends it as a rule, to try to make at least one person happy every day, and adds the calcul-

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lation, — take ten years, and you will have made three thousand six hundred and sixty persons happy, or brightened a small town by your contribution to the fund of general joy.

most durable object, and the nearest. And, the more I have practiced this, the more I have had to do it with; and, when I gave almost all, more came in (without any gift), I scarce knew how, at least unexpected; but when by providence I have cast myself into necessities of using more upon myself, or upon things in themselves of less importance, I have prospered much less than when I did otherwise. And when I had contented myself to devote that stock which I had gotten to charitable uses after my death, instead of laying out at present, that so I might secure somewhat for myself while I lived, in probability all that is like to be lost; whereas, when I took that present opportunity, and trusted God for the time to come, I wanted nothing, and lost nothing. — *R. Baxter.*

Pagiel

72-77. (72) Pagiel, *see on i. 13.* (73-77) his, *etc.*,^a *see vss. 13-17.*

a Ph. iv. 18.

"It is the devil's masterpiece to make us think well of ourselves." — *Adam.*

"As benevolence is the most sociable of all virtues, so it is of the largest extent; for there is not any man, either so great or so little, but he is yet capable of giving and of receiving benefits." — *Seneca.*

"Doing good is the only certainly happy action of a man's life." — *Sir Philip Sidney.*

Advantage of liberality. — I had three brothers, who had been brought up to the duty of giving even of their little store for the spreading of the kingdom of the Redeemer. It happened that each of these brothers possessed a box, in which he dropped any money that might be given to him. In the confusion of moving our residence, these boxes were mislaid, and were long looked for in vain. Some time afterwards the boxes were unexpectedly found. The boys determined at once to open them. The three boxes contained almost the same sum of money — about ten pounds. My eldest brother had long wished to possess a watch; and, without hesitation, he appropriated the whole of the contents of his box to the purchase of one. My second brother was of a divided mind. He accordingly separated his money into two portions: one he spent for his own gratification; the other portion he gave to some religious society. My youngest brother gave up all; he reserved no portion for his own self-indulgence, but freely and joyfully gave the whole to the Lord. The dispositions which were then shown proved indicative of the future course of each of these young men. The eldest has been engaged in many undertakings which seemed to promise wealth, and he has expended large sums of money; but he has failed in everything, and, at the close of a long life, he is a poor man, and has been for some considerable time dependent on the bounty of his youngest brother. My second brother is not poor; but he has never been rich, nor satisfied with his very moderate circumstances. I am now in mourning for my youngest brother. He died lately, leaving a hundred thousand pounds, after having freely given away at least as much to missions among the heathen and to other works of love. God prospered him in everything that he undertook; and he ceased not, throughout the whole course of his life, to give freely of all that God gave to his hand. Freely he had received, and freely and cheerfully did he give. — *The Kingdom and the People.*

Ahira

b Ro. xi. 35, 36.

"There is no use of money equal to that of beneficence; here the enjoyment grows on reflection." — *Mackenzie.*

"Men resemble the gods in nothing so much as in doing good to their fellow-creatures." — *Cicero.*

78-83. (78) Ahira, *see on i. 15.* (79-83) his, *etc.*,^b *see on vss. 13-17.*

Mottoes of giving. — A vain man's motto is, "Win gold, and wear it;" a generous man's, "Win gold, and share it;" a miser's, "Win gold, and spare it;" a profligate's, "Win gold, and spend it;" a broker's "Win gold, and lend it;" a gambler's, "Win gold, and lose it;" a wise man's "Win gold, and use it." *How to give easily.* — Giving to promote the cause of Christ, when so frequent as to be a habit, becomes easy to the giver. The way to acquire the habit is to practice the giving. Practice here, as well as elsewhere, makes perfect. The more one gives the more one will be inclined to give.

summary of the princes' offerings for the altar

c 2 Ch. vii. 5-9; Ezra vi. 16; Ne. xii. 27.

d Nu. xii. 7, 8; Ex. xxxiii. 9, 11.

e Ex. xxv. 22.

"There is a story of an earl that was much given to immoderate anger;

84-89. (84) in . . day, *i. e.* about the time. by . . Israel,^c no one giving more or less than any other: this would prevent pride, envy, jealousy, etc. (85-87) charger, *etc.*, *see vss. 13-17.* (88) This . . altar, the total offering was 2,400 shekels of silver, 120 shekels of gold, and 240 beasts. (89) the . . congregation, the tent of meeting. to . . him, to commune with God. voice . . him, *R. V.*, "Heard the Voice speaking unto him." he . . speaking,^d this had been promised.^e

From between the cherubim. — I. He who had before spoken from Sinai now spoke in the midst of the camp. II. He who now spoke in the midst of the camp, spoke from above the mercy-seat. III. He who now spoke from above the mercy-seat, spoke after the altar was dedicated. IV. He who spoke after the altar was dedicated, spoke through a mediator. V. The mediator through whom He spoke went in to speak to Him, and then passed out to speak to the

people. *Divine communications* are—I. Personal. II. Private. III. Plain. IV. Merciful. V. Holy.

The speech of the Divine Spirit.—It is told of Claus Harms, the preacher who was most blessed in the first half of our century, that he related to a Quaker how much daily he had to speak. The Quaker listened, and when Brother Harms had finished his narration, he asked, "Brother Harms, if thou speakest so much, when art thou quiet? and when doth the Spirit of God speak to thee?" Harms was so impressed, that from that day forward he passed a certain portion of each day in retirement.—*Professor Gess. Communion with God.*—Standing by the telegraph wires one may often hear the mystic wailing and sighing of the winds among them, like the strains of an Æolian harp, but one knows nothing of the message which is flashing along them. Joyous may be the inner language of those wires, swift as the lightning, far reaching and full of meaning, but a stranger intermeddles not therewith. Fit emblem of the believer's inner life; men hear our notes of outward sorrow wrung from us by external circumstances, but the message of celestial peace, the Divine communings with a better land, the swift heart throbs of heaven-born desire, they cannot perceive; man sees but the outer manhood, but the life hidden with Christ in God flesh and blood cannot discern. *Communion with God.*—A converted heathen said, "I open my Bible and God talks with me; I close my Bible and then I talk with God." *The ear of the heart*—"I talk to Him until I fall asleep," she (Madame Louise) said. I asked whether He answered her. "Oh, yes," she replied; "the ear of my heart hears His answer."

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

1-4. (1, 2) when, etc.,^a see Ex. xxv. 37. shall . . candlestick, the Jewish expositors seem to have thought that the light was to be thrown inward towards the central shaft; most modern commentators, with more probability, understand it to mean that the lamps were to be so placed as to throw their light across the tabernacle towards the north side.—*Pulp. Com.* (3) and . . so, it was usual to light the middle light fr. the altar; and the branches fr. the middle light. (4) was . . gold, solid (see on Ex. xxv. 31). pattern . . mount, see Ex. xxv. 40.

Light, beauty, purity.—The candlestick. I. It was hammered into a beautiful form. II. It was made of pure gold—solid and with no admixture of base metal. III. It was designed for use—to give light. Like this candlestick should be every life, book, sermon.

Use of gold.—"But the mere costliness of gold," says Archbishop Trench, "that it was of all metals the rarest, and therefore the dearest, this was not the only motive for the predominant employment of it. Throughout all the ancient East there was a sense of sacredness attached to this metal, which still to a great extent survives. Thus 'golden' in the Zend-Avesta is throughout synonymous with heavenly or divine. So also in many Eastern lands, while silver might be degraded to profane and every-day uses of common life, might as money pass from hand to hand, 'the pale and common drudge 'twixt man and man,' it was not permitted to employ gold in any services except only royal and divine."

Prayer for purity.—

Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That on my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soiled and dark
To yonder shining ground;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round.

So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee;
So in mine earthly house I am
To that I hope to be.

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and the means he used to cure it was by studying Christ. His patience under the injuries and affronts offered Him; and he never suffered the meditation to pass before he found his heart transformed to the similitude of Christ Jesus."—*Spencer.*

"We are not sent into this world to do anything into which we cannot put our hearts."

the lighting of the lamp

^a Jo. i. 6-9; Lu. ii. 32; Jo. iii. 19; 1 Jo. i. 5; Jo. iii. 12; ix. 5; 2 Co. iv. 6; Ep. v. 8; 1 Pe. ii. 9; Matt. v. 14-16.

"God is called light (1 John i. 5), by which His majesty, holiness, perfection, and blessedness are noted; as, when celestial light is transmitted to us, there is nothing fairer, clearer, or more comfortable; whence it is said (Eccles. xi 7), 'Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun'"—*Keach.*

B. c. 1490.

Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean. — *Tennyson*.

cleansing of the Levites

a Isa lii. 11.

b Nu. xix. 17-18; Is. lii. 15; Ez xxxvi. 25; 1 Co. vi. 11; Tit. iii. 5, 6; Ep v. 26, 27; He. x. 22; ix. 13, 14.

c 1 Ch. xxiii. 27-32.

d Gesenius thinks that the Levites were led to and fro, bef. the altar.

relation of Levites to Israel

"It is not like a banquet, accommodated to the tastes and wants of so many and no more. Like a masterpiece of music, its virtues are independent of numbers."—*D. Thomas*.

"If there had been no sin on earth, there had been no need of an Advocate in heaven."

The Atonement is the nearest way to God.

the service of the Levites

e Ga. i. 10 1 Co. ix. 19.

On vv. 19; "By performing those services wh. were due fr. the children of Israel; the omission of wh. by the children of Israel would, but for the

5-11. (5, 6) **Levites**,^a who had not offered anything; being themselves an offering. (7) **sprinkle . . purifying**,^b *lit.* sin-water: water to cleanse fr. sin. **shave, etc.**, *R. V.*, "let them cause a razor to pass over all their flesh," "emblem of spiritual freedom fr. worldly care and taint which ought to characterize God's ministers." (8) **bullock**, *see* Le. i. 3. **meat-offering**, Le. ii. 1. **sin-offering**, Le. iv. 13, 14. (9) **whole . . together**, "in the persons of their heads and representatives." (10) **the . . hands**, not the whole people, but the chief of them in the name of the rest. The laying on of hands was symbolic of transferring of power. (11) **offer, etc.** *lit.* wave the Levites as a wave-offering to God fr. the people.^d

The Levites consecrated to holy service.—The order of consecration was this. They were—I. Separated, vs. 6. II. Cleansed, vs. 7. III. Absolved, vs. 8. IV. Congregated, vs. 9. V. Dedicated, vs. 10. VI. Presented to the Lord as the people's representatives in holy work.

The province of conscience.—Every man is a little world within himself. and in this little world there is a court of judicature erected, wherein, next under God, the conscience sits as the supreme judge, from whom there is no appeal, that passeth sentence upon us,—upon all our actions, upon all our intentions; for our persons, absolving one, condemning another; for our actions, allowing one, forbidding another. If that condemns us, in vain shall all the world beside acquit us; and if that clear us, the doom which the world passeth upon us is frivolous and ineffectual. — *Bp. Hall*.

12-17. (12) **the . . hands**, thus taking the ans. as their representatives. (13) **and**, or, thus, in this way. (14) **mine**, for special religious services. (15) **offer, wave**. (16) **instead, etc.**, *see* iii. 12, 43-45. (17) **for, etc.**, *see* Ex. xiii. 2, 12-15.

An offering to God, needing for itself an atonement.—The tribe of Levi was set apart for God's service in the tabernacle in place of all the firstborn. Before they could enter on that service they needed a special call and consecration, including atoning sacrifices (vs. 5-12). Thus we are reminded of the obvious truth that, without a sacrifice for us, we can never-ourselves be acceptable sacrifices to God.

The spirit and method of atonement.—When I see men busy about the method of atonement, I marvel at them. It is as if a man that was starving to death should insist upon going into a laboratory to ascertain in what way dirt germinated wheat. It is as if a man that was perishing from hunger should insist upon having a chemical analysis of bread. How many books have been written, and how many sermons have been preached, to show how God could be just, and yet justify a sinner; how He had a right to do it, and what were the relations of forgiving mercy to law. These questions are not immaterial, but the spirit of atonement is far more important than its method. The secret truth is this; crowned suffering, love bearing the penalty away from the transgressor, and securing his re-creation. Love bearing love, love teaching love, love inspiring love, love re-creating love—this is the atonement. It is the opening up of elements which bear in them cleansing power, inspiration, aspiration, salvation, immortality. It is the interior working force of atonement that we are most concerned in, though we are apt the least to concern ourselves with it — *Beecher*.

18-22. (18) **and, etc.**, *see* on iii. 6-9. (19) **make . . Israel**, serving God in special labors as representatives of Israel. **that . . plague**, *i. e.* that the people might be secured from Divine judgments by everything being done in order, and by those who were commissioned. (20) **did to, etc.**, as descr. fr. vs. 5; where we have the part taken by Moses, vs. 13; by Aaron, vs. 11; by the people, vs. 10. (21) **were purified**, *i. e.* purified themselves, having been presented by the people, etc. (22) **and . . went, etc.**,^e aft. the completion of their public appointment and personal purification. **before . . Aaron . . sons**, in their presence and by their direction.

Representative relation of the Levites, official not moral.—I. They were appointed to discharge certain official duties. II. The people in surrendering

those duties made no surrender of personal responsibility to the moral and ceremonial law. III. The hearer and scholar not relieved of religious duty by the teacher or preacher.

The redemptive element.—It is the very focus of the redemptive element, that one is found with love enough to suffer remedially for the world. We often contrast law and love; and, in our inferior being, perhaps it is necessary to analyze and take them apart, and contrast them, although in the Divine mind and administration they are doubtless inseparably mingled. As presented to us in the human condition, law may be considered rather as a preventive—seldom as a curative. Love is both. It prevents, but, still more, it heals transgression. Law punishes for the sake of society. Human penal laws are devices of human weakness, needful for our state, simply because other and better ways are scarcely within our reach. But, while law makes transgressors suffer, love suffers for transgressors. Both carry justice; both vindicate purity, truth, mercy; but law, in the whole sphere of human administration, puts the burden, the woe, the deep damnation on the transgressor. Love, yet juster, higher, purer, takes the suffering and the woe upon itself, and releases the transgressor. Which carries the sublimest justice, law or love? Which rules highest, reaches deepest, spreads widest, and best meets the want of man's whole being—the penal justice that says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," or the disclosed justice of love, which says, "I have found a ransom; I bear the stripes; I carry the guilt and the penalty; I suffer, that the world may go free."—*Beecher*.

23-26. (23, 24) from . . old, *this* was the permanent rule; that of iv. 3, 23, 30, was temporary. They were merely to perform the light labors such as taking care of the tab., excluding strangers, etc., but were not to do heavy work, as loading or unloading wagons, etc. (25) from, etc., merciful consideration for the infirmities of age. (26) minister, etc.,^a they shall still enjoy the honors of suitable service, and its emoluments.

Service.—I. The service God demands of all Levites. Every Christian should be a priest, ever ministering in his temple. 1. Burden-bearing: how often Christians murmur about their burdens, as though they were not honored in being permitted to bear anything from God; 2. Singing: the Levites sang and played on instruments: sing the song of gratitude and contentment; 3. Studying of the law: "Search the Scriptures;" 4. Attendance on the ordinances of the sanctuary: there is a special blessing for those who worship in God's house. II. God demands this service in our prime: "from twenty and five years old." We must give God the best we have. III. He demands this service when it can be most easily rendered. God did not ask of the Levites, nor does He of us, impossibilities. The very young and the old were exempt from the bearing of the heavier burdens. God suits the burden to the back. All he asks is, that we shall do what we can.—*R. A. Griffin*.

A faithful servant.—It is related of the missionary, Henry Martyn, that, when at college, "he never lost an hour;" but then every moment was spent in seeking honor for himself. When, however, he had obtained the highest honors he was disappointed in finding that he had grasped a shadow. A friend told him one day that he ought to attend to his studies not to obtain the praise of men, but that he might be better fitted to promote the glory of God. He thought such a demand very strange, and when his sister spoke to him on the subject, and begged him to give his heart to God, he did not like to listen to her, because he felt that he would have to give up many things if he became religious. At length, however, a great change came over him—a change of heart; and he resolved to "seek first the kingdom of God." His prospects were every day becoming brighter and brighter; but the love of God had entered his heart, and he was enabled to conquer his ambition and love of fame. He became a minister of the Gospel, and was greatly esteemed for his learning and amiable manners. He began now, more than ever, to feel that he was not his own, and therefore that he must not live to himself; and although he might have risen to posts of distinction in his native land, he chose rather to be a missionary to the heathen. He sacrificed home, friendship, worldly comfort, health, earthly love, and last of all, life itself, that he might tell the heathen of the true God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, who died to save sinners; for, as he said, "he could not endure life if Jesus were not glorified."—*S. S. Teacher*.

B. c. 1490.

interposition of the Levites, have called down wrath fr. God."—*Spk. Comm.*

The religion of a self-righteous man is mainly a system of negatives; I am not so-and-so; whereas the principal duties of a child of God are, in their nature, positive.

There is a similarity and a difference between a self-righteous man and a true penitent; both are seeking life, but one is seeking it in Christ, the other in himself.

Levites' time of service

α 2 Ti. iv. 7, 8; Ps. lxxi. 9; xcii. 14.

"The transport of the tab. required the strength of a full-grown man and therefore the more advanced age of thirty years; whereas the duties conn. with the tab. when standing were of a lighter desc. and could easily be performed fr. the twenty-fifth year."—*Delitzsch*.

"Whoever sincerely endeavors to do all the good he can will probably do much more than he imagines, or will ever know till the day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest."—*Miss Bowdler*.

B. C. 1490.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

passover at Sinai

a Nu. i. 1, 2.

b Ex. xii. 1-11; Le. xxiii. 5; De. xvi. 1; Jos. v. 10.

"The reason why the men of the world think so little of Christ is, they do not look at him. Their backs being turned from the sun, they only see their own shadows and are therefore wholly taken up with themselves."—*Dr. Payson.*

case of conscience

c Mishaël and Elizaphan had recently buried their cousins, Nadab and Abihu; Le. x. 4, 5.

d Le. vii. 21.

"Conscience is God's king, that he puts in a man's breast; and conscience ought to reign. You may get up a civil war to fight against conscience; but you cannot kill the king. You may dethrone him for a while; but he struggles and fights for the mastery."—*S. Coley.*

supplementary passover

e Ro. v. 8; Ep. ii. 4, 5.

f Over the Heb. word *rechokah*—"afar off" are

puncta extraordinaria, i. e. special marks wh. may mean that special consideration is needed, or that the meaning is not clear, or that the word is suspicious.

g 1 Co. v. 6-8; Ps. lxxix. 21.

h Ac. ii. 30, 31; Jo. xix. 32-36

i He. x. 26-31.

j Re. xxii. 17; Ep. ii. 17-19.

1-5. (1) **first . . year**, hence bef. the num. of the people.* (2) **keep**, make, observe, do. at . . **season**, one of the last occurrences at Sinai; but for Israel's rebellion the next pass. would have been kept in Canaan. On the 14th day of the month, in memory of their deliverance from Egypt. (3) **keep . . season, etc.**,^b in the time and manner Divinely settled. (4) **spake, etc.**, Moses, faithfully communicated the command he had received. (5) **they kept, etc.**, the people, too, were faithful in their obedience.

The passover at Sinai.—I. It was commemorative of a great deliverance. II. It was observed in the Divinely-appointed season and manner. III. Its observance was not to be interfered with by the duties and incidents of the time and place. Learn—1. Past mercies not to be forgotten among present trials; 2. Crowding labors are no excuse for neglect of religious observances.

Forget not all His benefits.—Dr. Franklin says that in a time of great despondency among the first settlers of New England, it was proposed in one of their public assemblies, to proclaim a fast. An old farmer arose, spoke of their provoking heaven with their complaints, reviewed their mercies, showed that they had much to be thankful for, and moved, that, instead of appointing a day of fasting, they should appoint a day of thanksgiving. This was accordingly done, and the custom has continued ever since.

6-8. (6) **were . . man,**^c see Le. xix. 28; persons thus defiled were unclean seven days. (7) **wherefore . . back,**^d if these men were Mishaël and Elizaphan, who had just buried their cousins, Nadab and Abihu, they might well ask this, since their defilement was the result of their obedience to an express command. They were in a dilemma. If they neglected to eat they were liable to judgment; if they ate they were equally exposed. (8) **stand . . still**, wait a while. **hear . . you**, in such a case there might be some special exception. But Moses would do nothing as of himself.

A case of conscience.—I. How it arose. The fear lest obedience to the ceremonial law should exclude from religious privilege. II. How it was resolved. 1. They did not lean upon their own understanding, but asked Moses; 2. He did not rely upon his official relation, but asked God.

Checks of conscience.—Col. Gardiner was habitually so immersed in intrigues, that if not the whole business, at least the whole happiness of his life consisted in them; and he had too much leisure for one who was so prone to abuse. His fine constitution, than which perhaps there was hardly ever a better, gave him great opportunities of indulging himself in these excesses; and his good spirits enabled him to pursue his pleasures of every kind in so alert and sprightly a manner, that multitudes envied him, and called him by a dreadful kind of compliment, "The happy rake." Yet still the checks of conscience, and some remaining principles of so good an education would break in upon his most licentious hours; and I particularly remember he told me, that when some of his dissolute companions were once congratulating him on his distinguished felicity, a dog happening at that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself, "Oh that I were that dog!" Such was, then, his happiness, and such, perhaps, is that of hundreds more, who bear themselves highest in the contempt of religion, and glory in that infamous servitude which they affect to call liberty.—*Doddridge.*

9-14. (9, 10) **speak, etc.**,^e this exceptional case leads to the promulgation of a law that provides for all such cases. **or . . off,**^f fr. the place of celebration. **yet, etc.**, enforced absence does not excuse fr. duty. (11) **the . . it,**^g a mo. aft. the stated time. (12) **they, etc.**,^h in the case of this sec. pass. all things shall be duly observed. (13) **but, etc.**,ⁱ i. e. none were to take advantage of this exceptional case and neglect the pass. proper. (14) **stranger, etc.**,^j see Ex. xii. 48, 49. The allusion is to such as had become proselytes to the faith of Israel, and had submitted to circumcision.

Neglect of religious privileges.—I. The wilful neglect of religious ordinances is sinful. 1. Withholds from God that which is His due; 2. Despises the gifts which God bestows; 3. Neglects the culture and development of the highest faculties of the being; II. The wilful neglect of religious ordinances will be punished. The neglecter brings the punishment upon himself. 1. He fore-

goes the highest joys of life. 2. He dwarfs and degrades his soul. 3. He excludes himself from the highest fellowship on earth. 4. He renders himself unfit for the fellowship of heaven.

The Divine mercy.—We should learn to comfort ourselves in this, that while we are under our minority, we are under the mercy of a Father—a mercy of conservation by His providence, giving us all good things richly to enjoy, even all things necessary unto life and godliness—a mercy of protection, defending us by power from all evils—a mercy of education and instruction, teaching us by His Word and Spirit—a mercy of communion many ways, familiarly conversing with us, and manifesting Himself to us—a mercy of guidance and government, by the laws of His family—a mercy of discipline fitting us, by fatherly chastisements, for those further honors and employments He will advance us unto. And when our minority is over, and we once are come to a perfect man, we shall then be actually admitted unto that inheritance, immortal, invisible, and that fadeth not away, which the same mercy at first purchased, and now prepareth and reserveth for us.—*Bp. Reynolds.*

15-19. (15-17) and, etc.,^a see on Ex. xl. 33-38. The great day, the first day of the first month of the second year after their departure from Egypt, when God took visible possession of his dwelling in their midst. (18) commandment,^b wh. might be given by the sudden ascent or descent of the cloud. (19) kept. . . Lord, obeyed His will by remaining where they were.

The cloudy pillar.—I. May be regarded as an emblem of Divine truth. 1. Supernatural as to origin; 2. Stable: only a cloud, yet not now dispersed; 3. Adapted to both night and day; 4. Reliable; 5. Intolerant: "*This is the way,*" and no other. II. As a symbol of Divine Providence. 1. Different appearance to different characters; 2. Presented alternation of aspect to the same people; 3. Mysterious in its movements; 4. Aims at the good of all who follow its guidance. III. As a type of the Divine Saviour. 1. Mysterious nature; 2. Challenges attention; 3. His purpose beneficent; 4. The source of great comfort; 5. Constant in His attachment. Learn—(1) Seek to be on the right side of the cloud; (2) To seek it in the right place—over the tabernacle; (3) To follow its guidance.

Definite guidance.—One day a staff officer found Gen. Lander with a Bible in his hand and said, "General, do you ever search the Scriptures?" Gen. Lander replied, "My mother gave me a Bible, which I have always carried with me. Once in the Rocky Mountains I had only fifteen pounds of flour. We used to collect grasshoppers at four o'clock in the day to catch some fish for our supper at night. It was during the Mormon war; and my men desired to turn back. I was then searching for a route for the wagon-road. I will turn back if the Bible says so, said I; and we will take it an inspiration. I opened the book at the following passage: 'Go on and search the mountain; and the gates of the city shall not be shut against you.' All concurred in the definite statement of the passage; and the heroic explorer once more led his men into the wild country of the Indians.—*Moore.*

20-23. (20) few days, = a short time. according, etc., they were "under the cloud:"^c i. e. under its direction, etc. They awaited in either case the appointed indication. (21) and . . when, etc.,^d lit. and there was also when, etc. whether, etc., this would involve constant watchfulness. (22) year, evident that the stops were of unequal length. One time they rested 18 years; other times only a day. (23) by . . Moses,^e who interpreted and enforced the will of God.

The cloud tarrying.—A word of—I. Description. The time "the cloud tarried" was a time of—1. Rest; 2. Spiritual activity; 3. Peculiar temptation. Remember Taberah, Hazeroth, the fiery serpents. II. Exhortation. Be more anxious to—1. Keep the cloud in sight than to see it tarry; 2. Improve than enjoy these refreshing times; 3. Improve than prolong these periods. Seek not so much a long as a useful life. III. Caution. 1. If the cloud tarry long, think not that it will never move; 2. Be not impatient if it tarry when you wish to journey; 3. Be ready, that whenever the cloud moves you may move also with joy.—*R. A. Griffin.*

God's guidance.—A preacher of the gospel was traveling by steamboat from Chicago to the north of Lake Michigan, and found that at a certain point the course lay through a narrow and difficult channel between several small

B. c. 1490.

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform, without fail, what you resolve.—*Franklin.*

the cloudy pillar moving

a Ps. lxxx. 1; Ex. xiii. 21; xiv. 19-20.

b 1 Co. x. 1.

"It was a touching answer of a Christian sailor, when asked why he remained so calm in a fearful storm, when the sea seemed ready to devour the ship. He was not sure that he could swim; but he said 'Though I sink I shall but drop into the hollow of my Father's hand; for He holds all these waters there.'—*Arnot.*

tarrying

c 1 Co. x. 1.

d Ne. ix. 12, 19.

e Ps. lxxvii. 20, lxxvii. 14.

"Were God to withdraw from me, I should be as weak as water. All that I enjoy, though it be miracle on miracle, would not support me without fresh supplies from God. The thing I rejoice in is this, that God is altogether full; and that in the

B. C. 1490.

Mediator Christ Jesus is 'all the fulness of the God-head,' and it will never run out."—*T. Halyburton.*

"The moment you accept God's ordering, that moment your work ceases to be a task, and becomes your calling; you pass from bondage to freedom, from the shadow-land of life into life itself."—*H. Clay Trumbull.*

"Don't try to hold God's hand; let him hold yours. Let him do the holding and you do the trusting."—*H. W. Webb Peplow.*

islands and the shore. The difficulty of advancing here is greatly increased by the fact that a dense fog almost always rests upon the surface of the water. When, therefore, this part of the voyage is reached, a man is sent up to the mast-head, where he can see the landmarks on either side rising above the fog, and, though himself out of sight, is able to give directions for steering to those below. Thus the vessel is guided safely through. So our gracious God sits above the clouds of temptation and trial which surround us on earth, and make our voyage through life so perilous, and, seeing all the dangers of the way, He counsels us as to the track of safety. Let us fully trust the guidance of His eye, and boldly proceed as He directs. *A trustworthy guide:*—I trust myself implicitly to the pilots on the ferry-boats. I do not know the tides and currents that change with every trip across the river, but I have no doubt that they know them, and I have never stopped to question them as to how they came by their knowledge. I am satisfied that they are good pilots, for I see them carrying millions of people back and forth between the two cities without accident; and I think that our Brooklyn and New York ferries as they are served are a miracle of safety; and if I put my life, my happiness, all that is dear to me, in the hands of those men because I believe that they know what they can do, and know what they are about, how much more can I put my trust in Jesus Christ, who has, by His deeds, by His death and by His resurrection, manifested Himself as worthy of all trust.—*Beecher.* *Following the Divine leading.*—I said to an aged minister of much experience, "All the events of my life seem to have been Divinely connected. Do you suppose it is so in all lives?" He answered, "Yes, but, most people do not notice the Divine leadings." I stand here this morning to say from my own experience that the safest thing in all the world to do is to trust the Lord. I never had a misfortune or a trial or a disappointment, however excruciating at the time, that God did not make turn out for my good. My one wish is to follow the Divine leading.—*Talmage.*

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

the trumpets
the princes'
signal

a Le. xxv. 9.

b Is. i. 13; Je. iv. 5; Joel ii. 15.

c Ex. xviii. 21; Nu. i. 16; vii. 2.

1-4. (1, 2) two . . silver, ref. to bef.;^a but use indicated now. "Moses was the inventor of the form of their trumpet, which was made of silver. Its description is this: In length it was a little less than a cubit. It was composed of a narrow tube, somewhat thicker than a flute, but with so much breadth as was sufficient for the breadth of a man's mouth; it ended in the form of a bell like common trumpets. Its sound was called in the Hebrew tongue, *Asotra*."—*Josephus*. (3) all . . thee,^b in the persons of representatives, the princes or elders of tribes. (4) if . . one,^c blow one blast; this the preliminary signal for muster of princes. The camp, hearing this, would wait for the next signal.

The silver trumpets.—I. Made of pure metal and one piece. Gospel heralds to be pure men and sound at heart. II. To be used in the service of God. III. Not to emit an uncertain sound. IV. The sound to be listened to and obeyed.

The silver trumpets.—The trumpet was the sacred joyful sound in old Palestine, the silver trumpets blown by the priests of the sons of Aaron. The trumpet proclaimed the opening of the year, the trumpet proclaimed the commencement of the sabbatical year, the trumpet proclaimed the year of jubilee that was kept by the Israelites, the feast of trumpets, and the tone of the trumpet mingled with their most solemn feasts and domestic scenes:

The Jewish trumpet was "a little less than a cubit in length; the tube narrow, a little thicker than a flute, and just wide enough to permit the performer to blow it; while it terminated like other trumpets in the form of a bell."—*Jos. Ant.* iii. 12, 6. Such trumpets are depicted on the arch of Titus.

"Then rose the choral hymn of praise,
The trump and timbrel answered keen,
And Judah's daughters poured their lays
The priest's and warriors' voice between."

Conceive such an evening as this in that delightful land; it is the evening of the sixth day, our Friday: the sky is peaceful, it is the wilderness; among those crags are the foes of Israel's race; there is the tabernacle, there is the cloud, about to yield to the fire; a star or two has already appeared; reverently waiting and expecting, the laborers are reposing from their day's toil; the sun is setting, and darkness approaching. Hark! hark! this is the peal of the silver trumpet over the waste, and the tool is dropped; instantly all labor ceases—and it is more, it is the commencement of the sabbatical

year! Yonder Philistines may put their own interpretation on it, and say, Their Sabbath is begun: but we can say, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." — *Parson Hood*.

5-10. (5) **alarm**,^a Heb. *teruah*: a broken, quavering, interrupted blast of an animated and excited character. (6) **second**, etc.,^b and prob. a third and fourth alarm were signals to the W. and N. camps. (7) **blow** . . **alarm**, *i. e.* in short, sharp, notes. (8) **sons** . . **trumpets**, receiving their instructions fr. Moses. (9) **war** . . **trumpets**,^c sig. the dependence of God's people on His aid. (10) **in** . . **gladness**, times of national and religious rejoicing.^d

Trumpet notes. — I. The trumpets were blown by the priests. II. They were blown according to the Divine signal code. III. They were to be sounded in the time of war to signal the attack and inspire the people with confidence in God. IV. They were to be sounded in times of rejoicing to remind the people of source of all prosperity.

The organization of Israel. — The form of the republic established by Moses was democratical. Its head admitted of change as to the name and nature of his office: and we find that, at certain times, it could subsist without a general head. If, therefore, we would fully understand its constitution, we must begin, not from above, but with the lowest descriptions of persons that had a share in the government. From various passages of the Pentateuch, we find that Moses, at making known any laws, had to convene the whole congregation of Israel, and, in like manner, in the book of Joshua, we see, that when Diets were held, the whole congregation were assembled. If on such occasions every individual had had to give his vote, everything would certainly have been democratic in the highest degree; but it is scarcely conceivable how, without very particular regulations made for the purpose (which, however, we nowhere find), order could have been preserved in an assembly of 600,000 men, their votes accurately numbered, and acts of violence prevented. If, however, we consider that, while Moses is said to have spoken to the whole congregation, he could not possibly be heard by 600,000 people (for what human voice could be sufficiently strong to be so?) all our fears and difficulties will vanish; for this circumstance alone must convince any one that Moses could only have addressed himself to a certain number of persons deputed to represent the rest of the Israelites. Accordingly, in Numb. i. 16, we find mention made of such persons. In contradistinction to the common Israelites, they are there denominated *Kerûe Hâdæ*, that is, "those wont to be called to the convention." — *Michaelis*.

11-17. (11) **on** . . **day**, etc.,^e *i. e.* at the end of supplementary passov., see ix. 11. **cloud** . . **up**, *i. e.* was made to ascend. (12) **took** . . **journneys**, *lit.* journeyed aft. their journeys: *i. e.* went from stage to stage: first to *Taberah*, then to *Kebroth-hattaavah*,^f then to *Hazeroth*, then to *Paran*.^g **Paran**,^h (*cavernous region*), this vs. does not imply that Paran was close to Sinai, but th. the cloud, often rising fr. the wild. of Sinai, pointed to the wild. of Paran, and did not rest till it rested there. — *Bonar*. (13) **first** . . **journey**, or they journeyed in precedence; *i. e.* in the order, etc. **by** . . **Moses**, *i. e.*, by the ministry of Moses: Moses being employed as an intermediate. (14-16) **in** . . **place**, etc., see Nu. ii. 3-9. Judah as the progenitor of the Lord was to have first place always. (17) **and** . . **down**, etc., *i. e.* the fabric of it; the board, curtains, etc., see i. 51; vii. 6-8.

Teachings of Israel's journey. — I. Human pilgrimage should be prosecuted in accordance with Divine directions. II. In human pilgrimage the arrangements and provisions for Divine worship should be matters of primary concern. III. In human pilgrimage the most reverent care should be exercised in relation to sacred things. IV. In human pilgrimage the weak and the wandering should be tenderly cared for.

Wilderness of Paran. — It comprised ab. $\frac{1}{2}$ of the whole penin. of Sinai, being the E. half of the limestone plateau constituting its centre. At the N. E. end was the wild. of Zin (not Sin). The whole plateau is known as *et-Tih*— (the wandering). "It must not be confounded with a distr. which could never have been included within it, the well-known and beautiful *Wâdy Feiran*, deriving its name fr. the early Christian city on which, through some unexplained cause, the name *Pharan* was bestowed. . . Towards this wilder. the Israelites now advanced on their march fr. Sinai to Canaan, unaware as yet that on its wastes the next eight-and thirty yrs. of their existence would be spent." — *Spk. Com.*

B.C. 1490.

signal for marching

a Nu. ii. 3.

b Nu. ii. 10; Joel ii. 1.

c Nu. xxxi. 6; Jos. vi. 4, 5; Ju. vii. 19-22; 2 Ch. xlii. 12-14; Am. iii. 6; Ne. iv. 18-20; 1 Co. xiv. 8

d Le. xxiii. 24; Nu. xxix. 1; 2 Ch. xxxix. 27; Ezra iii. 10; Ne. iii. 35-41; Ps. lxxxi. 3.

The worst soil, when properly cultivated, is capable of producing something, in like manner, the vilest heart, under the power of Divine grace, can contribute something to the glory of God.

leaving Sinai

Judah heads the march

e Ex. xi. 86.

f Nu. xi. 3, 34.

g "Here named by anticipation as the end and aim of their journey." — *Keil*.

h Nu. xii. 16; Ge. xxi. 20, 21.

For wild of Paran, see *Winer, Bib. R. W. B.*, art. *Paran*; *Stanley's Sin. and Pal.* 41-43; *Robinson's Bib. Res.* i. 189, 552; *Karl Ritter's Comp. Geog. of Pal.*; *Bonar's Des of Sinai*, 189, 369.

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Reuben and Ephraim follow

a Nu. iv. 5-15; vii. 9.

"A great deal of talent is lost to the world for the want of a little courage." — *Sydney Smith*.

"The servants of the Lord should be as bold for their Master as the devil's servants are for theirs." — *Countess of Warwick*.

"We fear men so much because we fear God so little." — *Gurnall*.

Dan is the rereward

b Nu. ii. 34; Song vi. 10.

"All confidence which is not absolute and entire is dangerous; for how little soever you have revealed of your secret to a friend, you have already said too much if you think it not safe to make him privy to all particulars." — *J. Beaumont*.

Moses invites Hobab

c Ex. ii. 18.

d Ju. i. 16; iv. 11; 1 S. xv. 6; Matt. xxi. 28, 29.

"An aged father says to his son, who wishes to go to some other village, 'My son, leave me not in my old age; you are now my eyes.' It is said of a good servant, 'he is eyes to his master.'" — *Roberts*.

18—24. (18-20) **Reuben . . Simeon . . Gad**, see Nu. ii. 10-16. (21) **other**, i. e. the Gershonites and Merarites mentioned in vs. 17. **did . . come**,^a that the tab. might be ready for the reception of the sacred vessels. (22-24) **Ephraim . . Manasseh . . Benjamin**, see Nu. ii. 18-24.

The order of Israel's march. — I. God, a lover of order, plans the march. II. God, the object of worship, jealously guards His honor on the march. III. God, the author of deliverance, guides the march. IV. God, the source of strength, protects the march.

Spiritual warfare. — Just when the battle was about to turn with the Ironsides, and the Cavaliers were coming on with one of Rupert's hot charges, ready to break the line, and the brave old Ironsides were half inclined to turn, up came the general, old Noll, riding on his horse, and they passed the word along, "Tis he, boys! here he comes!" and every man grew into a giant at once; they stood like iron columns, like walls of granite, and the Cavaliers as they came on broke like waves against rocks, and dashed away, and were heard of no more. It was the presence of the man that fired each soldier. And so it is now with us. We believe in Jesus Christ. We know that He is with His church. He was dead, but rose again. He has gone to heaven, but His Spirit is with us, — King of kings and Lord of lords is He. If He seems to sleep in the midst of our ship, yet He sleeps with His hand on the helm, and He will steer the vessel rightly; and now the love that we bear His name steers our souls to holiness, to self-denial, to seek after God, to make full proof of the faith and fellowship of the gospel, to seek to become like God, and to be absorbed into God that He may be all in all. This is what was wanted — a stimulus potent enough, under God's grace, to break through the barriers of sin. — *Spurgeon*.

25—28. (25-27) **rereward**, it was the duty of the division of Dan, which brought up the rear, to see to all the stragglers and the feeble, by no means an unimportant duty. **Dan . . Asher . . Naphtali**, see Nu. ii. 25-31. (28) **according, etc.**,^b i. e. acc. to the order of march.

The use of war. — I believe in war. I believe there are times when it must be taken. I believe in it as a medicine. Medicine is not good to eat, but when you are sick it is good to take. War is not a part of the gospel, but while men and the world are traveling on a plain where they are not capable of comprehending the gospel, a rude form of justice is indispensable, though it is very low down. If you go to a plain still higher, war seems to be a very poor instrumentality. And if you go yet higher and higher, till you reach that sphere where the crowned Sufferer stands, how hateful and hideous war seems! In the earlier periods of society it is recognized as having a certain value; but its value is the very lowest, and at every step upward, till you come to this central Divine exhibition, it loses in value. Always it is a rude and uncertain police of nations. It is never good. It is simply better than something worse. Physical force is the alternative of moral influence; if you have not one you must have the other. — *Beecher*.

29—32. (22) **Hobab** (*beloved*), prob. a bro. of Jethro. **Raguel**, or **Reuel**, **father-in-law**, prob. *bro.-in-law*; the Heb. word = any relation by marriage. **I . . you**, the Land of Promise. **we . . good**, material, religious good. **for, etc.**, God had promised Israel all good things. (30) **I . . go**, timid, doubtful. But he seems to have been persuaded by Moses.^d (31) **thou . . eyes**, the gen. direction, indicated by the pillar, might be supplemented by human sagacity and experience. Hobab was acquainted with the locality, and inasmuch as much water and fuel was needed by so large a host, it was necessary to have some one who was familiar with the desert. "This would be the more necessary, as from the scarcity of water in those regions, the Arabs were in the habit of digging pits or cisterns, which, when they left, they would close up with stones or sands, so that it would be difficult to discover them again. These hidden places Hobab, as having been born or brought up in the desert, would be apt to be better acquainted with, or more easily able to find, than the stranger people who now required his services." — *Bush*. It would also encourage H. to be told that he would not be a *useless* member of the camp. (32) **goodness . . thee**, the Targ. of Jonathan adds, "in the division of the land."

True spirit of Christianity. — 1. The spirit of true religion is social and benevolent. The Christian is not content to travel alone to the place which God promised to give him; but invites others to accompany him, saying,

"Come thou with us." 2. The exercise of this spirit should be first directed to those who are most closely related to us. Moses invited Hobab, his brother-in-law. Next to our own spiritual well-being we should seek that of our own kindred, — parents that of their children, the husband that of his wife, *etc.* Moses holds out to Hobab two inducements to accompany them — 1. The benefits he would receive. "We will do thee good : for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. . . . And it shall be if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee." 2. The benefits he would confer. The hope of deriving benefit did not prevail with Hobab : he said unto Moses, "I will not go ; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred." Then Moses tried to persuade him with this inducement, that his presence would be a benefit to them : "he said, Leave us not, I pray thee ; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes." Hobab appears to have been an "experienced Bedouin sheikh, to whom Moses looked for the safety of his cumbrous caravan in the new and difficult ground before them. The tracks and passes of that 'waste howling wilderness' were all familiar to him, and his practiced sight should be to them 'instead of eyes' in discerning the distant clumps of verdure which betokened the wells or springs for the daily encampment, and in giving timely warning of the approach of the Amalekites or other spoilers of the desert."

The solicitude of the godly.—I have seen birds sitting on the boughs and watching while other birds were feeding below. They would hop from twig to twig, and look wistfully down upon them ; then, gathering courage, they would spring from their perch and back again, and finding that it did not hurt them, they would at last join the outmost circle, and feed with the others. How many faces I have seen in these galleries, wearing a wistful look as they gazed down upon us while we were celebrating this ordinance of communion. May God give all such wings, that they may fly down and be among His people, and partake with them of heavenly food.—*Beecher.*
Guides in the desert.—A hybeer is a guide, from the Arabic word hubbar, to inform, instruct, or direct, because they are used to do this office to the caravans traveling through the desert in all its directions, whether to Egypt and back again, the coast of the Red Sea, or the countries of Sûdan, and the western extremities of Africa. He is a man of great consideration, knowing perfectly the situation and properties of all kinds of water to be met with on the route ; the distance of wells ; whether occupied by enemies or not ; and, if so, the way to avoid them with the least inconvenience. It is also necessary for him to know the places occupied by the simooms, and the seasons of their blowing in those parts of the desert ; likewise those occupied by moving sands. He generally belongs to some powerful tribe of Arabs inhabiting these deserts, whose protection he makes use of to assist his caravans, or protect them in time of danger, and handsome rewards are always in his power to distribute on such occasions ; but now that the Arabs in those deserts are everywhere without government, the trade between Abyssinia and Cairo given over, and that between Sûdan and the metropolis much diminished, the importance of the office of hybeer, and its consideration, have fallen in proportion, and with these the safe conduct.—*Bruce.*

33-36. (33) from . . Lord, Sinai. three . . journey, wh. might be one whole day and parts of two others. ark . . them,* though the usual place for the ark was in the centre of the host, it may be that on this occasion it was borne in the van as when the people crossed the Jordan and at the taking of Jericho. search . . them, prob. at Kibroth-hattaa'vah.^b (34) cloud . . day,* providing a canopy for those who were no longer sheltered fr. the sun by their tents, see Ps. cv. 3. when . . camp, out of the tents of encampment. (35) when . . forward, *etc.*,^c the march began with a prayer. Victory hoped for fr. the presence of God. Rise . . thee, "The sixty-eighth psalm, which we have learnt to associate with the wonders of Pentecost, and the triumphs of the church on earth, seems to be an expansion of Moses' morning prayer."—*Pulp. Bib.* Cromwell at battle of Dunbar, as he saw the King's troops fleeing, repeated this prayer. (36) when . . said, *etc.*,^d prayer ended the march.^e Return . . Israel, the meaning of the prayer is that the Divine Presence symbolized by the cloud would upon halting return and abide as the safety, comfort and glory of the chosen people.

Moses' prayers.—I. "Rise up, Lord." Rise—1. To scatter Thine enemies ;

B. c. 1490.

"I will tell you," says Izaak Walton, "that I have heard a grave divine say, that God has two dwellings, one in heaven and the other in a meek and thankful heart."

Dr. Payson, when racked with pain, and near to death, exclaimed, "Oh, what a blessed thing it is to lose one's will ! Since I have lost my will I have found happiness. There can be no such thing as disappointment to me, for I have no desire but that God's will be accomplished."

"God may change a promise, but not break a promise."

"The Lord shall give that which is good. He may change a temporal for a spiritual blessing. He may not increase 'the basket and the store,' but He may increase the 'faith and the patience'; He may cense to give His people pieces of silver, but He may give them treasures of gold."

Moses' prayer at the start and the rest

a De. i. 33; Jos. iii. 3-6.

A general who leads his troops does not necessarily go before them.

b Nu. xi. 24-34; xxxiii. 16.

c Ex. xlii. 21; Ne. ix. 12, 19.

d Ps. lxxviii. 1; cxxxii. 8; cxlv. 1-8.

e Ex. xlix. 45, 46; xxxiii. 14, 16; Is. lxiii. 8, 9; De. i. 10.

f "The one betokened the going

B. C. 1496.

forth of God
against His ene-
mies; the other
His gathering His
own people to
Himself; the one
was the pledge of
victory, the other
the earnest of re-
pose."—*Spk. Com.*

2. To endue Thy people with strength and courage for further journeys; 3. To provide for them by the way; 4. To guide them in the right road. II. "Return, O Lord." Return—1. To Thy numerous people; 2. In mercy and love; what is sinful, forgive; 3. As a guardian over them, that they may have no cause for fear.—*J. Braddon.*

Importance of prayer.—As every sacrifice was to be seasoned with salt, so every undertaking and every affliction of the creature must be sanctified with prayer; nay, as it sheweth the excellency of gold that it is laid upon silver itself, so it speaketh the excellency of prayer, that not only natural and civil, but even religious and spiritual, actions are overlaid with prayer. We pray not only before we eat or drink our bodily nourishment, but also before we feed on the bread of the Word and the bread in the sacrament. Prayer is requisite to make every providence and every ordinance blessed to us; prayer is needful to make our particular callings successful. Prayer is the guard to secure the fort-royal of the heart; prayer is the porter to keep the door of the lips; prayer is the strong hilt which defendeth the hands; prayer perfumes every relation; prayer helps us to profit by every condition; prayer is the chemist that turns all into gold; prayer is the master-workman; if that be out of the way, the whole trade stands still, or goeth backward. What the key is to the watch, that prayer is to religion, it winds it up, and sets it going.—*Swinstock.*

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

Taberah

a Ps. lxxviii, 21.

b Ps. lxxix, 5.

c De. ix, 22; He. xii, 29; Is. lv, 4; xxx, 27; xxxiii, 14.

1-3. (1) **complained**, no specific ground of complaint named, but we can hardly be mistaken if we say that the fatigue of the march after a year of idleness, together with the desolation and the unknown terrors of the land, spread a gen. dissatisfaction among the people. **fire . . them**, perh. lightning,^a some commentators say it might have been a flash of fire out of the pillar such as killed Nadab and Abihu; others say the fire was internal, see Ps. lxxviii, 21. (2) **quenched**,^b bef. it extended over the whole camp, not by the people; the Heb. indicates that it went out. It came unbidden, it went out without human means. (3) **Taberah**,^c (*place of burning*), prob. the name given to the part consumed.

Taberah.—Here we have—I. Man sinning against the goodness of God. II. God recognizing the sin of man. III. Suffering men seeking the intercession of the good. IV. The intercession of the good resulting in blessing to men. V. The employment of a transient judgment as a permanent warning.

Murmuring, a time-destroying sin.—The murmurer spends much precious time in musing—in musing how to get out of such a trouble, how to get off such a yoke, how to be rid of such a burden, how to revenge himself for such a wrong; how to supplant such a person, how to reproach those that are above him, and how to affront those that are below him; and a thousand other ways murmurers have to expend that precious time that some would redeem with a world. Ah, murmurers, murmurers! you who by your murmuring trifle away so many golden hours and seasons of mercy, have you no God to honor? Have you no Christ to believe in? Have you no hearts to change, no sins to be pardoned, no souls to save, no hell to escape, no heaven to seek after? Oh! if you have, why do you spend so much of your precious time in murmuring against God, against men, against this or that thing?—*J. Brooks.*

Complaint.

I think we are too ready with complaint
In this fair world of God's. Had we no hope
Indeed beyond the zenith and the slope
Of yon grey bank of sky, we might grow faint
To muse upon eternity's constraint
Round our aspirant souls. But since the scope
Must widen early, is it well to droop
For a few days consumed in loss and taint?
O pusillanimous heart! be comforted,
And, like a cheerful traveler, take the road,
Singing beside the hedge. What if the bread
Be bitter in thine inn, and thou unshod
To meet the flints—At least it may be said,
"Because the way is short, I thank Thee, God."

Elizabeth B. Browning.

"The surest way
to prevent sedi-
tions, if the times
do bear it, is to
take away the
matter of them;
for, if there be fuel
prepared, it is
hard to tell whence
the spark shall
come that shall set
it on fire."—*Lord
Bacon.*

"Tarquin the
Proud, being asked
what was the best
mode of governing
a conquered city,
replied by beating
down with the staff
all the tallest
popples in his gar-
den."—*Levy.*

4-9. (4) **mixed multitude**, the riff-raff, the hangers-on, *see* Ex. xii. 38^a again, the murmurings of this rabble affected the whole people, so that, notwithstanding the punishment just inflicted (*vss.* 1, 2), they fell back again immediately. **give . . . eat**, their flock, *etc.*, being required for sacrifices. (5) **remember**, their memory might have been better employed. "They did not remember the brick-kilns, and the task-masters, the voice of the oppressor, and the smart of the whip. These are forgotten by the ungrateful people." — **Henry. fish**,^a abundant in Egypt. **melons**, watermelons; still abundant in E. **leeks**, Heb. *Katsir* (grass), so called from grass-like appearance; prob. *chives*. **onions**,^b mild, pleasant taste. (6) **soul . . . away**, they were languid; wanting in vital force, lacking juicy, savory food. (7) **manna**, *see* Ex. xvi. 14, 31. **bdellium**, *see* Ge. ii. 12. (8) **ground . . . baked**, hence must have been diff. fr. the tarfa-manna. (9) **dew**, *see* Ex. xvi. 13, 14.

Partial memories.—I. Observe what they ought to have remembered. 1. What they had suffered; 2. What God had done for them; 3. What He then was doing; 4. What He had promised to do. II. Observe what they chiefly dwelt upon. 1. Creature comforts, not spiritual deprivations; 2. Personal satisfaction, not national freedom. III. Observe the effects of this partial memory of the past. 1. It led to discontent; 2. It resulted in Divine anger: 3. It prolonged their stay in the wilderness.

Manna.—The natural products of the Arabian deserts and other Oriental regions, which bear the name of manna, have not the qualities or uses ascribed to the manna of Scripture. They are all condiments or medicines rather than food, stimulating or purgative rather than nutritious; they are produced only three or four months in the year, from May to August, and not all the year round; they come only in small quantities, never affording anything like 15,000,000 of pounds a week, which must have been requisite for the subsistence of the whole Israelite camp, since each man had an omer (or three English quarts) a day, and that for forty years; they can be kept for a long time, and do not become useless in a day or two; they are just as liable to deteriorate on the Sabbath as on any other day; nor does a double quantity fall on the day preceding the Sabbath, nor would natural products cease at once and forever, as the manna is represented as ceasing in the book of Joshua. The manna of Scripture we therefore regard as wholly miraculous, and not in any respect a product of nature.—*C. E. Stowe.*

10-15. (10) **weep**,^c it was general. **door**, none hid their grief. **displeased**,^d it was more than this meek man could endure. (11) **hast . . . servant?** in making him the leader of such a people. In his displeasure he was committing the same sin as the people, for by this attitude he was murmuring against God. (12) **have I**, *etc.*,^e scarcely could a parent have endured so much. (13) **whence**, *etc.*,^f but it did not follow that they were to have what they wept for, and the Lord never expected Moses to give it. (15) **if . . . me**, apparently leaving me. **let . . . wretchedness**, "the failure of all my efforts."

Earthly afflictions.—Our Heavenly Father sends us frequent troubles to— I. Try our faith. If our faith be worth anything, it will stand the test. Gilt is afraid of the fire, but gold is not. II. Glorify Himself: for He is greatly glorified in the graces of His people which are His own handiwork. The wisdom and power of the great Workman are discovered by the trials through which His vessels of mercy are permitted to pass. III. Heighten future joy. There must be shades in the picture to bring out the beauty of the lights.—*Spurgeon.*

Afflictions may be full of mercies.—In one of the German picture galleries is a painting called "Cloudland." It hangs at the end of a long gallery, and, at first sight it looks like a huge, repulsive daub of confused color, without form or comeliness. As you walk toward it the picture begins to take shape. It proves to be a mass of exquisite little cherub faces, like those at the head of the canvas in Raphael's "Madonna San Sisto." If you come close to the picture you see only an innumerable company of little angels and cherubims. How often the soul that is frightened by trials sees nothing but a confused and repulsive mass of broken expectations and crushed hopes! But if that soul, instead of fleeing away into unbelief and despair, would only draw up near to God, it would soon discover that the cloud was full of angels of mercy. In one cherub face it would see, "Whom I love, I chasten." Another angel

B. C. 1491.

sighing for
Egypt

a Ex. vii. 18.

b Acc. to Herod. ii. 125, the ordinary food of the workmen at the pyramids; and still nearly the sole food of the poor. *Hasselquist.*

"The tarfa exudations are in composition and consistency somewhat like honey. Who could grind honey?" *Bonar, Sinai*, 148.

"In great hunger or thirst the people say, 'Our soul is withered.' 'More than this, sir, I cannot do; my spirit is withered within me.'"—*Roberts.*

displeasure
of Moses

c Ps. xciv. 8-11.

d Nu. xli. 3.

e Is. xl. 9, 11.

f Job v. 1; 1 K. xix. 4; Jon. iv. 3.

"Thus Moses in his candor ingenuously confesses his own weakness here as elsewhere."—*Wordsworth.*

"A memory without blot or contamination must be an exquisite treasure.—an inexhaustible source of our refreshment."—*Charlotte Brontë.*

B. C. 1490.

the seventy elders

a Lu. x. 1-20; Ex. xviii. 21, 22; xxiv. 1, 9.

b No. ix. 20; 1 S. x. 6; De. xvi. 18; Ac. vi. 1-6.

c Ex. xix. 10; xvi. 7; Ps. lxxviii. 29; cvi. 15; Ac. vii. 39.

d Ex. xii. 37; Ma. xv. 33; Mk. viii. 4.

e Ps. 1. 10-12; Is. 1. 2; lxx. 1; Nu. xxiii. 19; Ge. xviii. 14.

"A surfeit of the sweetest things the deepest loathing to the stomach brings." — *Shakespeare*.

the elders prophesy

Eldad and Medad

f Nu. xli. 5; Ex. xxxiii. 9; De. xxxi. 15.

g "Just as a person who kindles a thousand flames from one, does not lessen the first, whilst he communicates light to the others, so God did not diminish the grace imparted to Moses by the fact that He communicated it to the seventy." — *Theodoret*.

h It was a sign for the occasion. *i. e.* to assure their own minds, and to accredit them to Moses.

i Ex. xxxiii. 11; De. xxxiv. 9.

j 1 Co. xiv. 5.

would say, "All things work together for good to them that love God." — *T. L. Cuyler*.

16—23. (16) **seventy**,^a to this the Sanhedrim is traced. Notice the forbearance of Jehovah in not rebuking Moses for his weakness. (17) **take . . them**,^b not that Moses should have less; but that they should have of the same spirit. (18) **therefore . . eat**, their desire was to be granted, but in the same way as He answered them when they desired a king; He gave them one in His anger; *see also* Ps. cvi. 16. (19) **ye . . day**, *etc.*,^c they should have more than they asked for. (20) **loathsome**, they were to find their punishment in the answer to their prayer. "Till you be glutton with it, and vomit it up so violently, that it shall come not only out at your mouth, but at your nostrils." — *Patrick*. (21) **Moses**, even he is astonished at the breadth of the promise. (22) **shall**, *etc.*,^d he prob. wonders what they will do for sacrifices. (23) **and . . Moses**, *etc.*,^e He reproved, but did not punish M.

Moses in error. — 1. The most eminent saints continually need the grace of God. 2. It behooves us to be slow to censure men. We should rather take heed to ourselves, that we fail not.

"Search thine own heart. What paineth thee
In others, in thyself may be;
All dust is frail, all flesh is weak;
Be thou the true man thou dost seek." — *Whittier*.

No failure of power with God. — Amongst all the gods of the heathen Jupiter was in the greatest esteem, as the father and king of gods, and was called Jupiter, *quasi juvenis pater*, a helping father; yet (as the poets feign) he wept when he could not set Sarpedon at liberty; such was the imbecility and impotency of this master-god of the heathen. But the hand of our God is never shortened that it cannot help. He is ever able to relieve us, always ready to deliver us. Amongst all the gods there is none like unto Him, none can do like unto His works, He is God Omnipotent. — *J. Spencer*.

"He is able,
He is willing: doubt no more."

24—30. (24) **set . . tabernacle**, in a semi-circle bef. the door. (25) **Lord . . cloud**,^f the soaring cloud descended to the door. **took . . him**, of the same spirit.^g **prophesied**, an ecstatic utterance prompted by a divine influence, not necessarily foretelling the future. **and . . cease**, *R. V.*, "but they did so no more;" *i. e.* they prophesied now, but not afterwards.^h (26) **Eldad** (whom *God loves* = Theophilus., **Medad** (*love*). (28) **Joshua**, *see* Ex. xvii. 9. **Nun** (*fish*). **my . . them**, Joshua thought these men were setting up an independant authority in the camp. (29) **Moses**, *etc.*,^j the true servant of God regards his Master's rather than his own glory.

Joshua's envy was a violation of the law of brotherly kindness. — To envy is always to outrage Christian charity. "Charity envieth not." Mark the evil features of this vice as it is portrayed by Socrates: "An envious man waxeth lean with the fatness of his neighbors. Envy is the daughter of pride, the author of murder and revenge, the beginner of secret sedition, and the perpetual tormentor of virtue. Envy is the filthy slime of the soul; a venom, a poison, or quicksilver which consumeth the flesh, and drieth up the marrow of the bones." How much more loathsome should it appear to us, who should view it in the light of the teaching and spirit of Jesus Christ! *Envy of the gifts of others*. — Lord, I perceive my soul deeply guilty of envy. By my good will I would have none prophecy but mine own Moses. I had rather Thy work were undone, than done better by another than by myself: had rather that Thy enemies were all alive, than that I should kill but my thousand, and others their ten thousands of them. My corruption repines at other men's better parts, as if what my soul wants of them in substance she would supply in swelling. Dispossess me, Lord, of this bad spirit, and turn my envy into holy emulation. Let me labor to exceed them in pains who excel me in parts; and knowing that my sword, in cutting down sin, hath a duller edge, let me strike with the greater force: yea, make other men's gifts to be mine, by making me thankful to Thee for them. It was some comfort to Naomi that, wanting a son herself, she brought up Ruth's child in her bosom. Let me feed, and foster, and nourish, and cherish the graces in others, honoring their persons, praising their parts, and glorifying Thy name, who hath given such gifts unto them. — *T. Fuller*.

31—35. (31) wind . . Lord,* a strong wind fr. the S. E., showing that Jehovah used natural means to work his miracles. sea, Red S. quails, see Ex. xvi. 13. let . . camp, threw them down—*i. e.* the wind beat them down. two . . earth, not that they fell in a heap of two cubits thickness; but being driven downward by the wind, flew along ab. breast high fr. the ground, and so were easily caught. Had they been piled two cubits high, the under ones must have died, and the Israelite could eat nothing that was suffocated. (32) gathered, having caught, ten homers,^b ab. 20 bush., see Le. xxvii. 16. spread, *etc.*, prob. to dry in the sun. (33) smote . . plague,* result of eating so much of an unaccustomed food. (34) Kibroth-hattaavah (*graves of longing*).^d (35) Hazeroth (*villages*), sup. to be 'Ain-el-Hudhera, ab. 18 hrs. fr. Sinai.

Murmuring hurts not God, but wounds us.—I have read of Cæsar, that, having prepared a great feast for his nobles and friends, it fell out that the day appointed was so extremely foul that nothing could be done to the honor of their meeting; whereupon he was so displeased and enraged that he commanded all of them that had bows to shoot up their arrows at Jupiter, their chief god, as in defiance of him for that rainy weather; which, when they did, their arrows fell short of heaven, and fell upon their own heads, so that many of them were very sorely wounded. So all our mutterings and murmurings, which are so many arrows shot at God Himself, will return upon our own pates, or hearts; they reach not Him, but they will hit us; they hurt not Him, but they will wound us; therefore it is better to be mute than to murmur; it is dangerous to contend with One who is a consuming fire (Heb. xii. 29).—*Thomas Brooks.*

"We, ignorant of ourselves
Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
Deny us for our good; so find we profit
By losing of our prayers."—*Shakespeare.*

"Heaven is most just, and of our pleasant vices
Makes instruments to scourge us."

Quails.—From the apparent improbability of quails, whose favorite resort is moist pasture land, being found in such vast flights in the desert, it has been suggested that the Hebrew word *selav* does not mean a quail, but a stork, or some other desert bird. But observation of the habits of the quail shows the accuracy of the account; and the name *selav* is still applied to the quail in the Arabic and its cognate tongues. The time of the first miraculous supply of quails, and probably of the second also, was in the month of April, the exact season when the quail performs its migration in vast flocks. We are told that "at *even* the quails came up and covered the camp," and it is well known that the quail, like most other birds of passage, performs its migrations only at night. Again, we are told that "there went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea." From their weak power of flight, the quails instinctively select the shortest sea passage, and avail themselves of any island as a resting-place. Thus the Mediterranean islands, as Malta, Capri, and others, have frequently been known to be covered with these birds for several days together at the time of the spring migrations, when the wind was adverse. They spend the winter in Central Africa; and in returning to Syria, skirt the western side of the Red Sea, crossing its narrowest part. They always fly with the wind, and wait till it is favorably before they commence to cross. After their passage, they are so utterly exhausted that, as is sometimes the case with woodcocks in England, they may be captured in any number by the hand. Their flight is always very low, which is doubtless what is meant by their being "as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth;" and finally we are told that the people spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp—*i. e.* dried them for food in the sun, as they had learned to do in Egypt, where Herodotus tells us the Egyptians cooked the quail after this simple fashion (ii. 77). I have myself been fortunate enough to be a witness of this quail migration both in African and Asiatic deserts. I have seen them in the morning covering many acres, where not one had been on the evening before. The wind on one occasion was ahead; and though hundreds were slaughtered, they did not leave for two days, when the wind veered in their favor, and they as suddenly disappeared, leaving scarce a straggler behind.—*Tristram.*

B. c. 1490.

the quails
Kibroth-hatta-
avah,
Hazeroth

a Ps. lxxviii. 26—28;
cv. 40.

b Ez. xlv. 11.

c Ps. lxxviii. 30, 31.

d Nu. xxxiii. 17;
De. ix. 22.

"Some are cursed
with the fullness
of satiety, and
how can they bear
the ills of life,
when its very plea-
sures fatigue
them?"—*Cotton.*

"To find fault with
the trials Christ
sends you is to put
(Christ himself on
trial."

"Trials come from
Christ or self; in
the one case, sub-
mit; in the other
case repent."

"There are plenty
of things to fret
about. Even Holy
Writ says we are
prone to trouble as
sparks fly upward.
But even to the
sparks flying up-
ward, in the black-
est of smoke, there
is a blue sky above;
and the less time
they waste on the
road, the sooner
they will reach it.
All fretting is time
wasted on the
road."—*Helen
Hunt Jackson.*

"Satiety comes of
a too often repe-
tition; and he who
will not give him-
self leisure to be
thirsty, can never
find the true plea-
sure of drinking."
—*Montaigne.*

"It is probable
that God punishes
the wish as much
as He does the
actual perform-
ance; for what is
performance but a
wish perfected
with power? and
what is a wish but
a desire wanting
opportunity of
action."—*South.*

B. C. 1490.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

Miriam's rebellion

a Josephus, Philo.
Kurtz, Keil.
Ewald, Winer,
Baumgarten.

b Ex. xv. 20; Mi.
vi. 4.

c Ps. lxxvi. 7-9.

Divine anger

d Ge. xv. 1; xlv.
2; Job xxxiii. 15;
Ez i. 1; Lu. i. 11;
Ac. x. 11.

e Ps cv. 26; He.
iii. 2-5.

f Ex. xxxiii. 11;
De. xxxiv. 10; 1
Co. xiii. 12.

"Highest when
it stoops lowest
before the holy
throne; throws
down its crown
abased; forgets
itself, admires,
and breathes
adoring praise."
— Pollok.

Miriam's leprosy

g De. xxiv. 9; 2 K.
v. 27; xv. 5; 2 Ch.
xxvi. 19, 20.

h 2 S. xxiv. 10; Ps.
lxxx. 5; xxv. 11;
Ps. xxxviii. 1-7.

i Le. xiii. 44-46.

j Ja. v. 15, 16.

"Guilt, though it
may attain tem-
poral splendor, can
never confer real
happiness. The

1-5. (1) **Miriam**, the sister of Moses and Aaron. **Ethiopian**, Heb. *Cushite*. Not likely to be Zipporah, who was prob. dead.^a Besides if Z. were meant why had they not spoken bef. (2) **hath . . us?**^b this to disparage Moses. (3) **meek . . earth,**^c as being the highest officially, yet without pride. (4) **come . . three**, God would show them the diff. measure of His communications.

The meekness of Moses. — I. Was manifested most conspicuously on many occasions. II. Was marked by the humble surrender of His will to God. III. Was the more striking in that he was so learned. IV. Exceeded that of all men. V. Yet was not absolutely perfect.

"No might nor greatness in mortality

Can censure 'scape; back-wounding calumny

The whitest virtue strikes: What king so strong,

Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?" — *Shakespeare*.

Patience under injustice. — Rowland Hill, when once scurrilously attacked in one of the public journals, was urged by a zealous friend to bring a legal action in defense: to this he replied with calm, unruffled dignity — "I shall neither answer the libel, nor prosecute the writer, and that for two reasons: first, because, in attempting the former, I should probably be betrayed into unbecoming violence of temper and expression, to my own grief, and the wounding of my friends; and in the next place, I have learned by experience *that no man's character can be eventually injured but by his own acts.*" — *Gleanings*.

6-9. (6) **If . . you, etc.,**^d to an ordinary prophet, occasional special communications shall be made. (7) **my . . so**, not an ordinary prophet. Jehovah revealed himself in a different way than stated in vs. 6. **faithful . . house,**^e and like a faithful servant does not need special instructions in the will of God. (8) **speak . . mouth,**^f familiarly. **apparently, distinctly. not . . speeches**, parables, enigmas, which require wit and ingenuity to interpret. **and . . behold**, God would in some way manifest Himself to the eye of Moses, not the essential nature of God, which no man can see, but some form. **afraid, etc.**, seeing his vast superiority. (9) **them**, Miriam and Aaron.

Aaron and Miriam reproved. — We shall consider these words as expressing God's displeasure against those who — I. Oppose the civil magistrate. II. Disregard the ministers of the gospel. III. Neglect the Lord Jesus Christ. — *Simeon*.

Condition of communion. — Birds cannot converse with men unless they have a rational nature put into them; nor can men converse with God, unless, being made new creatures, they partake of the Divine nature. Communion with God is a mystery to most. Every one that hangs about the court doth not speak with the king; all that meddle with holy duties, and, as it were, hang about the court of heaven, have not communion with God; it is only the new creature enjoys God's presence in ordinances, and sweetly converses with him as a child with a father. — *T. Watson*.

10-13. (10) **cloud . . tabernacle**, i. e. it went away from its temporary station at the door of the tab. and reared itself aloft above the tab. and the host. **Miriam**,^g prob. the instigator of the rebellion. **leprous**, she was so in heart bef., but this involved social and religious excommunication, as well as being a stigma of Divine displeasure. **Aaron**, perh. exempted fr. punishment bec. his leprosy would have interfered with his official duties. (11) **lay . . us,**^h he may have expected it to app. on himself; he confesses and repents of his sin. (12) **be . . dead**, unnumbered among the people.ⁱ **of whom, etc.**, as a stillborn child with decomposition begun. (13) **Moses, etc.,**^j moved by his bro.'s intercession and his sist.'s condition.

The prayer of Moses for Miriam. — Consider — I. The prayer. How conclusively does it attest the excellency of the character of Moses! How worthy of power is one so large-hearted and forgiving. The prayer was — 1. Explicit. Nothing vague. He prays not for wrong-doers in the mass, but for one in particular, and that one who had wronged him. Many will pray general prayers heartily enough. Lips, willing to say, "Have mercy on us, miserable sin-

ners," refuse to say, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner; 2. Earnest. Did he see the Skekinah receding (*vs.* 10), and would have God return at once? God's withdrawals excite prayer; 3. Generous; "Heal her now." Not make her penitent, or cause her to beg forgiveness, and then heal her, or remove the disease after a certain time; but "Heal her now;" 4. Well-timed. He waited not till the memory of her sin and his wrong were fainter; at once his cry goes up. We are not "to give place unto wrath." He gives place who gives time. — *R. A. Griffin.*

Consciousness of guilt. — However vauntingly men may bear themselves in the hour of prosperous villainy, proofs enough have existed of the fears of guilt, when the hour of calamity approaches. Why did our first parents hide themselves after their sin, when they heard the voice of the Lord in the garden? Why did Cain alarm himself at being pursued by the people of the earth? Why shrunk Belshazzar from the handwriting on the wall? Adam had before heard the voice of the Lord, and trembled not; Cain knew that no witness of the murder of his brother existed; Belshazzar understood not the meaning of the writing upon the wall; — and yet they all, after the commission of their several deeds of sin, trembled at the voices that were heard, and the signs that were seen. Whence, then, was this? It was because conscience told them that there is an Eye to which all hearts are open, and whispered the important truth, which has since been proclaimed aloud to all the world, that, "doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth." — *Matthews.*

Conscience is harder than our enemies,
Knows more, accuses with more nicety,
Nor needs to question Rumor if we fall
Below the perfect model of our thought. — *Geo. Eliot.*

14-16. (14) if . . days, how much more shall the fact of the leprosy be marked; this, too, a mark of the disapprobation of God, which must be endured for a certain period. (15) *Miriam . . days,** see *Le. xiii. 4, 5.* The people would learn that not even their leaders could sin with impunity and that God is no respecter of persons. *people . . again,^b* sug. of the fact that when officials sin the community suffers. (16) *Paran,^c* see *Nu. x. 12.*

Lessons from the sin of Miriam and Aaron. — Consider—I. The Divine judgment because of the sin of Miriam and Aaron. II. The Divine judgment leading to personal humiliation. III. The remarkable acknowledgment of the eminence of Moses, the servant of the Lord. IV. The distinguished magnanimity and grace of Moses. V. The great power of the intercession of good. VI. The justice and mercy of God as manifested in His treatment of Miriam. VII. The sin of one person checking the progress of an entire nation. "The people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in"

Spitting in the face. — Miriam had greatly offended God, and, therefore, she was to be as a daughter whose father had spit in her face. In *De. xxv. 9,* the widow was to spit in the face of her late husband's brother if he refused to marry her. And *Job (xxx. 10)* in his great misery says of his enemies "they spare not to spit in my face;" and in reference to our Saviour, they did "spit in His face." The most contemptuous, the most exasperating and degrading action, which one man can do to another is to spit in his face. — *Roberts.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-8. (1, 2) *search, etc.,^d* examine for themselves and for the people, the ruler, a man of judgment and experience, so that their testimony would be worth much. (3) *from . . Paran, i. e. fr. Kadesh.** (4) *Shammua (rumor). Zaccur (mindful).* (5) *Shaphat (judge). Hori (dweller in caverns).* (6) *Caleb^f (dog). Jephunneh (beholder).* (7) *Igal (God will avenge). Joseph (he will add).* (8) *Oshea (deliverance),* aft. called *Joshua.*

Glimpses of the better land.—I. The search. II. The retreat. III. An emblem of God's dealings with His people. 1. The children of Israel were sent back to the wilderness on account of their sin; 2. While they are sent back in judgment, they go back of their own accord; 3. Through the fruit of sin, and the token of God's righteous displeasure, all was overruled for their good; 4. Though chastened and afflicted they are not cast off: they are Divinely delivered, sustained, guided, and chastened. Improvement:—(1)

B c. 1490.

evident consequences of our crimes, long survive their commission and, like the ghosts of the murdered, forever haunt the steps of the malefactor. The paths of virtue, though seldom those of worldly greatness, are always those of pleasantness and peace." — *Sir Walter Scott.*

"Behold her guilty looks; for guilt will speak, though tongues were out of use." — *Shakespeare.*

Moses intercedes for Miriam

a Nu. v. 2, 3; Le. xiii. 4-6; Ps. ciii. 2-4, 8-14.

b Ge. vi. 1, 2; 2 Co. xi. 29; Ro. xv. 1-4.

c Ge. xxi. 20, 21.

"The ancient councils and synods as is noted by the ecclesiastical story, when they deprived any bishop, never recorded the offense, but buried it in perpetual silence." — *Lord Bacon.*

the twelve spies

d De. i. 19, 22.

e Nu. xlii. 26.

f Jos. xiv. 6-14.

"The eye as it is used will either be a help or a snare; either it will let in the sparks of temptation, or enkindle the fire of true de-

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votion. These are the windows which God hath placed in the top of the building, that man from thence may contemplate God's works and take a prospect of heaven, the place of our eternal residence." —*T. Manton.*

"He sees with other eyes than theirs; where they behold a sun, he spies a Deity." —*Young.*

Origen, op. ii. 293; *Bp. Hall*, Cont.; *J. Saurin*, Dis. Hist. ii. 392, Diss. 557; *Dr. Hawker*, Wks. p. 387.

α He. iv. 8.

"Let no man presume that he can see beforehand into the ways of Providence. His part is to contemplate them in the past, and trust in them for the future; but so trusting, to act always upon motives of human prudence, directed by religious principles." —*Southey.*

their commission

b 1 Co. ii. 9, 10; Is. lxi. 4.

"To the natural eye this world is opaque, and shows only its surface; to

Let young believers not be high-minded, but fear; (2) Let backsliders remember and weep; (3) Let tried and troubled saints take fresh courage.

—*J. Burns.*

Grandfather's eyes.—Never was little Myra better pleased than when going for a walk with her grandfather; for he was so kind and gentle, and talked to her about the things they saw in so pleasant and cheerful a manner that it was quite a treat to her. If they saw any ants at work, "Oh! oh!" he would say, "what makes you so busy, when none of you have any rent or tax to pay? But I see how it is: you are at work for one another. Remember, Myra, we must not be idle; for when we have nothing to do for ourselves, we may always help other people." If they saw a bee winging his way from flower to flower, he was almost sure to speak of it. "Well, Mr. Buzzabout, will you tell us what you are doing? But we understand it very well, and will learn a lesson from you. Mind, Myra, that, as the bees get honey from every flower, you and I get good from everything." In this way Myra used to be entertained by her grandfather, who likened her to a fresh bud that would soon burst into flower, and himself to a faded leaf which was almost ready to fall from the tree. One day, after Myra had a pleasant walk with her grandfather, she sat down to do a little sewing with her mother, and then they talked together in the following manner: "I wish I had grandfather's eyes, mother." "Do you, dear? I hardly think that he could spare them. But what can you possibly want with the eyes of your grandfather, Myra?" "Oh! if I had his eyes, I should see all that he sees when we are walking together; but now I can't see half so much as he does." "No, that is very strange, when you are young and he is old. He often says that his sight is not what it used to be; and then, you know, though the Bible is in large print, he is obliged to use spectacles." "Yes, mother, but for all that he can see more than I can." "Tell me what you mean, love, for I cannot at all understand you." "Why, when we walk out into the fields and lanes, let us look at what we will, he says he sees God's goodness in everything." "Ah! Myra, it is not grandfather's eyes, but grandfather's faith that you want. Pray to God to open the eyes of your understanding, to give you a heart to love and trust Him, and you will then see Him, not only in all the works of His hand, but in all the events of life." —*Methodist.*

9—16. (9) Palti (*deliverance of Jehovah*). Raphu (*healed*). (10) Gaddiel (*fortune of God*). Sodi (*confidant of Jehovah*). (11) Gaddi (*fortunate*). Susi (*horseman*). (12) Ammiel (*kindred of God*). Gemalli (*camel-driver*). (13) Sethur (*hidden*). Michael (*who like God*). (14) Nahbi (*hidden*). Vopshi (*my increase*). (15) Geuel (*majesty of God*). Machi (*decrease*). (16) Jehoshua, ^a (*salvation of the Lord*), contracted into Joshua, changing of the name was a mark of honor indicating that he was to be the temporal saviour of his people.

The spies selected.—I. In the selection each tribe was represented. II. The selected men were rulers among the people. III. They were selected to do a given work for the whole nation. IV. They were responsible to man and God.

True courage.—The courage we desire and prize is not the courage to die decently, but to live manfully. This, when by God's grace it has been given, lies deep in the soul; like genial heat, fosters all other virtues and gifts; without it they could not live. In spite of our innumerable Waterloos and Peterloos, and such campaigning as there has been, this courage we allude to, and call the only true one, is perhaps rarer in these last ages, than it has been in any other since the Saxon invasion under Hengist. Altogether extinct it can never be among men; otherwise the species man were no longer for this world: here and there, in all times, under various guises, men are sent hither not only to demonstrate but exhibit it, and testify, as from heart to heart, that it is still possible, still practicable. —*Carlyle.*

17—20. (17) southward, *R. V.*, "by the South," by the Negeb, or south country. mountain, hill-country of the south. (18) see, ^b thoroughly survey and inspect it. (19) whether . . strongholds, the Chal. renders "whether walled or unwalled." (20) land . . lean, soil whether fruitful or not. wood . . not, timber, forests. bring . . land, as a specimen of the productions. time . . grapes, they ripen in July, August, and are gathered Sept., Oct. One of the Jewish commentators remarks, "They had need to have courage, because the keepers of the vineyards then kept watch."

The spies' commission. — I. They were not to select the land, but search it. II. They were not to search one part, but the whole. III. Their examination of the whole was to be thorough. IV. They were to traverse it courageously. V. They were to bring back a true report and proofs of the land's fertility.

Eyesight not infallible. — I stayed last Friday night at the Continental Hotel in Philadelphia, where they have a sliding chamber that runs up from a lower floor to the fifth story, following an immense column of iron, cut like a screw, which is stationary in the centre. If you stand below the chamber, no person can persuade you that that column does not rise and fall, such is the effect produced on the eye by the spiral motion. You cannot make yourself feel that that column is not ascending and descending, carrying with it a fixed chamber. Your eye lies. The column turns round, but it does not ascend or descend a particle. Now get into the chamber. There is an iron column extending from top to bottom of the building. In that chamber you are carried up and down, and the column stands still; and yet I defy you to make it seem as though anything moved but the column. If you went by your sense of seeing, you would declare that the chamber did not move. Under such circumstances, one would be apt to say, "The chamber is stationary, and the column moves, or there is no truth in eyesight." That is it — there is no absolute or infallible truth in eyesight. The column is the only thing that is stationary. Men say, "I saw it," as though that settled the controversy. Ah! if you saw it, then I do not believe you. And our courts have pronounced an implied judgment upon the fallibility of men's senses. It is not until you have put one eyesight with another, and one ear with another, and made a sort of equation of errors, that you can come to anything like a certainty of judgment. — *Beecher.*

21-25. (21) from . . *Zin*,^a the extreme southern boundary of the prom. land. *Rehob* (*street, broad place*), prob. Beth-rehob, nr. *Dan-Laish*, the mod. *Tell-el-Kadhy*.^b as . . *Hamath*,^c by the entrance of *Hamath*,^d i. e. the S. approach to *Hamath*. (22) they . . south, i. e. by the south country. *Hebron*,^e see Ge. xxiii. 2. *Ahiman*^f (bro. of a gift). *Talmi* (*furrowed*). *Anak* (*long-necked, a giant*), son of *Arba*; head of one of the chief families of Canaan, being distinguished for their great stature, prowess and valor; perh. *Anan* = a race rather than an individual. *Hebron* . . *Zoan*, prob. by a com. founder.^g (23) they . . *Eshcol*, see on Ge. xiv. 13-24. A rich valley N. of *Hebron*.^h one . . grapes, perhaps a number of clusters close together, having the appearance of one large cluster. The Heb. word may be translated *bunch*. bare . . staff, for ease in carrying, and prevent crushing of the fruit. (24) brook *Eshcol*,ⁱ i. e. valley of the cluster. (25) from . . days, time enough to explore the whole land.

The fruit of the promised land. — I. The earthly Canaan produced rich fruit. 1. Various; 2. Abundant; 3. But surrounded by foes. II. The spiritual Canaan produces fruit. 1. Pardon; 2. Hope; 3. Joy; 4. Christian fellowship, etc. But the world lies all around. III. The heavenly Canaan produces the richest fruit. 1. Rest; 2. Peace; 3. Love, etc.; and, without molestation the saints will eat of the fruit of the tree of life forever.

Grapes of Eshcol. — "This *Eshcol*, or Grape Valley, a little to the south of *Hebron*, is still clad with vines, and the grapes are the finest and largest in Palestine. Clusters weighing ten or twelve pounds have been gathered. The spies doubtless bore the cluster between them on a staff, that the splendid grapes might not be crushed. With care and judicious thinning, it is well known that bunches weighing nearly twenty pounds can be produced. Not only are the bunches remarkable for their weight, but the individual grape attains a size rarely reached elsewhere. In *Eshcol*, as elsewhere where vineyards remain, we see them marked by their watch-towers and walls fenced, where no other crop is so protected, rising one above another on their terraces, the earliest and latest symbol of Judah. 'A vineyard, or a hill of olives,' with the 'fence' and 'the stones gathered out,' and 'the tower in the midst of it,' is the natural figure which both in the prophetic and evangelical records, represents the kingdom of Judah. The vine was the emblem of the nation on the coins of the Maccabees, and in the colossal cluster of golden grapes which overhung the porch of the second temple, and 'the grapes of Judah still mark the tombstones of the Hebrew races in the oldest of their European cemeteries at Prague.'" — *Dr. Stanley.*

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the eye of faith it is transparent; and may be seen through, so as to afford a view of somewhat beyond it." — *Skelton.*

"Ahab cast a covetous eye at Naboth's vineyard, David a lustful eye at Bathsheba. The eye is the pulse of the soul; as physicians judge of the heart by the pulse, so we by the eye; a rolling eye, a roving heart." — *T. Adams.*

"Our eyes, when gazing on sinful objects, are out of their calling and God's keeping." — *Fuller.*

their departure, journey, and return

a Nu. xxxiv. 3, 7, 8.

b Jud. xviii. 28. *Robinson Bib. Res.* 371 (1856), thinks it the same with the ruins of the castle of Hunin or Honin.

c Epiphania on the Orontes, now Hamah. See *Robinson Bib. Res.* iii. 551, etc.

d 1 K. viii. 65; 2 K. xiv. 25; Ez. xlvii. 15, 16.

e Ge. xxxv. 27; xxxvii. 14; Jos. xi. 21, 22; xv. 13, 14; xxi. 11; 2 S. ii. 11; 1 Ch. vi. 57; Ps. lxxviii. 12.

f Jos. xv. 14; Jud. i. 10.

g *Knobel.* The Hyksos built and fortified Zoan as defense of their E. frontier. See *Spk. Com.*

h *Van de Velde* says a fountain ab. a mile from the city is still called *Am. Eshdly*.

i Ge. xiv. 21-24.

B. C. 1491.

the report of
the spiesa Pr. xxvi. De. 18;
ix. 1, 2; 18. xxvii. 8.

"The art of spreading rumors may be compared to the art of pin-making. There is usually some truth, which I call the wire; as this passes from hand to hand, one gives it a polish, another a point, others make and put on the head, and at last the pin is completed."—*John Newton.*

Caleb stilled
the people

b Nu. xiv. 6.

c Le. xxvi. 38.

d Nu. xxi. 27, 28;
De. ii. 20.e De. ii. 10; xi. 3;
Am. ii. 9; De. i. 23.

"God gave you that gifted tongue of yours and set it between your teeth, to make known your true meaning to us, not to be rattled like a muffled man's bell."—*Cartley.*

"Eloquence is the companion of peace, the associate of a life of leisure."—*Cicero*

26-29. *Paran*, see vs. 3. *Kadesh*, the same as Kadesh-Barnea, identified by Dr. H. C. Trumbull in 1831 as Ain Zâdees (the holy well), 50 miles south of Beersheba. This was the central point of the people for nearly 38 years. (28) and . . walled,* proof both that the people were warlike, and the country attractive to invaders. *Anak*, see vs. 22. (29) *Amalekites*, see on Ge. xiv. 7. A nomad people. *Hittites*, etc., see Ex. iii. 8. *Canaanites*, gen. term for all these tribes: here it is used in its narrow sense, i. e. those of Phœnician origin.

Lessons arising from these reports. 1. A statement may be true as to matters of fact, yet false and evil in its spirit and influence. 2. The cause of God has never been left without some true witnesses. 3. Majorities are not trustworthy criteria of truth and right. 4. To judge by appearances only is foolish, sinful, and perilous.

Kadesh and Eshcol.—This is undoubtedly the Negeb, or south country, of Scripture, and Ain Gadis may be considered as situated almost at the frontier of the district. The spies, we are told, went up from Kadesh, and returned, bringing with them grapes and figs from Eshcol, and this latter site is generally assumed to be identical with the valley of Hebron. But Hebron is at least four days' journey from Ain Gadis, and grapes and figs could not have been brought so far in that hot climate without spoiling. If then Kadesh is at Ain Gadis, as supposed, Eshcol must be near the same place; and it is a curious fact that for miles throughout the country the hillsides and valleys are covered with small stone heaps called by the Arabs to this day "grape mounds." Most Biblical geographers have placed Kadesh much closer to the southern border of Palestine, but in that case the Israelites would have been hemmed in by the Amorites, the Moabites, and other tribes, whereas in the neighborhood of Ain Gadis they would have had nothing but the wilderness before them. A good general like Moses would not have chosen a bad position for so important a camp, and I was therefore confirmed in my belief that the Ain Gadis which we saw was actually the Kadesh of the Bible.—*Palmer.* *Folly of exaggerating the enemy's strength.*—It is a bad plan to exaggerate the enemy's strength; to do so is to increase it. Our English warriors have owed many a victory on land and sea to the confidence with which they entered the fight. Francis Drake was playing bowls on the Hoe at Plymouth when information was brought to him of the appearance of the terrible Armada. Some were for hurrying away at once; but the great sailor insisted on finishing the game, gaily assuring his comrades: "There will be plenty of time to beat the Spaniards." It is with something of the same dauntless spirit that we should enter upon our holy war.

30-33. (30) *Caleb*, see vs. 6, prob. the first to speak thus; but Joshua also stood by his side.^b *stilled*, calmed. *we . . it*, he had faith in God. (31) *but . . him*, ten against two. *we . . able*, etc., they looked no higher than the people and their walls. (32) *evil*, not so much false as one-sided: they told only one side, and that the least favorable. *land . . thereof*, exposed to invasion: its very fertility led to quarrels among the tribes and wars of extermination.^d (33) *giants*,^e *nephilim*, the term applied to the giants that lived bef. the flood.

The ancient Canaan a type of heaven.—I. In what respects the ancient Canaan was a type of heaven. 1. It was a promised land, and the right of possession was founded on the promise: 2. It was a land in which God was peculiarly present: 3. It was a land of fruition: 4. It was a free gift. II. As the Israelites had dangers, difficulties, and discouragements on their way to Canaan, so have Christians in their progress to heaven. 1. There are formidable foes to be encountered; 2. There are adversaries in timid and faint-hearted associates; 3. The Israelites in their progress were made dependent on the Lord for all things. III. Consider the resolution: "Let us go up at once and possess it." 1. The title to it is sure; 2. We have means and ordinances by which needed strength is supplied; 3. Here we have many foretastes of the good land.—*Evang. Preacher.*

Nephilim.—The word translated giants is Nephilim, which occurs only in Gen. vi. 4 and Num. xiii. 33. They may have been men of great stature, but the word means more than this. In every other case—twenty-two in all—the word rendered giant is *Rapha*: i. e. giants, strictly so. Nephilim is from the root *Naphal*, to fall; and nephilim may signify *apostates*, or men who had fallen away from the fear of God—*fallen ones*. By some it has been

translated *assaulters*, men who fell upon, assaulted others: men of lawless, predatory habits. If they were really *giants*, as is probable, they used their superior strength to plunder and oppress their fellows. The passage in Genesis teaches that there were two causes that moved God to punish human wickedness. 1. The existence and wickedness of the *nephilim*; 2. The apostasy and altered character of those who, by repute, were the sons of God. Thus understood, it records not a mere marvel, but a solemn fact, telling us that in those days the earth was so filled with violence, that even those who had been "sons of God" ended by becoming, like the rest of men, men of violence and might.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1-5. (1) *lifted . . cried*, mingled disappointment and anger. and . . *night*, tears of unbelief. (2) *murmured . . Aaron*, this is the way of the mob. Always ready to burden some one with reproaches. In murmuring against their leaders they murmured against God. *died, etc.*, unreasonable; they could but *die* here, as free men trying to conquer. (3) *were . . Egypt*, and endure a bondage worse than before. (4) *let . . captain*, they felt that Moses would not lead them thither. (5) *Moses . . faces*,^b turning to Him fr. whom the people turned away, not asking the people to forbear their rebellion, but praying the Lord in their behalf. *before . . Israel*, teaching them a lesson of humility, submission, faith.

Effects of the report. — I. Grievous mental distress. II. Unreasonable and unjust murmuring. III. Shocking blasphemy. IV. Foolish and wicked rebellion. V. The noble conduct of Moses and Aaron in these painful circumstances.

Forgetfulness of God. —

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend rememb'ed not.
— *Shakespeare.*

6-10. (6) *rent . . clothes*, as a sign of their sorrow at the rebellion of the people. (8) *then . . bring . . give*,^c God recognized as guide and conqueror. (9) *only . . Lord*, neither . . land, He who is for, more than all against. *for . . us*, perh. further signifies that their enemies having granaries and stores would supply them, though unwillingly, with food. *their . . them*,^d i. e. the protection of Providence. (10) *but . . stones*,^e no argument can prevail over prejudice and obstinacy. "Such have been ever the thanks of fidelity and truth. Crossed wickedness proves desperate; and, instead of yielding, seeks for revenge. Nothing is so hateful to a resolute sinner, as good counsel" — *Bp. Hall*. *appeared*,^f suddenly, gloriously, to stay their base designs. *before . . Israel*, confounding, and diverting them from their wicked purpose.

The noble minority. — I. Joshua and Caleb nobly endeavored to arrest the rebellion of the nation. II. Joshua and Caleb were in danger by reason of their effort to arrest the rebellion of the nation.

"They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three."

III. Joshua and Caleb rescued from danger by the interposition of God.

Power of the righteous few. — On the whole, honor to small minorities, when they are genuine ones. Severe is their battle sometimes, but it is victorious always like that of gods. Tancred of Hauteville's sons, some eight centuries ago, conquered all Italy: bound it up into organic masses, of vital order after a sort; founded thrones and principalities upon the same which have not yet entirely vanished,—which, the last dying wrecks of which, still wait for some worthier successor, it would appear. The Tancred Normans were some four thousand strong; the Italy they conquered in open fight and

B. c. 1490.

"It is but poor eloquence which only shows that the orator can talk." — *Sir Josh. Reynolds.*

the people complain

^a Ps. cvi. 24, 25; ^b Ne. ix. 27; Ac. vii. 30.

^c Ps. cv. 26; Nu. xvi. 4, 22.

"In such distress nothing remained but to pour out their desires before God; offering their prayer in public, however, and in the sight of all the people, in the hope of turning their minds."

— *Calvin.*

"However deep may be the sorrow which cankers in our heart, prayer, placing us in fellowship with God, introduces us to the source of light, guidance and the truest comfort!"

Joshua and Caleb exhort them

^c Ge. xlviii. 21; Ex. xxxiii. 16; 1 K. x. 9; 2 Ch. xiii. 12; xxxiii. 8; Ps. cxlvi. 1, 2, 15; cxlvi. 5; xxxiii. 20.

^d Defense, lit. shadow; ^e shadow as from scorching sun. Eastern figure Is. xxx. 2, 3; xxxii. 2.

^f Ex. xvii. 4; Ex. xvi. 10; Nu. xvi. 19; xx. 6.

"He that complies ag. his will, is of the same opinion still." — *Butler.*

"In idle wishes fools supinely stay; be there a will, and wisdom finds the way." — *Crabbe.*

"He that would not when he might, he shall not when he would." — *Percy's Reliques.*

B. c. 1490.

"That slave prince, Joseph, was mightier than all the monarchs of Egypt, because he was in habitual communion with the Sovereign of all sovereigns."—*Cowdery.*

Divine threats and Moses' intercession

a De. ix. 7, 8, 22, 23; He. iii. 8, 18; Ps. cvi. 43; lxxviii. 22, 33, 37-41; cvi. 24-27; Jo. xii. 37.

b Ex. xxxii. 10; De. xxviii. 15, 20, 21.

c Ex. xxxii. 12; Ps. cvi. 23; De. ix. 26-28.

d De. xxxii. 27; Ez. xx. 9-17.

e Jos. vii. 9.

On vs. 14 see *Blunt, Scrip. Coia.* 84.

"When thou art wrestling like Jacob with the angel, and art nearly thrown down, ask the Holy Spirit to nerve thine arm. Consider how the Holy Spirit is the chariot-wheel of prayer. Prayer may be the chariot, the desire may draw it forth; but the Spirit is the very wheel whereby it moveth."—*Spurgeon.*

Moses' prayer is heard

f Ps. ciii. 8; cxlv. 8; Jo. iv. 2; 2 Co. v. 21.

g Ex. xxxiv. 9; h Da. ix. 16-19.

i Ps. cxxxviii. 8; j Ps. cvi. 45; cvi. 37-43; Is. xliii. 25.

28; xlviii. 9-11; Ja. v. 16; 1 Jo. v. 14, 15.

k Ha. ii. 14; Ps. lxxii. 19.

bound up into masses at their ordering will, might count eight millions, all as large of bone, as eupaptic and black-whiskered as they. How came the small minority of Normans to prevail in this so hopeless-looking debate? Intrinsically, doubt it not, because they were in the right; because in a dim, instinctive, but most genuine manner, they were doing the commandment of Heaven, and so Heaven had decided that they were to prevail. But extrinsically also, I can see, it was because the Normans were not afraid to have their skins scratched; and were prepared to die in their quarrel where needful. One man of that humor among a thousand of the other, consider it! Let the small minority, backed by the whole universe, and looked on by such a cloud of invisible witnesses, fall into no despair. — *Thos. Carlyle.*

11—16. (11) **provoke**, by contempt of His nature, and distrust of His word. **for**, notwithstanding, etc.^a (12) **pestilence**,^b personal punishment, not an absolute determination, but like the purposed destruction of Nineveh, which was conditional. **disinherit**, national punishment, deprived them of the promised land. **make . . . they**, make thee to be leader of a greater people, *i. e.* greater in faith, etc. Rather than have the promise to Abraham fail, He would raise up a new stock from Moses which should inherit Israel's blessings. (13) **Egyptians . . . hear**,^c he would not have a conquered foe rejoice in the overthrow of God's people. (14) **tell . . . land**,^d *i. e.* Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, etc., who, by such news, would be encouraged to oppose the march. **for . . . heard**, and hearing this have been filled with awe. **seen . . . face**, *i. e.* in the most plain and visible manner. (15) **then . . . heard**, the march of two millions of people must have led to much spying and scouting. (16) **because, etc.**,^e Moses was jealous of the honor and faithfulness of God. Moral difficulties were not understood by the heathen nations; if Israel was destroyed they would immediately attribute it to physical weakness.

Main points of Moses' plea. — I. The relations of God with Israel were well known amongst neighboring nations. II. If God should destroy Israel at a stroke, that also would be known amongst these nations. III. The interpretation of such destruction by the nations would be such as would reflect on the honor of God. They would conclude that His resources were exhausted; that His power had failed to sustain and lead Israel onward; and thus His glory would be tarnished. IV. That this might not be the case Moses entreats the Lord not to disinherit the rebellious people.

Faith in falsehood. — When the English army under Harold, and the Norman under William the Conqueror, were set in array for that fearful conflict which decided the fate for the two armies and the political destinies of Great Britain, William, perceiving that he could not, by a fair attack, move the solid columns of the English ranks, had recourse to a false movement in order to gain the victory. He gave orders that one flank of his army should feign to be flying from the field in disorder. The officers of the English army believed the falsehood, pursued them, and were cut off. A second time a false movement was made in another part of the field. The English again believed, pursued, and were cut off. By these movements, the fortunes of the day were determined. Although the English had the evidence of their senses, yet they were led to believe a falsehood: they acted in view of it; the consequence was, the destruction of a great part of their army, and the establishment of the Norman power in England. It is an incontrovertible fact that the whole heathen world, ancient and modern, have believed in and worshiped unholy beings as gods. Now, from the necessities of the case, the worshiper becomes assimilated to the character of the object worshiped. In consequence of believing falsehood concerning the character of God, all heathendom, at the present hour, is filled with ignorance, impurity and crime. — *J. B. Walker.*

17—21. (17) **let . . . great**, in its manifestations, saving Thy people and pardoning them. (18) **The Lord, etc.**,^f see Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. (19) **iniquity**,^g wh. He does not extenuate. **according . . . mercy**,^h the pardon of sin always involves great mercy. **thou . . . people**, their past sins. **from . . . now**,ⁱ sin and pardon had marked every step. (20) **said**, mark the power of fervent prayer. **have**,^j it is done. **word**, all it contains and implies; concerning My glory. (21) **earth, etc.** *i. e.* Divine care for the world's future provided for in all dealings with Israel. **shall . . . Lord**,^k the world would be filled with the report of His glorious and righteous acts in punishing offenders and being merciful to the residue of His people.

The earth filled with the glory of the Lord. — I. The import of the promise before us. II. The reason we have for believing that these scenes of glory will one day be realized. Our confidence that Christ's religion will one day fill the whole earth with its glory is founded on — 1. Jehovah's faithful and unerring promise; 2. The consideration that this religion is, in its nature, adapted above all others to be universal; 3. The present aspect of the world. III. Our present duty in relation to the promise before us. 1. To believe it; 2. To labor and pray without ceasing for its accomplishment; 3. Not to be discouraged by any adverse circumstance, however painful; 4. To pray for the Holy Spirit to render all our efforts effectual; 5. To let our plans be large, liberal, and ever expanding. — *J. Miller.*

Great mercy. — God's mercy is so great that it forgives great sins to great sinners after great lengths of time, and then gives great favors and great privileges, and raises us up to great enjoyments in the great heaven of the great God. As John Bunyan well says, "It must be great mercy or no mercy, for little mercy will never serve my turn." — *Spurgeon.*

Say not that any crime of man
Was e'er too great to be forgiven;
Can we within our little span,
Engrasp the viewless mind of Heav'n?
Shall we attempt with puny force
To lash back ocean with a rod?
Arrest the planets in their course?
Or weigh the mercies of a God?

Our mercies, like ourselves, may be
Small, finite, and ungracious ever;
May spurn a brother's bended knee —
But God forsakes the contrite, never!
Vast as Himself they shine above,
To eyes that look through sorrow's tear;
Great though the crime, great is the love,
If those who seek it are sincere. — *Mackay.*

22—25. (22) *seen*, and are therefore without excuse. *ten times*, words not to be forced to a literal interpretation: ^a the num. 10 — completeness. ^b (23) *surely, etc.*,^c men shall learn that they are not to presume on My mercy. (24) *Caleb*,^d and those who like him did not share in the rebellion.^e *because . . . spirit*, Caleb was bold, resolute, faithful and hopeful; the others were base, cowardly, unbelieving. (Same prob. applies to Joshua, tho' not mentioned.) (25) *valley*, or elevated plain. *to-morrow, i. e. henceforth. way . . . sea, i. e. the Elanitic gulf, the eastern gulf of the Red Sea.*

Caleb's integrity. — Consider — I. What groundwork is requisite in a man to enable him to follow the Lord fully. He must — 1. Have a principle of saving faith; 2. Esteem God to be the chief good; 3. In all things value God's interest before his own; 4. Be able to die for God. II. What it is to follow the Lord fully. 1. It excludes — (1) Partial obedience; (2) Sinister ends; (3) Lukewarmness; (4) Formality; (5) Fickleness. 2. It includes — (1) Obedience to the whole will of God; (2) Freeness of obedience; (3) Satisfaction with measure of success; (4) Disregard of men; (5) Disregard of impediments. III. How God rewards those who follow Him fully. They shall — 1. See and know more of Him; 2. Receive more from Him. — *R. Vines.*

Integrity next to sincerity. —

Next to sincerity, remember still
Thou must resolve upon integrity.
God will have all thou hast — thy mind, thy will,
Thy thoughts, thy words, thy works. A nullity
It proves when God, who should have all, doth find
That there is any one thing left behind. — *G. Herbert.*

26—33. (26, 27) *long*,^f through what extent of *time* and *sin*. (28) *as . . . ears*, words of sinful complaint. *so . . . you*, the punishment shall correspond with the sin. Their wish was that they might die in the wilderness, and God is going to take them at their word and grant to them their desires.

B. C. 1490.

See *Serm.* on vs. 18 by *Abp. Tillotson*; on vs. 19 by *Dr. J. Hunt* (1748).

"What venom must there be in the corruption of my nature, that can suck poison out of such a sweet attribute as the patience of God!" — *Cotton.*

reward of following God fully

^a The Rabbins instance ten separate occasions.

^b Ge. xxxi. 7.

^c De. i. 35; Ps. xcv. 11; Ez. xx. 15; Ps. cvi. 26; He. iii. 17, 18; Je. xv. 1.

^d De. i. 36; Jos. xiv. 6-14.

^e "Ps. xc. has been most appropriately regarded as a kind of dirge upon those sentenced thus awfully by God to waste away in the wilderness." — *Spk. Com.*

the doom of the murderers

^f Ex. xvi. 28; Ma. xvii. 17.

B. c. 1490.

a De. i. 35, 36.

b Nu. xxvi. 63-65;
xxxii. 11, 12.c Jude 5; De. i. 39;
Ps. cvi. 24; 1 Co.
x. 5.d Ex. xxxiv. 7;
Nu. xxxii. 13; Ps.
cvii. 40; Ez. xxiii
35.

"I will not be as
those who spend
the day in com-
plaining of head-
ache; and the
night in drinking
the wine that
gives the head-
ache."—*Goethe.*

forty years'
wandering

e Nu. xiii. 25; Ps.
xcv. 10; Ez. iv. 6;
He. iv. 1.f 1 Co. x. 10; Mal.
ii. 18.

g Nu. xxvi. 65.

(29) numbered,^a see i. 18 ff. (30) save,^b i. e. of those numbered. The Levites, children under twenty, and wives of offenders were not included in this severe sentence, which accounts for the presence of Eleazar in the division of the promised land in Canaan. (31) but . . ones, under 20 yrs. of age. which, etc., those saved were more helpless than those who said they were not able to possess the land. (32) but, etc.,^c lit. but your carcasses, even yours. (33) bear,^d endure the immediate consequences of. How often must children suffer on account of the guilt of parents?

Murmuring (vs. 27).—We have here—I. The sin of murmuring referred to. 1. What is it? Finding fault with God's way and will; 2. What causes it? Pride, setting up our judgment against God's wisdom. 'Selfishness, our wishes against God's will. II. The punishment of that sin. 1. Its nature. The people doomed to a lifelong experience of that which they complained; 2. Its completeness, vs. 29. III. Its folly exposed. 1. Those of whom the worst misfortunes were predicted—the children—should inherit the land; 2. Yet, even they should suffer for their fathers' sin. Children are often the victims of parental folly.

The evil of murmuring.—Seneca hath his similitude to set out the great evil of murmuring under small afflictions. Suppose, saith he, a man to have a very fair house to dwell in, with very fair orchards and gardens set about, with brave, tall trees for ornament: what a most unreasonable thing were it in this man to murmur because the wind blows a few leaves off the trees, though they hang full of fruit! If God takes a little and gives us much, shall we be discontent?—if He takes our son and gives us His own; if He cause the trees to bring forth the fruit, shall we be angry if the wind blow away the leaves?—*Venning.* John Wesley used to say, "I dare no more fret than curse or swear. To have persons around me, murmuring and fretting at everything that happens, is like tearing the flesh from my bones."

34—39. (34) days . . years,^e it takes a short time to sin, a long time to repent and suffer. my . . promise, *R. V. margin*, "the revoking of my promise." Jehovah made a promise conditioned upon obedience, and inasmuch as they had been disobedient, they had broken their part of the engagement, Jehovah was released from his obligations. (35) that . . me, ostensibly against Moses and Aaron, but really against Jehovah had they rebelled. consumed,^f by war, disease, etc. (36) men, the ten evil witnesses. (37) died . . Lord, the first instalment of Death's great harvest; died, suddenly, collectively before the Tab., where the glory of the Lord appeared. (38) Joshua . . still,^g reward of fidelity to truth, duty, God. (39) mourned, their grief made greater by despair.

A Divine breach of promise.—I. The great purpose of God remains unchangeable. II. The working out of His purposes according to plan and method may be effected by human conduct. III. That human conduct, which leads to any change in or modification of the Divine method, must involve human misery. IV. God has a great purpose of mercy towards all men: how it is perverted, or presumed upon!

Murmuring and contentment.—

Some murmur when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue;
And some with thankful love are filled
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy, gild
The darkness of their night.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied?
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid
(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made.

—*Abp. Trench.*

"I think half the
troubles for wh.
men go slouching
in prayer to God
are caused by their
intolerable pride.
Many of our cares
are but a morbid
way of looking at
our privileges. We
let our blessings
get moldy, and
then call them
curses."—*Beecher.*

A bishop was once asked the secret of the quiet, contented spirit which he always had. He said, "My secret consists in the right use of my eyes. When I meet with any trial, I first of all look up to heaven; I remember that my chief business in life is to get there. Then I look down upon the earth; I think how small a space I shall need in it when I die; and then I look round and think how many people there are in the world who have more cause to be unhappy than I have. And so I learn the Bible lesson, 'Be content with such things as ye have.'"

40-45. (40) early, overtaken with a fit of slavish fear; now as anxious to advance as bef. to return. *gat* . . mountain, they turned towards some plateau on N. of valley of *vs. 25.* for . . sinned,^a they were repentant and thought a frantic, earnest effort to do what they before feared and a confession of sin would save them from their doom. (41) transgress . . commandment, that of *vs. 25.* requiring them to turn back to the Red Sea. (42) for . . you,^b they had neglected the cloud. (43) fall . . sword, *etc.*, even with the Lord they sinfully feared this result; how much more without the Lord's help. (44) presumed,^c notwithstanding the warning of Moses. ark . . camp, the plainest evidence that the Lord was not with them. The ark only moved with the removal of the cloud. (45) Hormah,^d *lit.* the ban-place.

Presumption of the rebellious Israelites. — Let us inquire — I. Wherein their presumption consisted. They went up — 1. Without the Divine presence; 2. In opposition to the Divine command. II. Wherein it issued. Their efforts terminated in — 1. Painful disappointment; 2. Fruitless sorrow. — *C. Simeon.*

Reckless presumption. — A noble ship was bearing into port. It was the evening hour, and too late to enter without a pilot. There were two passages into the harbor; one a dangerous narrow channel, the other a wide and safer one. The captain determined to pilot himself by the narrow passage. A storm was coming up; and the passengers, with fear and consternation, begged him to take the wider channel. He laughed at their cowardice, and swore he would do as he pleased. As the night advanced, the gale increased. Soon arose a cry, "Breakers ahead, breakers ahead!" The captain flew to the wheel; sails were struck; the wind had the mastery, and the captain found a will that could defy his own. The vessel made a fearful plunge, struck the foreship deep into the sand, to be shattered by the wild waves' pleasure. Few survived the terrors of that fearful night; but among the dead thrown up by the rising tide was the body of the wilful and presumptuous captain.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

1-7. (1) and . . spake, some time after the events recorded in the last chapter, but still at Kadesh-barnea (?) land . . , you,^e *see* Ex. iii. 17. (3) and will, *etc.*,^f *see* Le. i. 3. freewill offering, an offering not required by law, but given as an expression of a grateful heart. (4) meat, *etc.*,^g *see* Le. ii. tenth . . oil, *i. e.* tenth part of an ephah or an omer, *see* Ex. xxix. 40. (5) fourth . . wine, *etc.*,^h a hin contained one gallon and two pints, *see* Ex. xxix. 40. (6) two, sacrifice of higher value, hence increase of quantity of flour. (7) drink, *etc.*, "The accessory sacrifices were always increased in proportion to the greater worth and magnitude of its principal."

The greater sacrifice and the less. — We learn here — I. That the greater the principal item, the lesser were to be in proportion. When lambs, rams, *etc.* were offered, the wine, oil, *etc.*, were to be of relative value. II. The great sacrifice for sin having been offered, the accessories, *i. e.* the heart and life of believers must, in their consecration, be entire, that there may be the truest relation possible between *our* sacrifice and *His*, *see* Rom. xii. 1.

The sacrifice of Christianity. — She demands of us the sacrifice of body and soul to God. But wherefore? Because we have fallen from our original righteousness; because we are prone to forbidden objects; because we are guilty, enslaved, blind, erring creatures. What would never be thought of by a person in health, and never be urged upon him, may be and is perfectly reasonable for one sinking with disease. To a shipwrecked mariner that becomes most reasonable which would be contrary to common reason were he sailing with a favorable wind. A prisoner condemned to die by the laws of his country may and ought, in reason, to sue for pardon and submit to whatever conditions his prince imposes. Thus all the self denial of Christianity, its penitence, its difficulties, its afflictions, its separation from the sins of the world, its humility, its vigilance, its holy fear, are most reasonable under the circumstances in which man is placed, and with the eternity which is before him. — *Bp. Wilson.*

8-12. (11) thus . . done, *etc.*,ⁱ *i. e.* such shall be the proportion of accessory sacrifice (flour, oil, wine) according to value and kind of principal sacrifice. (12) number, of lambs, *etc.* so . . one, such shall be the proportion of wine, oil, flour, to each principal sacrifice.

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the defeat of Israel at Hormah

^a Ex. xxxiii. 4; De. i. 41.

^b De. i. 42; 2 Ch. xv. 2; xxiv. 20.

^c 2 Pe. ii. 9; Ps. xix. 13.

^d De. i. 43, 44; Jos. xii. 14; Ju. i. 17.

"If we pursue most of those contentions which afflict the world to their first principle, we shall find that they issue from pride, and pride from self-opinion, and a strange persuasion that men have of their knowledge of those things of which they are indeed ignorant." — *South.*

law of offerings

^e De. viii. 7-9.

^f Nu. xxviii. 27; Ep. v. 2; 2 Co. ii. 15.

^g Le. vi. 14, 15; Jo. iv. 34; He. x. 7.

^h Ps. civ. 15; Jo. xv. 1; Ne. viii. 10; Ps. c. 2; Is. xxxv. 10.

"If ye ask why you should give your hearts to God, I do not answer, like the disciples who went for the ass and colt, 'The Lord hath need;' but we have need. If ever the saying were true, 'It is more blessed to give than take,' more blessed are they who give their hearts to God than they who take possession of the world." — *H. Smith.*

burnt-offerings and vows

ⁱ Le. xxii. 21.

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"All Christians should feel their study to be Christ's exaltation; and whatever is calculated to hinder man from beholding Him in all the glory of His person and works should be removed out of the way!"

"Many there are who, while they bear the name of Christians are totally unacquainted with the power of their Divine religion. But for their crimes, the Gospel is in no wise answerable."—*Faber.*

the stranger under the same law

a Ex. xii. 49; Nu. ix. 14; Ro. iii. 29, 30

b Ep. ii. 11-18; 1 Ti. ii. 3, 4.

"The moment a man's heart touches the heart of Christ in living faith, he becomes, whether he knows it or not, the brother of every other, in heaven or on earth, who has come into the same relationship with Christ."—*Beecher.*

the heaven-offering

c Jos. v. 11, 12; De. xxvi. 2, 10; Pr. iii. 9, 10; Matt. vi. 33.

On vs. 20, see *Blunt, Scrip. Coin.*, 101.

sins of ignorance and forgetfulness

d Le. vi. 13-20.

e Lu. xxiii. 34; Jo. xvi. 3; Ac. iii. 17-19; 1 Co. ii. 8; Ac. ii. 36-39.

Aims at perfection (vs. 12).—Here we have the doctrine enforced that what is done should be well done. I. Attention to the greater does not excuse neglect of the less. Ma. xxiii. 23; Lu. xi. 42. II. Obedience in the greater matters tested, as to sincerity, by obedience in the lesser details of ceremonial observance. III. The offering up of the great sacrifice for sin does not liberate us from the duty of offering, on our part, the lesser sacrifice of faith, etc. IV. The offering of the less manifests our appreciation of the greater.

Judging Christianity.—Judge not Christianity even by its most perfect embodiment in the life of its disciples here. The best are imperfect, and Christianity itself teaches this, and points to perfection as yonder. Do not judge the science of that organ builder by that half-finished instrument in his workshop. There is but little in that to please the eye, and from it scarce a note can be evolved to charm the ear. Judge not the artistic character of that painter by the first rough outline which you discover on the canvas in his studio. There is scarcely a touch of life in it, or any perceptible resemblance to the original. Judge the organ builder by the instrument as it stands in the great cathedral, pouring forth, by the touch of a master musician, pealing strains of music, electrifying the congregated thousands. Judge the artist by the picture as hung up in the Academy of Art—looking, throbbing, and blushing at you as a thing of life, gathering around it a crowd of admiring spectators. Even so judge Christianity. Its organ—the Christian life—is not half finished here in its workshop. Yonder, in the great cathedral or eternity, you will see it in perfection, and feel the inspiration of its harmonies. The painting is not finished here in its studio; its figure is half formed and blotched, and scarcely a feature is accurate. See it in the great gallery of the heavens, finished, in an exact copy of the Son of God Himself, "Who is the image of the Father's glory," etc.—*Thomas.*

13—16. (13) all . . manner, *i. e.* all who should be born in Canaan. (14) stranger, *etc.*, not to be excluded fr. religious privileges bec. of his extraction: (15) so . . Lord, who is no respecter of persons. (16) one law, *etc.*,^a so also of the greater sacrifice we are all one in Christ.^b

Once strangers, now friends.—Consider—I. The Old Law. 1. It provided for the incorporation of strangers into the body of God's people; 2. Strangers admitted on two conditions. (1) Willingness on their part; (2) Conformity to the customs of Israel. II. The modern application. 1. We must make the widest provision for the introduction of strangers into the church of God; 2. We must not allow such to dictate the terms on which they will be received.

The principle of sacrifice.—When a teacher was wanted by Dr. Mason, of Burmah, for the warlike Bghais, he asked his boatman, Shapon, if he would go, and reminded him that, instead of the fifteen rupees a month which he now received, he could have only four rupees a month as a teacher. After praying over the matter he came back, and Dr. Mason said, "Well, Shapon, what is your decision? Can you go to the Bghais for four rupees a month?" Shapon answered, "No, teacher, I could not go for four rupees a month, but I can do it for Christ." And for Christ's sake he did go.

17—21. (17, 18) when . . you, they were to regard the coming into the land as settled. (19) heaven-offering,^c see Le. vii. 32. (20) dough, or coarse meal: not only the corn, but of the bread made fr. it, an offering was to be made. (21) generations, *i. e.* for all time.

Memorial of gratitude.—A very poor and aged man, busied in planting and grafting an apple-tree, was rudely interrupted by this interrogation: "Why do you plant trees, who cannot hope to eat the fruit of them?" He raised himself up, and leaning upon his spade, replied, "Some one planted trees for me before I was born, and I have eaten the fruit. I now plant for others, that the memorial of my gratitude may exist when I am dead and gone."

22—26. (22) erred,^d sinned: neglect of duty, unadvisedly or thro' ignorance. (23) all, having observed some and neglected others. and . . generations, if ye shall at any time neglect them. (25) ignorance,^e not presumptuous, intentional violation of law. (26) seeing . . ignorance, still their ignorance involved sin, and necessitated sacrifice.

Sins of omission.—I. "I did not know," or, "I forgot," often pleaded as excuses for neglect. Assumption of innocence, on the ground of ignorance or forgetfulness. II. The regarding of such neglect as sin shows that we are held responsible for the cultivation of mind and memory.

Our sins of omission many. — Many books have a few lines of *errata* at the end, but our *errata* might well be as large as the volume if we could but have sense enough to see them. Augustine wrote in his older days a series of retractions; ours might make a library if we had enough grace to be convinced of our mistakes, and to confess them. If we had eyes like those of God we should think very differently of ourselves. The transgressions which we see and confess are but like the farmer's small samples which he brings to market, when he has left his granary full at home. — *Spurgeon*.

27-31. (27) *soul*,^a single individual, as distinct fr. whole nation. (28, 29) The same principle applies as in case of national sins, *vss.* 25, 26. (30) *presumptuously*,^b wilfully, openly. *reproacheth*, revileth, blasphemeth. *cut* . . . *people*, by the magistrates. (31) *his* . . . *him*,^c in the punishment which he shall endure.

Presumption. — Let us notice — I. What presumption includes. It signifies — 1. Boldness in evil, sinning without fear; 2. Arrogance in evil, pride of heart, spirit, and tongue; 3. Irreverence towards God; 4. Confidence of escape from His threatenings. II. Its chief causes. 1. Spiritual ignorance; 2. Recklessness and inconsideration; 2. Confirmed unbelief, giving no credit to the Word; 4. Hardness of heart. III. Its terrible results. 1. God defied, will vindicate His authority; 2. Threatenings despised, He will terribly execute; 3. Mercy despised will involve in a fearful retribution. — *J. Burns*.

Progress of presumption. — Presumption never stops in its first attempt. If Cæsar comes once to pass the Rubicon, he will be sure to march farther on, even till he enters the very bowels of Rome, and breaks open the Capitol itself. He that wades so far as to wet and foul himself, cares not how much he trashes farther. — *South*.

32-36. (32) *found* . . . *day*,^d open profanation of the Sabbath. (33) *they*, *etc.*,^e this shows how impressed they were with the sanctity of the day. (34) *they* . . . *ward*, like the blasphemer, *Le. xxiv. 12.* *because, etc.*, *i. e.* the mode of death not decided on. (35) *and* . . . *Moses*, prob. in answer to the special inquiry. *without* . . . *camp*, that it might not be defiled. (36) *all, etc.*,^f this would vividly impress on all the heinousness of the sin and the greatness of the punishment.

The Sabbath-breaker stoned. — The guilt of profaning the Sabbath. It is — 1. An unreasonable sin. Consider who it is that requires the observation of the Sabbath; what portion of our time it is that He requires; for whose sake He requires it: 2. A presumptuous sin: it is "a reproaching of God Himself" as a hard Master that was unfit to be obeyed. II. Its danger. This sin is particularly specified as a very principal occasion of bringing down all those judgments with which the Jews were visited at the time of their captivity in Babylon. — *Simeon*.

Sabbath observance. — A young man, well off in the world, and an elderly man of business, were riding in a railway carriage together, between London and a country town, when the question of Sunday amusements came up. "I maintain that Sunday ought to be a general holiday," said the younger, in a tone which betokened assurance and presumption, "and the people ought not to be kept out of such places as the Zoological Gardens and the Crystal Palace grounds. I would have Sunday used for recreation." "Recreation!" answered the elder, gravely, "yes, that is the very word. The Sabbath is meant for recreation, and if people were recreated, they would want very little of the so-called recreation which they now make so much of."

37-41. (37, 38) *make* . . . *fringes*, "There have been various conjectures as to the object of this law. The most probable is that the 'fringe' was intended as a sort of badge, by which, as well as by circumcision and by the fashion of their beards, and by their peculiar diet, the Hebrews were to be distinguished from other people." — *Pict. Bib.* *borders*,^g corners. *put* . . . *upon*, add to. *ribband, R. V.*, "cord." *blue*, blue was of peculiar sanctity to the Hebrews, being the color of the priests' robes. (39) *that* . . . *look, etc.*, it was a constant reminder of their peculiar relation to God. *ye* . . . *not*,^h that ye wander not. *remember*, memory aided by sight. (41) *to* . . . *God*,ⁱ the great purpose of their deliverance.

Fringes in the borders of garments. — As the children of Israel were to wear these fringes, to remind them of their duties towards God, so have we many

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"Childish, imbecile carelessness is enough to render any man poor without the aid of a single positive vice." — *Wayland*.

presumptuous sins

^a *Le. iv. 27, 28; I Ti. i. 12-16.*

^b *De. xxvii. 12, 13; Ps. xix. 13; He. x. 26; 2 Pe. ii. 10. c Pr. xiii. 13; He. iv. 12, 13; Jo. xii. 48; He. x. 28-31.*

Boldness puts forth men before their time. Wherein we have seen that many, like lapwings and partridges, have run away with some part of the shell upon their heads." — *Bishop Hall*.

the sabbath-breaker

^d *Ex. xxxi. 14, 15; xxxv. 2, 3.*

^e *Ex. xxxi. 19; Le. xxv. 8.*

^f *1 K. xxi. 13.*

Sabbath is called "Day of light" by the Jews; "day of silence" by the Africans; "praying day" by the Cree Indians; the early Christians called it the "queen of days."

"It is a curious fact that though the rain keeps thousands away from Church on Sunday it does not deter a single man from attending to his business on week-days."

fringes for remembrance

^g *De. xxii. 12; Ma. xxlii. 5.*

^h *De. xxix. 19; Je. ix. 14; Ju. xvii. 5, 6; Ez. vi. 9; Ps. lxxiii. 27, cvi. 39; Ja. iv. 4.*

ⁱ *Le. xi. 44, 45; Ro. xii. 1; 1 Th. iv. 7; 1 Pe. i. 15, 16.*

Cir. b. c. 1491.

like reminders of our duties to Him. Among our fringes of remembrance are—I. The word of God. This we have constantly before us, to bring to our remembrance our duty to—1. God; 2. Our fellow-men. II. The example of good men around us. III. The warning conveyed to us in the lives of sinners. — *W. H. Thomson.*

The art of reflection.—Reader, you have been bred in a land abounding with men able in arts, learning, and knowledge manifold; this man in one, this is another; few in many, none in all. But there is one art of which every man should be a master—the art of reflection. If you are not a thinking man, to what purpose are you a man at all? In like manner, there is one knowledge which it is every man's duty and interest to acquire, namely, self-knowledge. Or to what end was man alone, of all animals, endued by the Creator with the faculty of self-consciousness. — *Coleridge.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

Korah's rebellion

a Nu. xxvi. 9.

b It may read, "Now, Korah... took counsel apart with Dathan," etc. See *Spk. Com.*

c Ps. cvl. 16.

d Nu. xiv. 5; xx. 5.

e 2 Pe. ii. 9, 10.

Korah's object was not to abolish the distinction between the Levites and the people, but to win priestly dignity for himself and his kinsmen. But this ultimate design is masked for the present in order to win the support of the Reubenites, by putting forward claims to spiritual equality on behalf of every Israelite." — *Spk. Com.*

On vs. 1. *Blunt, Serip. Coin.* 75.

Korah called to the trial

f 2 Ch. xxvi. 19; 1 K. vii. 50; Ex. xxxvii. 16; Ho. ix. 4; Ez. viii. 11; Re. viii. 3-5.
g Ex. xxviii. 1; Le. xxi. 12.
h 1 S. ii. 28; Ps. cv. 26; 2 Ti. ii. 19.
i 1 S. xviii. 23.
j Nu. viii. 14; De. x. 8; Nu. iv. 17-20.
k Nu. iii. 10, 38.

1-5. (1) **Korah**, see Ex. vi. 18. **Dathan**,^a (belonging to a fountain). **Abiram** (father of loftiness or renown). **Eliab**, (to whom God is Father). **On** (strength). **Peleth**, (swiftness). **took**, i. e. perh. took counsel,^b (men, in ital., not in Heb). (2) **princes** . . congregation, R. V. "princes of the congregation, called to the assembly." (3) **against** . . **Aaron**,^c he objected to influence of fam. of Aaron over rest of Levites. **wherefore**, etc., it was God who had exalted them. **all** . . **holy**, "Under the Christian dispensation the priesthood, properly so termed, is abolished, as all Christians constitute 'a holy nation, a royal priesthood;' but still it does not follow from this that all the men of the church are equally qualified to discharge the functions of leaders and teachers. This depends upon their spiritual gifts, which are the true basis of ministerial character." — *Bush*. (4) **when** . . **face**,^d laying the matter bef. God. (5) **spake**, having first spoken to God. **even** . . **shew**,^e he will leave the answer in higher hands. **whom** . . **him**, whom he has selected and especially qualified as priests.

The policy of the place-hunter.—I. The place sought. The priesthood. Why? II. The plan adopted. 1. The Reubenites gained over; 2. Pretense of popular advocacy; 3. Attack upon Moses and Aaron. III. The plotters confronted. Moses refers them to God and leaves the decision with Him.

Nature of the uprising.—"The former rebellions had been mere popular tumults; but this was a regular conspiracy, headed by persons of consequence, abetted by many of the princes, and favored by most of the congregation." *The princes of the assembly.*—I notice this passage particularly, because it appeared from it that 250 persons of this description, who rose up against Moses, became to him objects of extreme terror; which they could not have been if their voices had not been, at the same time, the voices of their families and tribes. Still more explicit, and to the point, is the passage, Deut. xxix. 9, where Moses, in a speech to the whole people, says, "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God, your heads, your tribes (that is, chiefs of tribes), your elders, your scribes, all Israel, infants, wives, strangers that are in your camp, from the hewer of wood to the drawer of water." Now as Moses could not possibly be heard by two millions and a half of people (for to so many did the Israelites amount, women and children included), it must be manifest that the first named persons represented the people, to whom they again repeated the word of Moses. Who these representatives were, may in some measure be understood from Josh. xxiii. 2 and xxiv. 1. They would seem to have been of two sorts. To some their office as judges gave a right to appear in the assembly; and these were not necessarily of the same family in which they exercised that office. Others, again, had a seat and a voice in the Diet, as the heads of families.—*Michaelis.*

6-11. (6) **censers**,^f see Le. x. 2, translated fire-pans in Ex. xxvii. 3, prob. a household utensil. (7) **put** . . **morrow**,^g undertake holiest function of priestly service. **choose**,^h visible evidence of choice expected. **take** . . **you**, "perhaps he would say that if he and Aaron were usurpers, the whole tribe of Levi were usurpers too." — *Pulp. Com.* (8) **ye** . . **Levi**, the title shows that Moses penetrated their design. (9) **but** . . **you**,ⁱ so small that you want to be higher. (10) **he** . . **him**,^j itself honor enough. **seek** . . **also**,^k this was their main object. (11) **cause**, personal and selfish ambition. **and** . . **Aaron**, only a poor servant doing what the Lord had bidden him to do.

Competitive examinations.—I. The test proposed:—Korah, etc., to discharge one of the easiest duties of the office to which they aspired. II. The referee:—The Lord, not Moses or Korah. III. The reason of the test:—To reveal the true motive of the rebels.

“Fling away ambition:

By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by’t?”—*Shakespeare.*

The project of Themistocles.—Themistocles having conceived the design of transferring the government of Greece from the hands of the Lacedæmonians into those of the Athenians, kept his thoughts continually fixed on this great project. Being at no time very nice or scrupulous in the choice of his measures, he thought anything which could tend to the accomplishment of the end he had in view, just and lawful. In an assembly of the people one day, he accordingly intimated that he had a very important design to propose, but he could not communicate it to the people at large, because the greatest secrecy was necessary to its success; he therefore desired that they would appoint a person to whom he might explain himself on the subject. Aristides was unanimously pitched upon by the assembly, who referred themselves entirely to his opinion of the affair. Themistocles, taking him aside, told him that the design he had conceived was to burn the fleet belonging to the rest of the Grecian states, which then lay in a neighboring port, when Athens would assuredly become mistress of all Greece. Aristides returned to the assembly, and declared to them, that nothing could be more advantageous to the commonwealth than the project of Themistocles; but that, at the same time, nothing in the world could be more unfair. Without inquiring further, the assembly unanimously declared, that since such was the case, Themistocles should wholly abandon his project. — *Cheever.*

12—17. (12) *we . . up,*^a from our tents to tab.; prob. they feared punishment. (13) *out . . honey,*^b in their insolence applying to Egypt the title belonging to the Land of Prom. (14) *put . . men?* fig. deceive; throw dust in eyes of. (15) *wroth*, being openly despised, and charged with being an ambitious deceiver. I, etc.,^c never had abused his power. (16) *be . . Lord,*^d at the door of the tab.; let Him decide. (17) *incense,*^e see Ex. xxx. 34—38.

The challenge rejected.—I. The challenge. Dathan and Abiram summoned to the tabernacle to witness the trial of Korah and his company. II. The challenge rejected. 1. Probably they began to fear; 2. Or, since they had rebelled, they would resist authority at once; 3. They increase their guilt by the charge introduced by them against Moses, into their rejection. He had blinded the people.

Man, having entered upon an evil course, unless arrested by some restraining force, proceeds to greater daring in and deeper depths of wickedness.—So Dathan and Abiram grew bold and insolent in sin. “Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse.” Character is never stationary. It grows either towards perfection or towards perdition. In the case of the wicked their dread progress in wickedness is not difficult of explanation. (1) The heart becomes hardened; less susceptible to good influences; less amenable to conscience, etc. (2) The propensity to evil increases in power. As the soul falls the momentum with which it falls increases. (3) The circumstances into which they bring themselves by sin urge them onward. One sin seems to make other sins necessary. Shakespeare clearly expresses the idea in *Macbeth*:

“I am in blood
Stept in so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o’er.”

18—22. (18) *and . . censer, etc.,*^f they presumptuously accepted the challenge. *and . . tabernacle*, not the usual place where incense was offered, but here because no room in the holy place for such a large number, or that the entire people might witness. (19) *glory, etc.,*^g the Lord manifested His presence also. (See ch. xiv. 10). (20, 21) *separate, etc.,*^h the present safety of the wicked off. depends on the presence of the good.ⁱ They could not be consumed till Moses, etc., had withdrawn. (22) *God . . flesh,*^j God the author and ruler of life and the soul.

Dangerous companionships (vs. 21).—I. The wicked are doomed to destruction. “God is angry with the wicked every day.” “He that believeth not is condemned already.” II. The presence of the good postpones, for

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“Dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely a shadow of a dream. And I hold ambition of so light a quality that it is but a shadow’s shadow.” — *Shakespeare.*

“Ambition destroys the pleasures of the present in ardent aspirations after an imaginative future.” — *Dr. Thomas.*

Dathan and Abiram refuse to obey

^a Ex. ii. 14; Ac. vii. 35.

^b 2 Pe. ii. 21, 22; iii. 3-9.

^c 1 S. xii. 3; Ac. xx. 33; 2 Co. vii. 2.

^d 1 Co. iii. 13.

^e De. xxxiii. 10; 1 S. ii. 28; 1 Ch. ix. 30.

“Bad company is like a nail driven into a post, which, after the first and second blow, may be drawn out with little difficulty; but, being once driven up to the head, can only be drawn out by the destruction of the wood.” — *St. Augustine.*

Korah before the tabernacle

^f Re. viii. 3-5.

^g Ex. xvi. 7; Ez. i. 28; ii. 1-5.

^h Ex. xxxii. 10; xxxiii. 5; He. xii. 28, 29.

ⁱ e. g., case of Sodom; parable of tares.

^j Ac. xvii. 24-28; Job xii. 10; He. xii. 9.

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"As it is madness to open our doors to those who bring the plague which infecteth our bodies, it is much greater madness to set open our doors to swearers, ribald talkers and ungodly livers who infect both soul and body."—*Cawdray*.

a while, the execution of the sentence; and "they grow together to the harvest." III. The good should seek to maintain distinction of character; and so prepare for the final separation.

Fatal discontent.—A fern told me that it was too bad to be always shut up in a shady place, and that it wanted to grow beside the red rose in the garden. The fern said, "I have as much right to be out in the sunshine as the rose has, and I will be out." I transplanted the little malcontent, and in one hot day the sun struck it dead with his dart of fire. Now, if we be where Christ means us to be, in shade or in light, and will grow according to His will, it shall be well with us, but if we touch that which is forbidden, we shall be made to remember that it is written, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."—*J. Parker*.

Unrestrained ambition.—

How, like a mounting devil in the heart,
Rules the unrein'd ambition! Let it once
But play the monarch, and its haughty brow
Glow with a beauty that bewilders thought
And unthrones peace forever. Putting on
The very pomp of Lucifer, it turns
The heart to ashes, and with not a spring
Left in the bosom for the spirit's lip
We look upon our splendor and forget
The thirst for which we perish.—*N. P. Willis*.

**Dathan and
Abiram
swallowed up**

a Ge. xix. 14; Is. lii. 11; 2 Co. vi. 17; Je. li. 6; Ac. ii. 40; Re. xviii. 4; Ex. xxxii. 26-28.

b De. xxvii. 22.

c Nu. xxiv. 13.

d Zec. ii. 9; iv. 9; 1 S. xii. 15-18.

e Jo. v. 36.

"If I have found any good companions, I will cherish them as the choicest of men or as angels which are sent as guardians to me. If I have any bad ones, I will study to lose them, lest by keeping them I lose myself in the end."—*Feltham*.

**the destruction of the
rebels**

f Job xxxi. 3; Ps. cvii. 17; Is. xxviii. 21; Ps. lv. 15; Jude 11.

g Ps. cvi. 18; Is. xxxiii. 10-14; Job iv. 8. 9.

23—30. (23 24) tabernacle, tent. Korah, S. side of tab. Dathan . . Abiram, being Reubenites, were in outer line of camp on S. side. (25) elders . . him, his supporters and witnesses. (26) from . . men,^a Dathan and Abiram. (27) Dathan . . out, Korah and his 250 had gone to E. side of tab., where Aaron and the priests were. stood . . children, full of fear, wonder: conscience-stricken. Perh. defiantly. (28) hereby,^b by a sign wh. he descr. works, including the separation of Aaron, etc., to the priesthood. for . . mind,^c it is not nepotism or favoritism, as ye suppose. (29) then . . me, the Lord sparing them would be evidence of the Lord's approving of them. (30) but if, etc.,^d he proposes a test wh. could not be of his contriving. then . . Lord,^e fr whom alone such a judgment could come.

Forming friendships.—Be cautious with whom you associate, and never give your company or your confidence to persons of whose good principles you are not certain. No person that is an enemy to God can be a friend to man. He that has already proved himself ungrateful to the Author of every blessing, will not scruple, when it will serve his turn, to shake off a fellow-worm like himself. He may render you instrumental to his own purposes, but he will never benefit you. A bad man is a curse to others; as he is secretly, notwithstanding all his boasting and affected gaiety, a burden to himself. Shun him as you would a serpent in your path. Be not seduced by his rank, his wealth, his wit, or his influence. Think of him as already in the grave; think of him as standing before the everlasting God in judgment. This awful reality will instantly strip off all that is now so imposing, and present him in his true light, the object rather of your compassion, and of your prayers, than of your wonder or imitation.—*Bp. Coleridge*. There is but one resource for innocence among men or women, and that is an embargo upon all commerce of bad men. Bar the window! bolt the door! nor answer their strain, if they charm never so wisely! In no other way can you be safe. So well am I assured of the power of bad men to seduce the erring purity of man, that I pronounce it next to impossible for man or woman to escape, if they permit bad men to approach and dally with them.—*Beecher*.

31—35. (31) as . . words, suddenly responding to them. clave, as it sometimes does in an earthquake. (32) all . . Korah, i. e. Korah's coadjutors in this part of the camp. (33) they, etc., themselves, families and tents, etc. they . . congregation,^f leaving only their infamous memory behind. (34) lest . . also, the chasm was so great; and they not without sin. (35) fire . . Lord, i. e. from the Divine glory enthroned in the pillar of cloud, see Le. x. 1-7. consumed, etc.,^g thus Aaron was established in his priesthood at the tab., while the authority of Moses was vindicated in the camp.

The punishment of the conspirators.—It was—I. Sudden. II. Complete. III. Awful. IV. Superhuman. They died by the visitation of God. V

Instructive. 1. It vindicated the official position of Aaron and Moses; 2. It was a warning for all time.

The certainty of punishment. — As you stood some stormy day upon a sea-cliff, and marked the giant billow rise from the deep to rush on with foaming crest, and throw itself thundering on the trembling shore, did you ever fancy that you could stay its course, and hurl it back to the depths of ocean? Did you ever stand beneath the leaden lowering cloud, and mark the lightning's leap, as it shot and flashed, dazzling athwart the gloom, and think that you could grasp the bolt and change its path? Still more foolish and vain his thought who fancies that he can arrest or turn aside the purpose of God, saying, "What is the Almighty that we should serve Him? Let us break His bands asunder, and cast away His cords from us!" Break His bands asunder! — how He hath sitteth in the heavens shall laugh! — *Dr. Guthrie, Judgment on insolent sin.* — About the year 1793 an awful incident occurred at Salem, in the State of New Jersey. There had been a revival of religion, and the pious part of the community had been disturbed with riots and mobs; but, on making application to the civil magistrate, these tumults had been effectually suppressed. The opposers of religion turned their attention to a new method of entertainment; acting in a farcical way at religious meetings, pretending to speak of their experiences, to exhort, etc., in order to amuse one another in a profane, theatrical manner. One night, a young actress stood upon one of the benches, pretending to speak of her experience; and, with mock solemnity, cried out, "Glory to God, I have found peace, I am sanctified, I am now fit to die." Scarcely had this unhappy girl uttered these words, before she actually dropped dead upon the floor, and was taken up a lifeless corpse. Struck with this awful visitation, the auditors were instantly seized with inexpressible terror, and every face was covered with consternation and dismay.

36-40. (36, 37) **yonder**, afar off. **hallowed**,^a i. e. the censers, bec. once employed in the holy service of the sanctuary, hence not to be used for common purposes. (38) **sinner**s . . **souls**,^b *R. V.*, "lives." The Pentateuch conceives no consequence of sin beyond physical death. (39) **broad** . . **altar**, so, "God's altar was *protected* by the means which had been used to *violate* its sanctity." (40) **memorial**, and a warning forever. **that** . . **Korah**,^c in sin and punishment.

The spirit of ambition. — Ambition is the most troublesome and vexatious passion that can afflict the sons of men. Virtue hath not half so much trouble in it, for it sleeps quietly, without startings and affrighted fancies; it looks cheerfully, smiles with much serenity, and though it laughs not often, yet it is ever delightful in the apprehension of some faculty. It fears no man, nor thing, nor is it ever discomposed, and hath no concernments in the great alterations of the world, and entertains death like a friend, and reckons the issues of it as the greatest of its hopes. But ambition is full of distraction; it teems with stratagems, and is swelled with expectations as with a tympany. It sleeps sometimes as the wind in a storm, still and quiet for a minute, that it may burst out into an impetuous blast till the cordage of its heartstrings crack. It fears when none is nigh, and prevents things that never had intention, and falls under the inevitability of such incidents, which either could not be foreseen or not prevented. It is an infinite labor to make a man's self miserable, and the utmost acquist is so goodly a purchase, that he makes his days full of sorrow to enjoy the troubles of a three years' reign. Therefore, there is no greater unreasonableness in the world than in the designs of ambition; for it makes the present certainly miserable, unsatisfied, troublesome, and discontented, for the uncertain acquisition of an honor which nothing can secure; and besides a thousand possibilities of miscarrying, it relies upon no greater certainty than our life; and when we are dead all the world sees who was the fool. — *J. Taylor.*

41-45. (41) **ye** . . **Lord**,^d they looked upon Moses' prayer, not Korah's sin, as the cause of death. The fearful judgment they had just witnessed did not quell their murmuring. (42) **Moses** . . **looked**, *etc.*, they looked in the right direction for comfort and defense. **behold**, *etc.*, God showed Himself ready to help His servants. (43) **Moses**, *etc.*, they appealed fr. the people to God. (44, 45) **Get** . . **moment**,^e non-intervention would have resulted in their immediate and full vindication. **and** . . **faces**, in intercession for their enemies; no provocation abated their charity and compassion for the people.

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"As a father will not willingly suffer his child to come into a place where he may be in danger, much more a Christian father is bound to keep his child and the rest of his family from wicked company, where their souls should be hurt and poisoned." — *Cawdry.*

the rebels' censers made into a memorial

a Le. xxvii. 28.

b Pr. xx. 2; viii. 26; Hab. ii. 10; Ez. xiv. 8.

c 2 Ch. xxvi. 16-20.

Bible Examples of Ambition. — Adam and Eve (Ge. iii. 5, 6); Builders of Babel (Ge. xi. 4); Miriam and Aaron (Nu. xii. 2); Absalom (2 S. xv. 4, xviii. 18); Adonijah (1 K. i. 5); Sennacherib (2 K. xix. 23); Sons of Zebadee (Ma. xx. 21).

the people complain concerning the death of the rebels

d Ps cvi. 25.
e Nu. xx. 6.
f Ex. xx. 5; xxxiii. 34; 1 S. xii. 23-25.

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vs. 44-49. *W. Gouge, God's Three Arrows*, 1.

the plague is stayed

a Ps. ciii. 7.

b He. vii. 22-26; Is. liii. 12.

"Aaron by his acceptable ministrations and his personal self-devotion, foreshadows emphatically, in this transaction the perfect meditation and sacrifice of Himself made by Christ."—*Spk. Comm.*

c Ps. cvl. 29; 1 Ch. xxvii. 24.

d Ps. lxxviii. 18-20.

Serm. on vs. 46 by I. Hunter (1686); vs. 47, 48 by Dr. G. Horne (1778); and G. Watson (1756).

"No attribute so well befits the exalted seat supreme, and power's disposing hand as clemency. Each crime must from its quality be judged; and pity there should interpose, where malice is not the aggressor."—*Sin Wm. Jones*.

vs. 47, 48. *Bp. Hall Cont.*; *Bp. Horne*, ii. 175; *M. Anderson*, 201; *A. Arthur, M. A.*, i. 285.

vs. 48. *J. Slade*, vi. 37; *C. Bradley*, 224; *Dr. A. M. Carr*, 82.

Murmuring a mother sin.—As the river Nile bringeth forth many crocodiles, and the scorpion many serpents at one birth, so murmuring is a sin that breeds and brings forth many sins at once. It is like the monster of Hydra—cut off one head, and many will rise up in its room. It is the mother of harlots—the mother of all abominations—a sin that breeds many other sins (Num. xvi. 41, xvii. 10), viz., disobedience, contempt, ingratitude, impatience, distrust, rebellion, cursing, carnality, yea, it charges God with folly, yea, with blasphemy. The language of a murmuring soul is this: Surely God might have done this sooner, and that wiser, and the other thing better.—*T. Brooks*.

46—50. (46) *take, etc.*,^a personal intercession followed by official act. atonement, act as a mediator or intercessor; nothing expiatory is implied. (47) *ran*, earnest loving zeal on behalf of his foes. (48) *between . . living*, to stay the spread of the contagion. *and . . stayed*,^b note the dif. betw. the weakness of the self-elected priests and the Divinely-appointed ones: *those* could not save themselves; *these* saved others. (49) *now, etc.*,^c such a great number implies that it was something supernatural that took them off, something more sudden than a pestilence or a natural visitation. (50) *returned, etc.*,^d there to await the further commands of God. *stayed*, finally and effectually.

The plague stayed.—I. The scene of awe presented to us in the text. Disobedience and rebellion were the cause of the plague. II. The courageous and generous act of Aaron. Neither the rage of the whole throng, highly incensed against him, nor the violence of the awful pestilence, dismayed his pious soul. Learn—1. Let us be deeply impressed with the hatefulness of sin in God's sight; 2. Let us entertain a just and humiliating sense of our own weakness and insufficiency; 3. Let us be thankful to God for the great work of redemption; 4. Let us imitate Aaron's strength of faith; 5. Let us also imitate him in his love to his brethren; 6. For our encouragement in the path of duty, let us remember that we, too, have a great High Priest, whose merits and intercession will avail on our behalf.—*Laing*.

The danger of ambition.—When once a man has been touched with the ambition of the Presidency, he never gets over it. There is no hospital that can cure him. There is no physician that can cure him. There is nothing that can cure him. Everything in him is transformed. His judgment ceases to be reliable. All his life has gone out from the ordinary courses and rules of men. And when circumstances at last bring home the unwelcome and long-combated conviction that the end of life itself is lost, his sun goes down in darkness. And if I were endowed with the descriptive power of a Dante, methinks I could raise up a nobler Inferno than those which he has rendered immortal upon the pictured page. I would draw the proportions of one of nature's noblemen—sublime of reason, instinct with moral conceptions, full of wonderful powers, walking in the very prime and strength and grandeur of life, in a round of night, and in a realm of bitterness, because he had placed his mind upon an earthly ambition, and had utterly lost the chance of realizing that ambition; and I would show how he was gnawed at the soul, and how he became a suicide. For not he alone is a suicide who takes the cord and suspends himself by the beam. Not he alone is a suicide who drives home the dagger. He who commits suicide by instalments, and day by day drowns his care and grief in the intoxicating cup, is a suicide killing himself by inches.—*Beecher*. *Sin brings punishment.*—The punishment of sin is certain. All Scripture tells us so. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." "Be sure your sin will find you out." "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished." "The way of transgressors is hard." All the world's proverbs tell us so. "A reckless youth; rueful age." "As he has made his bed, so he must lie in it." "He who will not be ruled by the rudder, must be ruled by the rock." Even Satan himself tells us so. In the old legend of Dr. Faustus, when he bids the devil lay aside his propensity for lying, and tell the truth, the devil answers, "The world does me injustice to tax me with lies. Let me ask their own conscience if I have ever deceived a single man into believing that a bad deed was a good one." Even wicked men admit it. . . . God is no respecter of persons.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-5. (1) and . . spake, prob. shortly after the plague. (2) rod,^a or staff. write . . rod,^b this, for their own satisfaction, they were to do themselves (3) Aaron's . . Levi, yet he was not the nat. head of the tribe; being invested with the office of high priest, he became prince of the tribe. (4) testimony,^c the ark. (5) that . . blossom,^d R. V., "bud;" a sign that none could gain-say. make . . murmurings, by this most unanswerable sign.

The murmurers silenced. — I. Divine knowledge illustrated. All murmuring known to Gcd. II. Divine purpose stated. To vindicate and defend Moses. III. Divine test explained. I. None could say it was one-sided; 2. All were tried alike.

The punishment of ambition. — The builders of Babel were confounded in their speech, scattered abroad in the earth, and their work left as a monument of their folly. Abimelech was killed with a millstone cast upon his head by a woman. Absalom was hanged by the hair of his head in the wood, while seeking the throne from his father. Haman was hanged on a gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai. Nebuchadnezzar was thrust from his throne and his palace into the condition of a beast in the wilderness. Semiramis was slain in a brutish passion by the hand of her own son. Cæsar was gored with many stabs of daggers in the senate-house. Pompey, after he had caused golden mountains to be carried in triumph, finding no more land to conquer, he having gained so much, wanted five or six feet of ground to make him a sepulchre. Another, who had taken for ensign a world, with the helm of a ship, and his motto, *Hoc opus*, showing that his ambitions transported him not to any lower pitch than the world's conquest, found himself to be in a worse state than if he had been a swabber in a ship. Macrinus, a hunter, a fencer, a scrivener, became an orator, then a fiscal, next prætor of the palace, then emperor, and lastly was massacred by his son Diadumenus. Ablavius, most powerful under Constantine, was torn in pieces under Constantius, as a victim. — *Cassin*.

6-9. (6) Aaron . . rods, distinguishable fr. the rest by the name only. (7) rods . . Lord, the inference is that they were placed in the holy place, where Moses only had access. (8) Aaron . . budded,^e the rest were barren stocks. and . . buds, etc.,^b prob. dif. parts of rod showed those dif. stages of fructification. (9) looked, had ocular proof of the mir. took . . rod, and thus admitted wh. were theirs, and wh. was Aaron's.

Aaron's rod, or the priests for the people. — There are three facts suggested by the history contained in this chapter. (1) That the people require priests; (2) That they are liable to be imposed upon by false priests; (3) That there are men whom God appoints as priests for them. They are the true priests, who, like Aaron's rod, develop — I. Life; we mean, of course, spiritual life. II. Beauty. The priest must not only bud, but blossom. There is the blossom of — 1. A meek and humble spirit; 2. Tender sympathy with suffering; 3. Magnanimity. III. Fruit. Aaron's rod produced almonds as well as budded and blossomed. A true priest not only lives and unfolds a noble disposition, but is really useful. — *Thomas*.

Aaron's rod that budded. — It must have been a most convincing prodigy for the purpose it was designed to answer, for the people no sooner saw it than they cried out in remorse for their wavering allegiance, "Behold, we die! we perish! we all perish!" But beyond the age wherein the marvel occurred, this putting vegetable life into that dry staff has frequently been borrowed and used for other objects. Thus Achilles, in classic poetry, when enraged against Agamemnon, is made by Homer to refer to this miracle:

"But hearken! I shall swear a solemn oath
By this same sceptre, which shall never bud,
Nor boughs bring forth, as once; which, having left
Its stock on the high mountains at what time
The woodman's axe lopt off its foliage green
And stript its bark, shall never grow again:—
By this I swear!"

And amongst Latin literature you will, some of you, remember that a certain king confirms a covenant with Æneas by a similar oath.

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the question
of the priest-
hood settled

a Nu. i. 4.

b1 Co. xi. 3; Ep.
iv. 15; Col. i. 17,
18.c Ex. xxv. 22;
xxix. 43.d Is. xl. 1; xlii. 1;
Zec. vi. 12, 13.

"Ambition is at
distance a goodly
prospect, tempting
to the view; the
height delights us,
and the mountain
top looks beauti-
ful, because 'tis
nigh to heaven;
but we ne'er think
how sandy's the
foundation, what
storms will batter,
and what tempests
shake it."—*Otway*.

the twelve
rods

e Ro. i. 3, 4; 1 Co.
xv. 20, 21; 2 Ti. i.
10; Ep. i. 18-23;
Jo. xii. 24; Col.
iii. 3, 4.

"This was a fit
emblem of the
Messiah's resur-
rection, as declar-
ative of His
priesthood's being
acceptable to God,
—nothing being
more fit to repre-
sent one raised
from the dead than
a dead branch re-
stored to vegetable
life, and made to
bud, and blossom,
and bring forth
fruit."—*Maclaurin*.

"Party spirit not
only incapacitates
for sweet commun-
ion with God, but
by encouraging
pride, and many
evil passions, it
frequently excites
to malice and bar-
barity, and the
most bitter perse-
cutions."—*Saurin*.

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Aaron's rod

a "It seems not to have been preserved till Solomon's days (1 K. viii. 9). But the rod of A.'s Divine anti-type, Jesus Christ, is preserved forevermore."—*Wordsworth*. "A.'s rod was prob. lost when the ark was taken by the Philistines."—*Spk. Com.* "In this way the staff became a sign to the rebellious which could not fail to stop their murmuring."—*Keil*.

b Job xiv. 1, 2; Ja. iv. 14; Is. xlv. 6; Ja. i. 13-15; Ro. vi. 23; v. 12.

the charge of the priests and Levites

c Ex. xxviii. 36-38; Ps. lxxxix. 19; Job xxxiii. 24; Is. liii. 11, 12; Ro. iv. 6-8, 23-25; He. viii. 1, 2; vii. 26-28.

d Ex. xxx. 1-7; Nu. xvi. 46.

e Nu. viii. 19; iii. 9, 12.

f Ps. lxxv. 4; 1 Co. xii. 4-6; Ro. xi. 29; 1 Co. vii. 7; He. ii. 4; Ep. iv. 7-12; 1 Co. xiv. 1, 12; Ja. i. 16, 17; 1 Pe. iv. 10, 11.

See *Origen*, Op. ii. 301; *S. Mather*, *M. A., Figures and Types*, 527.

the priests' portion

g He. viii. 3, 5; Nu. v. 9; Le. ii. 8; xiv. 18.

10-13. (10) **Bring . . testimony**, after inspection it was taken to the place where it fructified and there preserved as a memorial. **kept . . rebels,** but it was also the token of their priestly intercessor. **quite . . murmurings**, by calls to repentance, and making atonement. (11) **Moses, etc.**, always, and in all things, obedient. (12, 13) **we die, etc.**,^b if not a fruit of faith, this fear of death would yet be salutary.

Aaron's rod that budded.—We shall show—I. What God did to confirm the Aaronic priesthood (vs. 1-9). The use of Aaron's rod was not confined to that generation; it remained to future ages—1. An evidence of God's decision; 2. A memorial of His mercy; 3. A witness for Him, in case He should be hereafter compelled to inflict His judgments upon them. II. What He has done to confirm the priesthood of Christ. Two things particularly show the Divine nature of our Saviour's appointment. 1. His resurrection; 2. The spread of His Gospel.—*C. Simeon*.

The end of worldly ambition.—Look to the end of worldly ambition, and what is it? Take the four greatest rulers, perhaps, that ever sat upon a throne. Alexander, when he had so completely subdued the nations that he wept because there were no more to conquer, at last set fire to a city and died in a scene of debauch. Hannibal, who filled three bushels with the gold rings taken from the slaughtered knights, died at last by poison administered by his own hand, unwept and unknown, in a foreign land. Cæsar, having conquered 800 cities, and dyed his garments with the blood of one million of his foes, was stabbed by his best friends, in the very place which had been the scene of his greatest triumph. Napoleon, after being the scourge of Europe, and the desolator of his country, died in banishment, conquered and a captive. So, truly, "the expectation of the wicked shall be cut off."—*Bowes*.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1-7. (1) **bear . . sanctuary**, they shall be held responsible; *e. g.* for the intrusion of strangers or the unclean. **bear . . priesthood,** through neglect of duty, etc. (2) **brethren, etc.**, see Nu. iii. 6-10. **they . . joined**, the Heb. word for *joined* is the word from which the name *Levi* is derived, and seems in this case to be a play upon the word. The tribe of Levi was to be Levited or joined. **thou, etc.**, Aaron and his sons only. **before . . witness**, before the most holy place where the ark rested, where the common priest could not enter. (3) **charge, etc.**, see Nu. iii. 25, 31, 36; Nu. iv. 15, 17-20. **nor . . also**, they for so doing, and you for permitting it, see vs. 1. (4) **they . . thee**, the Levites to minister to the priests, the priests to the Lord. **and . . you**, all but Levites excluded; even an Israelite was counted a stranger in this relation. (5) **that . . Israel,**^d through illegal departure fr. prescribed lines of duty, as in the case of Korah. (6) **given . . Lord,**^e hence they were to be conscientiously employed by Aaron in the Lord's service. **gift,**^f

The fidelity of one, the safety of many (vs. 5).—This applies—I. To ministers of the gospel, who are—1. To preach the whole truth; 2. To guard the ordinances of religion; 3. To urge the performance of duty, that the people of their charge may be saved from sin and wrath. II. To civil rulers, who are to make and enforce laws to maintain and increase the tone of public morality. III. To heads of families, who, by example and precept, should seek to form good characters, and correct evil habits in their children and servants.

An illustration of fidelity.—The fidelity of the keepers of the lighthouse once on Minot's Ledge, near Boston, may well be imitated. In the terrible April gale of 1851, this beautiful structure was destroyed. Two men were in it at the time: and a vast multitude were gathered upon the shore, waiting, in anxious distress, for the expected catastrophe. Every hour, however, the bell tolled the time, and ever the light pierced the dark raging storm, and bid the sailor beware. No howling blast could silence the one, or rising wave extinguish the other. At last, one giant wave, mightier than the rest rose up and threw its arms around the tower, and laid it low in the waves. Then alone was the bell silent; then alone did the light cease to shine.—*Reid*.

8-14. (8) **And . . spake**, the charge and responsibility has been set forth, now their maintenance is to be provided for. **by . . anointing**, not on account of personal worth or merit, but on account of their office. (9) **oblation, etc.**,^g the general term embracing all that is to follow. (10) **In . . place**, not the holy of holies, wh. was never used for eating, but the

court of the priests. (11) **and . . thine**, the gifts wh. follow may be eaten by the priests' families at home; all of the household who were clean might share them. (11) **heave-offering**, see Ex. xxix. 27. (12) **all . . best,**^a *lit.* all the fat. (13) **whatsoever**, the quantity left to the offerer. (14) **devoted**, things vowed, see Le. xxvii. 28.

Corruption of our calling.—For although the actual occupation in which many men are engaged is in itself the very line of their duty, yet they themselves make it unworthy of an heir of immortality by the spirit with which they enter on it. Earthly things are precious when we use them as the materials with which we may build up for ourselves a heavenly habitation, and the humblest and most ordinary trade or employment may be carried on with such a temper and such a heart that it may advance us daily on our way to heaven, and the angels themselves may behold us engaged in it with respect and love. But when pursued only for its own sake, without a single thought or hope reaching beyond it, and the practice of it sullied with all the unworthy principles and bad passions of the world, then what was before sound and wholesome becomes at once corrupt and injurious, like the manna, which, although given by God for the support of His people in their way through the wilderness, yet bred worms and became loathsome so soon as it was not used according to the will of its Giver.—*Dr. Arnold.* You listen to a minister suspiciously because he is paid for preaching. Very good, I only insist upon your being consistent throughout; then what will happen? When you are drowning, you will ask the life-boat men whether they are paid for their services, and on being told that they live by their occupation, you will nobly perish in the deep. When your house is in flames, you will demand, notwithstanding the stifling smoke and cracking timbers, whether the fire-escape men are paid for their work, and on learning that they have a pound a week, you will embrace the flames with a martyr's rapture. Of course you will do so. But let me tell you that men who try to save life never *can* be paid! A man may pay for his coat, but he can never pay for the services which, by the blessing of God, redeem and sanctify his nature.—*J. Parker.*

15—19. (15) **every thing, etc.,**^b see Ex. xiii. 2. (16) **and those, etc.,**^c see Nu. iii. 47. **for . . shekels**, to prevent extortion the sum was fixed by God. (17) **but, etc.,**^d these came under the law relating to clean beasts which had themselves to be given; money or another beast in place of them would not suffice, see Le. xxvii. 26, 27. (18) **as . . breast**, see Ex. xxix. 26—28. (19) **a . . salt,**^e *i. e.* indissoluble, inviolable.

The covenant of salt.—It seems to refer to an agreement made in which salt was used as a token of confirmation. We shall give an instance from Baron du Tott. "He (Moldovanji Pacha) was desirous of an acquaintance with me, and seeming to regret that his business would not permit him to stay long, he departed, promising in a short time to return. I had already attended him half way down the staircase, when stopping, and turning briskly to one of my domestics who followed me, 'Bring me directly,' said he, 'some bread and salt.' I was not less surprised at this fancy than at the haste which was made to obey him. What he requested was brought; when, taking a little salt between his fingers, and putting it with a mysterious air on a bit of bread, he ate it with a devout gravity, assuring me that I might now rely on him. I soon procured an explanation of this significant ceremony; but this same man, when become vizier, was tempted to violate this oath thus taken in my favor. Yet if this solemn contract be not always religiously observed, it serves, at least, to moderate the spirit of vengeance so natural to the Turks." The Baron adds in a note: "The Turks think it the blackest ingratitude to forget the man from whom we have received food, which is signified by the bread and salt in this ceremony."

20—24. (20) **Aaron**, he is here addressed representatively. **thou, i. e.** the priests. **thou . . land**, the mind of the priests not to be occupied with worldly affairs. **I . . part,**^f and will see that thou art provided for; spiritual possessions are infinitely more desirable than temporal. (21) **tenth,**^g tithes now instituted, had been paid in patriarchal times. (22) **lest . . die**, see Le. xxii. 9. (23) **they . . iniquity, i. e.,** of the people whom they represented. The people thus protected would the more readily support the Levites. (24) **among . . inheritance**, their time wholly occupied with affairs of religious

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^a Ex. xxiii. 19; Mi. vii. 1; De. xviii. 4; Ne. x. 35—38; Pr. iii. 9.

"The want of consistency in professing Christians has done more harm to Christianity than all the ravings of infidels from the day of Cain to the time of Paul."—*J. A. James.*

law of the firstborn

^b Ex. xxii. 29; Le. xxvii. 26; Nu. iii. 13.

^c Ex. xiii. 13; 1 Pe. i. 18, 19.

^d De. xv. 19; Le. iii. 2—5; Ep. v. 2.

^e Le. ii. 13; 2 Ch. xiii. 5.

"Covenants were ordinarily cemented in the E. by rites of hospitality; of wh. salt was the obvious token, entering as it does into every article of diet. It indicates perpetuity."—*Spk. Com.*

the priests' inheritance

^f De. x. 9; xiv. 27; xviii. 1, 2; Ps. xvi. 5; La. iii. 24; Ps. lxxiii. 25, 26.
^g Le. xxvii. 30, 32; He. vii. 5; Ro. xiii. 7; Ma. xxii. 21; xxiii. 23.

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 "Acc. to *Michaelis* every male adult Levite was supplied with as much as would maintain five grown-up persons. *Hooker* states that the worldly estate of the Levites was four times as good as any of the tribes of Israel."

the Levites' perquisite

a Je. xxxi. 14; Lu. x. 7; 1 Co. ix. 13; 1 Ti. v. 18.

b Le. xxii. 2, 15; Mal. i. 6-13; Ma. xxi. 33-41.

You all know some true Christian. You have never, it is true, seen one who in everything comes up to the Divine Ideal. There is, and always will be, in some points, a falling short; yet you know that the Christian has a life within him which the world has not.

the red heifer

c Song iv. 7; Ps. xiv. 2; He. ix. 13, 14.
 d Le. xxiv. 14; He. xiii. 11, 12.
 e 1 Pe. i. 19; De. xxi. 3; He. xii. 14.
 f Le. iv. 12; Ex. xxix. 14.
 g He. ix. 19; Is. i. 18.

worship, etc. It should be stated, however, that they had homes, and cities and pasturage, but no separate territory.

The priests' inheritance.—I. What it was not. 1. It was not material wealth; 2. It was not houses and lands; 3. It was not the result of trade or commerce; 4. Hence the usual avenues to wealth were closed to them, and they were denied the usual elements of wealth. II. What it was. God: "I will be," etc., vs. 20. 1. In all the defenses of My strength; 2. In all the resources of My providence; 3. In all the riches of My grace, 4. I, to whom all else belongs.

The bounty of God.—A tree was so laden with fruit that it bent its branches to the ground, and offered it to men in handfuls. Gotthold beheld it with pleasure, praised God for the blessing, and approached to take some. The force which he used shook the slender bough, and the consequence was, that several dropped at his feet. "Fair tree," he exclaimed, "how generous thou art! Thou givest me more than I desire; reminding me thereby of the incompressible and unmerited goodness of God, which presents its blessing upon loaded branches."—*Scriven*.

25-32. (25, 26) **tenth . . tithe**, as the whole tithe was the people's offering to the Levites, so this was the Levites' offering to the priests. It will be noted that the priests received a tenth part of all the people's offerings; which was the hundredth part of all the people's income. (27) **unto you**, accredited unto you and be as readily accepted as the tithe of the Israelites. (28) **give . . priest**, the Levites were not exempt, by reason of their service, fr. the need of priestly intercession. (29) **all . . thereof**, as they among the people, so their offerings were to be the best of the best. (30) **when, etc.**,^a not till they had offered their tenth might they reckon the remainder theirs. (31) **ye . . place, i. e.** in any place, thus they had more liberty than the priests. (32) **ye . . it, i. e.** by reason of eating it in their own families at home. **neither, etc.**, they were comforted by the assurance that they could so partake of it without sin.

The Levites' privilege (vs. 31).—The provision referred to. 1. It was a gift to them; 2. Its true source acknowledged by the offering of part to God, vs. 26; 3. It was a Divine recompense for the honest discharge of prescribed duty. II. The privileged enjoyment of it. 1. The priest might eat his portion only in the holy place, the Levite in any place; 2. Their households were to join them; 3. All were to regard it as a reward for work.

Living without God.—The high and the low, the young and the old, the busy and the idle, alike shun acquaintance with God, as if His very name brought uneasiness, and disturbed our comfort and repose. If we mention God to the young, we too often seem to be troubling them with what they had rather forget in such early days; while the aged dislike to be reminded of their misfortune, that their time on earth is drawing near to an end. If we mention God to the gay and happy, we appear to be interfering with their pleasures. If we mention Him to the great and to the learned, they will intimate that such subjects belong rather to a humbler class and station. But the poor and laborious, on their part, refer us to those who have more information and more leisure. Thus a large portion of mankind, in all classes, strive to keep God out of their thoughts, and to live so far as in them lies, without Him in the world. Yes, without Him who, as the Apostle says, "is not far from any one of us; for in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Why should they act so strangely and unreasonably, if they believed that acquaintance with God would give them peace?—*Bp. Sumner*.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1-6. (1, 2) **red . . spot**,^c only case in wh. color of victim is specified, "if it have but two hairs black it is unlawful," said a Jewish writer. (3) **Eleazar**, whom it rendered unclean for the day, hence high priest not employed. **that . . camp**,^d camp not to be defiled. **and . . face**, the priest to see that it was done. (4) **before**,^e towards. (5) **burn, etc.**,^f defilement being external, the whole body of the animal was consumed. (6) **shall take, etc.**,^g see Le. xiv. 4, 6, 49. "The antiseptic and medicinal qualities of the cedar (*Juniperus oxycedrus*) and hyssop (probably *Capparis spinosa*) make their use readily intelligible; the symbolism of the 'scarlet' is much more obscure."—*Pulp. Com.*

The holiness of God. — It appertains to the essence of God to be divided from every other thing; and to be incapable of entering into the composition of any other thing. While some persons ascribe this property to the simplicity and others to the unity of God's essence, several attribute it to both. But on reading the Scriptures, we find that holiness is frequently ascribed to God, which usually designates a separation or setting apart; on this account, perhaps, that very thing by which God is thus divided from others, may, without any impropriety, be called by the name of Holiness (Josh. xxiv. 19; Isa. vi. 3; Gen. ii. 3; Ex. xiii. 2; 1 Pet. ii. 2-9; 1 Thess. v. 23). Therefore God is neither the soul of the world, nor the form of the universe; He is neither an inherent form nor a bodily form. — *Arminius.*

7-10. (7) **priest** . . even, Lev. priesthood imperfect; comp. with Christ our great H. Priest.^a (8) **and he**, *etc.*,^b having contr. impurity. (9) **water of separation**,^c *lit.* water of sin. *it* . . sin, ref. to intended use of the water. (10) **he** . . ashes,^d a clean person. **unclean**, the ashes not being yet regarded in relation to their ultimate use.

Purification. — Have we a hope that "when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is?" Then must "every man that hath this hope in Him purify himself, even as He is pure." For in at the gates of that City — so unlike the cities of this world — "there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth." That City's streets are of gold that is pure; the river which waters it is a pure river; and the fine linen in which its sainted citizens do walk is clean and white. Even the elder church could answer its own question,

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?

Or who shall stand in His holy place?"

by saying,

"He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

Sin-stained and evil-hearted men as we are, it is here, and now, that this purification must be wrought. What need have we to have often upon our lips the prayer,

"O God, make clean our hearts within us!"

— *J. C. Dykes.*

11-16. (11) **toucheth**, *etc.*,^e see Le. xxi. 1, *etc.* (12) **he** . . *it*,^f *i. e.* with the water of separation. (13) **defileth**, *etc.*,^g see Le. xv. 31. (14) **this**, *etc.*,^h note the infection and contagion of sin wh. death symbolized. (15) **unclean**, the smell of the corpse having penetrated. (16) **toucheth**, *etc.*,ⁱ see vs. 11.

Holiness of God. — Had not the covenant of mercy been infinitely holy, man could never have been saved. We stand in need of holiness as well as mercy. The grace of God in the child of God is infinitely more glorifying to God than the sun which shines by day, or the moon and stars which govern the night. Holiness raises man more highly above his fellow-men than reason elevates him above the brute creation. The holiness of God reigns in hell, and ever will reign there: nor is the holiness of God less glorified in the condemnation of the wicked than in the salvation of the righteous. The law which executes the criminal is just as holy as the law which declares, "Thou shalt not kill." — *Howells.*

17-22. (17) **running**,^j living. (18) **clean**, lest uncleanness mar the ceremony and more guilt be incurred. Of use of hyssop in sprinkling, see Lev. xiv. 4, 6, 7, 49, 50. (19) **he** . . **clothes**,^k *i. e.* he who has been sprinkled. (20) **shall** . . **himself**,^l wilful or thoughtless neglect. (21) **he** . . **clothes**, self-sacrifice in discharge of duty. (22) **soul** . . **it**,^m whatever it be that the unclean had touched. Note — the indirect communication of evil; and duty of constant watchfulness.

The law of purification. — Consider — I. The typical import of this law. 1. The preparation of the heifer for its destined use. We see here a striking type of Christ's preparation for the atonement for man's sin; 2. Its application to that use. Here we see a type of the Holy Spirit co-operating with Christ in effecting the redemption of a ruined world. II. Its instructive tendency. Learn from it — 1. Our universal need of a remedy against the defilement of sin; 2. The mysterious nature of that remedy provided for us in the gospel; 3. The precise manner in which that remedy becomes effectual; 4. The indispensable necessity of resorting to it; 5. Its efficacy when duly applied. — *Simeon.*

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"Red, in order to shadow forth man's earthly body, even as the name Adam bears allusion to the red earth of wh. man's body was fashioned." *Theodoret.*

the water of separation

a 2 Co. v. 21.

b He. x. 22; 1 Pe. iii. 21; Jo. xlii. 3-10.

c Zec. xiii. 1; Jo. xix. 34; 1 Jo. i. 7; Is. iii. 14, 15; Je. xxxiii. 8; Is. liii. 6.

d Is. lli. 11; Re. iii. 4; Jude 23; 1 Ti. v. 22.

"The ashes thus collected were to serve the congregation; *lit.* as water of uncleanness; in other words, as water by wh. uncleanness was to be removed." — *Keil.*

the purifying of the unclean

e Nu. v. 2; ix. 6; Hag. ii. 13.

f Nu. xxxi. 19; Is. i. 16; Ac. xxiv. 16; 2 Co. i. 12.

g 1 Co. iii. 16, 17.

h Job. xvi. 14-16; Hab. i. 13.

i 1 S. xx. 25, 26.

j Ge. xxvi. 19; Jo. iv. 10; vii. 38, 39; Re. xxii. 1.

k Nu. xxxi. 20, 23; Ps. ii. 7; Ez. xxvii. 25; 1 Co. vi. 11.

l Nu. viii. 5-7; 1 Ti. i. 5, 19.

m Tit. i. 15; Ja. iii. 17; Ps. cxix. 140; xix. 7-11; Phil. iv. 8.

"Adorn the doctrine of God, your Saviour, not

Cir. B. C. 1453.

by fellowship with His people only, but by winning men to worship Him by the spectacle of your diligence, your industry, your purity, your truth, your charity, gentleness, patience, faith, and hope in God."

The fatherhood of God an encouragement to men.—The simple conduct of a child towards its parent, when it has done wrong, and when it is sorry for the wrong, and grieves over it, and throws itself into the mother's bosom—that epitomizes the coming back to God of sinners better than any possible explanation that can be given. And why should you take the familiar experience that belongs to the family, and cloud it, and darken it, by bringing in a conception of God as a Governor, with a whole train of doctrinal issues? I hold that you are, by representing God as a Governor instead of as a Father, embarrassing and not helping men in their endeavors to become Christians. It is said that these views make stronger Christians. Yes, very much as, among Indians, children are made strong by killing the weak ones, and leaving those that are so tough that nothing can kill them! If it is right to destroy twenty men to get one strong Christian, then these views are right; but if I understand the spirit of the gospel, it was sent to the poor. "Him that is weak in the faith," the Apostle says, "receive ye; but not to doubtful disputations." And any view that destroys twenty, if it does make the twenty-first a stronger man, is not the gospel view.—*Beecher.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

death of
Miriam

a Nu. xxxiii. 36.

*b Nu. xxvi. 59;
Ex. xv. 20; ii. 4-8.*

*c Acc. to Jos. Ant.
iv. 4, 6, her sepulchre was on a mt. called Zin.*

d Ex. xvii. 1-3.

e Nu. xvi. 49.

f Nu. xvi. 5ff.

"Miriam, the prophetess, died in the earlier part of 40th yr.; Aaron, the priest, died in the 5th month of same yr. (xxxiii. 38); and Moses, the lawgiver, died in the latter part of the same yr. (De. i. 3; xxxiv. 5), i. e. in the last yr. of the wandering, and a little time bef the entrance into Canaan under Joshua."—*Wordsworth.*

"All was ended now, the hope and the fear, and the sorrow; all the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing; all the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!"—*Longfellow.*

See *J. Saurin, Dis. Hist.* ii. 419; also his *Dissertations*, 579.

1-6. (1) Then came, etc. *R. V.*, "and the ch. of Is., even the whole cong., came," in . . month, prob. "in the first month of the third year after leaving Egypt." The account goes back to speak of the arrival at Kadesh, perhaps for the sake of bringing together the history of the death of Miriam, Aaron and Moses. Kadesh,^a see Nu. xiii. 26, and . . there,^b this is all the account we have of the death of Miriam.^c (3) the . . Moses, as at Rephidim.^d would . . Lord, a most impious wish; the death of their brethren was a punishment for sin.^e (4) why, etc., they forgot that their stay in the wilderness was the fruit of their sin. (6) and . . Moses, etc.,^f the old trial and the old refuge.

The death of Miriam.—I. A death that terminated a wonderful life. How many events lay between her girlhood and her old age. 1. The girl watching her infant brother; 2. The woman awaiting in Egypt the deliverance of her people by that brother; 3. The prophetess leading forth the songs and dances of a freed nation; 4. The proud woman, ambitious of equality with her great brother; 5. A leprous woman healed at the intercession of the brother she had saved in his babyhood. II. The death of a great historical character recorded in a line. However long the life and wonderful, death is brief and simple.

A happy death.—This excellent woman resided at Charleston, in America. When she had nearly closed her eyes in death her physician came and found the family in tears. "Well, doctor," said Mr. Legare, "what do you think of the scene in the next room?" "Indeed, sir," said he, "I know not what to think of it; it is all a mystery to me. I have seen numbers of men in all the vigor of health, and thirsting for martial honor, rush into a field of battle, and in that confused scene put on the appearance of fortitude, not one of whom could face the gradual approaches of death, or a sick bed, without visible horror; but here is a poor, emaciated woman, whose whole nervous system is unstrung by long disease, welcoming the grim messenger with the utmost serenity, composure and joy, though approaching in all the horrors of the most gradual progress imaginable (for she was three days in the agonies of death). Indeed it is a mystery, and I know not how to account for it." "Do you not, sir?" asked Mr. Legare; "go, then, to Calvary. You see us dissolved in tears, but I do not believe there is a tear in the room extorted by grief; no, sir, they are tears of joy." The doctor went downstairs, and met a gentleman at the door, who inquired after Mrs. L., to whom he replied, "Just gone, sir." "Well," said he, "Mr. Legare is a philosopher, and I hope he will bear the stroke like one." "Philosophy!" replied the doctor: "I have thought as much of philosophy as any man, but the scene within beats philosophy hollow." *Death of the righteous.*—John Elias, the great Welsh preacher, had a happy death. It may be said of him in the exquisite lines of Dr. Watts:

"He stood, but with his starry pinions on,
Dressed for the flight, and ready to be gone."

As he lay on his death-bed he said: "I am as happy as it is possible for a

redeemed man to be, though in pain, in pain. There is not a cloud between me and the face of my God. The blessings and mercy I used to enjoy in my ministry are still flowing freely into my soul. They are more powerful, more lively in their effects on my soul than ever I felt them when I preached them to others." Thus he passed away on June 8th, 1841, to his Saviour and his reward.

7-11. (7) saying, their Divine friend always prompt and faithful. (8) rod,^a the old rod of power. assembly, prob. the elders (Ex. xvii. 6) or chiefs of the murmurers. rock,^b Heb. *sela* = cliff. (9) from . . Lord, prob. the rod was laid up, bef. the Lord, in the tab. (10) rebels,^c murmurers. (11) smote . . twice, he was told to *speake*, vs. 8. The sin of Moses was in losing his temper. He dishonored God in the eyes of the people, and if the punishment seems to be severe, it must be borne in mind that the heinousness of sin depends quite as much upon the position of the sinner as the intrinsic character of the sin.

The sin of Moses. — I. What there was sinful in Moses. 1. Disobedience to the Divine command; 2. Immoderate heat and passion; 3. Unbelief; 4. All this was publicly displayed, and so the more dishonoring to God. II. What we may learn from this story. 1. What a holy and jealous God is ours; 2. The Lord's children need not think it strange if they are much exercised in that grace in which they most excel; 3. Let us not be surprised to see or hear saints failing under such tests; 4. Never think yourselves secure from falling till you are at the end of your race; 5. Learn the need we have to constantly guard our unruly passions; 6. Though God pardons the iniquity of His servants, yet He will take vengeance on their inventions. — *T. Boston.*

Anger. — If anger arises in thy breast, instantly seal up thy lips, and let it not go forth; for like fire when it wants vent, it will suppress itself. It is good in a fever to have a tender and smooth tongue; but is better that it be in anger; for if it be rough and distempered, there it is an ill sign, but here it is an ill cause. Angry passion is a fire, and angry words are like breath to fan them together; they are like steel and flint, sending out fire by mutual collision. — *Jeremy Taylor.*

12-13. because . . not,^d one word instead of two blows: "must we," etc., vs. 10, and ref. to God: perturbation instead of calmness. to . . Israel, proving that I am faithful and mighty as ever. ye . . them,^e a sad illustration of the effects of unbelief. (13) Meribah (*strife*): called Meribah-Kadesh,^f to dis. fr. the other Meribah,^g and . . them,^h He vindicated this holiness by not sparing even Moses and Aaron.

Moses and Aaron not to enter Canaan. — Learn from this sad history — I. That the best of men are not infallible: they are not precluded, by their goodness, from the possibility of committing sin. II. That with God there is the strictest impartiality. Although Moses was so much "the friend of God," yet God punished him for sin, as well as others. III. That a seemingly small sin will often be followed by a great punishment. — *H. Brett.*

Watch and pray. — A child would generally stand on its feet in a gust of wind if he knew it was coming; but when the wind happens to come round a corner furiously, he may be taken off his feet. Mind you are well ballasted by prayer every morning before your vessel puts out to sea, or carrying the quantity of sail you do, you may be blown out upon the waves to your perpetual shipwreck. Watch constantly against those things which are thought to be no temptations. The most poisonous serpents are found where the sweetest flowers grow, and when Cleopatra would have an asp to poison herself, it was brought in a basket of fair flowers. Beware of arrows shot from a golden bow, or by a woman's hand. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

14-17. (14) Edom, the country lying round the S. and S. E. of Dead Sea. brother,^j the Edomites being desc. fr. Esau were kin to Israel, and it would seem as though the position of Israel to Edom was so similar to that of Jacob when he met Esau that the "duke" of Edom might be affected by the striking similarity. knowest, the strange hist. of Israel must have been widely known. travel, adventure, history. (15) how, etc.,^k see Ex. i. 11-16, etc. (16) angel,^l messenger; Divine guide, the bush: the cloud. (17) pass . . country,^m to reach Canaan fr. the E. by a circuit of the Dead Sea, thus saving much time and weariness. we . . wells, the march of such a host might

the sin of Moses

a Ex. vii. 8 ff. viii. 5 ff., xvii. 5 ff.

b Ne. ix. 15; Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16; cxiv. 8; Is. xliiii. 20; xlviii. 21.

c Ps. cvi. 33

Bible examples of anger: Cain (Ge. iv. 5, 6); Esau; (Gen. xxvii. 45); Saul (1 S. xx. 30); Ahab (1 K. xxi. 4); Naaman (2 K. v. 11); Asa (2 Chr. xvi. 10); Uzziah (2 Ch. xxvi. 19); Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iii. 13); Jonah (Jon. iv. 4); Herod (Ma. ii. 16); Jews (Lu. iv. 28); High Priest (Ac. v. 17; vii. 54).

Meribah

d Nu. xxvii. 14; De. i. 37; iii. 23-26.

e Le. x. 3; Ps. xcix. 8; Ez. xx. 41; xxxvii. 23; 1 Pe. iii. 15.

f De. xxxii. 48-51.

g De. xxxii. 51.

h Ex. xvii. 7.

i Ps. xcv. 8; lxxxii. 7; De. xxxiii. 8; Ps. cvi. 32, 33; xcix. 5.

It was but one act, but it blighted the fair flower of a noble life, and shut the soul, from the reward which seemed so nearly within its grasp.

the message to Edom

j Ge. xxxii. 3-7; xxxvi. 40-43; De. xlii. 7.

k De. xxvi. 6; Ac. vii. 19.

l Ex. ii. 23; iii. 2, 7; xiv. 19; xxlii. 30; xxxiii. 2; Is. lxiii. 9.

m De. ii. 4-6, 27, 28.

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a Moses doubtless sought a passage by the Wady Ghuweir; leading E. through the heart of the mts. of Edom to the table-land above. This valley has still excellent pasture and many springs." — *Spk. Com.*

do serious damage. **we . . way,**^a keep to the lawful road. **we . . left,** we will respect property and boundaries.

The embassy to Edom. — I. This history presents us with the record of a reasonable request. 1. It might have been a demand for a way home. (a) Their journey had, so far, been marked by the overthrow of those who opposed them — Egypt, Amalek. (b) by the constant help of God in great emergencies; 2. It was a civil request — (a) urged by family relations, (b) by the memory of great trials, (c) by promise of harmless march. II. This history presents us with a reminder of what the church asks of the world. Simply a passage through it to the better country.

Refusing water to travelers. — At twelve o'clock the spy came back and reported that our enemy had posted his men to guard the stream, on both sides of the valley, in such a manner that he would not allow the shepherds of our sheikh to water their flocks. We now sent a message to Abou-Zeitun, with a proposal that if they would allow us to pass, we would not touch their water; but he returned for answer, that we should neither pass through their lands nor drink of their water. This occurred in the land of Edom. — *Mac-michel.*

Edom's reply

18-21. (18) **Edom, etc.**^b hence the name E. bec. odious, and significant of enmity to God and His church. This brought down the wrath of God upon Edom (*see* the prophecy of Obadiah). (19) **Israel, etc.**, again simply stating what they required. (20) **came . . people,** to check the advance of Israel, who while the ambassadors were treating, had advanced, *see vs.* 22. (21) **turned . . him,** going E. and round Edom.

b Jud. xi. 16-18; Ob. 10, 12; Lu. ix. 56.

"As the tree is known by its fruits, the gold by the touch, and the bell by the sound, so is a man's birth by his benevolence, his honor by his humility, and his calling by his courtesy." — *Cav-dray.*

Edom's churlishness. — I. Perhaps the remembrance of an old wrong, *i. e.* that of Esau, their ancestor, at the hands of Jacob. Note — the hereditary feuds of nations and families. II. Perhaps envy at the rising prospects of Israel. III. So the world would have no place in it for the church. At the world's hands the church, like its Master, would have granted to it no place even to lay its head.

The value of water in the East. — The scarcity of water, and the great labor and expense of digging away so much earth, in order to reach it, render a well extremely valuable. As the water is often sold at a very high price, a number of good wells yield to the proprietor a large revenue. Pitts was obliged to purchase water at sixpence a gallon; a fact which illustrates the force of the offer made by Moses to Edom; "If I, and my cattle, drink of thy water, then will I pay for it." It is properly mentioned as a very aggravating circumstance in the overthrow of Jerusalem, that the ruthless conqueror forced the Jews to purchase with money the water of their own wells and the wood of their own trees: "We have drunken our water for money; our wood is sold unto us." Even a cup of cold water cannot always be obtained in Syria without paying a certain price. It is partly on this account our Lord promises, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of those little ones, a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, should in no wise lose his reward." — *Paxton.*

"As the sword of the best tempered metal is most flexible, so the truly generous are most courteous to their inferiors." — *T. Fuller.*

Mount Hor

c Nu. xxxiii. 37.

d *i. e.* the mt. of the prophet Aaron.

e Nu. xxvii. 13; De. xxxii. 50.

Hor, 4,800 ft. high, of sandstone, with double top Aaron said to have died in the hollow betw. the two peaks. *See Stanley, S. and P. 86; Ritter, i. 448.*

22-26. (22) journeyed, their messengers not yet returned, *see on vs.* 21. **Hor**^c (*mountain*), identified with *Jebel Neby Harûn*,^d on E. of the Arabah and W. of Petra. (23) **by . . Edom,** just within the borders of Edom. (24) **shall . . people,** "The phrase is frequently understood as equivalent to *one's spirit being gathered to the spirits of the blessed in another world*, but it is extremely doubtful whether a strict philological induction will warrant us in affixing to it any other sense than that of being *added to the number of the dead*, without any reference to the *particular state* of departed souls." — *Bush, on Gen. xxv. 8. because, etc., see vs. 12.* (25) **Eleazar,** as witness of the death and successor in office. (26) **strip . . son,** "this was done in token that the office was transferred; it was done out of sight, and far above, in token that the priesthood was perpetual, although the priest was mortal." — *Pulp. Com.*

Aaron's death shows. — I. The common destiny of man. II. The rigorlessness of moral law. III. The termination of life in the midst of labor. IV. God's agency in man's dissolution. V. The promptitude with which Providence supplies the places of the dead. VI. The trial of human friendships. VII. The painful recognition by society of its greatest losses.

Mount Hor. — Mount Hor is one of the very few spots connected with the wanderings of the Israelites which admits of no reasonable doubt: the mountain is marked far and near by its double top, which rises like a huge

castellated building from the lower base, and on one of these is the Moham-
medan chapel, erected out of the remains of some early and more sumptuous
building over the supposed grave. There was nothing of interest within,
only the usual marks of Mussulman devotion, ragged shirts, ostrich eggs, and
a few beads. These were in the upper chamber. The great high priest, if his
body be really there, rests in a subterranean vault below, hewn out of the
rock, and in a nook now cased over with stone, wood and plaster. From the
flat roof of the chapel we overlooked his last view—that view which was to
him what Pisgah was to his brother. To us the northern end was partly lost
in haze, but we saw all the main points on which his eye must have rested.
He looked over the valley of the "Arabah," consecrated by its one hundred
watercourses, and beyond over the white mountains of the wilderness they
had so long traversed; and on the northern edge there must have been visible
the heights through which the Israelites had vainly attempted to force their
way into the Promised Land. This was the western view. Close around him
on the east were the rugged mountains of Edom, and far along the horizon
the wide downs of Mount Seir, through which the passage had been denied
by the wild tribes of Esau, who hunted over their long slopes. A dreary
moment and a dreary scene; such, at any rate, it must have seemed to the
aged priest. — *Stanley*.

27-29. (27) did . . commanded, painful, yet still a duty. they . .
congregation, how must the people have been affected by this ascent of the
two aged brothers. (28) died, not fr. physical decay, since he was able to
climb the mt., but bec. of the will of God. in . . mount, aged ab. 123 yrs.,
and there he was buried.^b (29) saw . . dead, the most momentous and
solemn death that had occurred since leaving Egypt. mourned, against
whom, when living, they had oft. rebelled. A common thing for men to
despise the living and honor the dead.

The removal of a devoted servant of God (on vss. 25-29). — In this death
there were—I. The express appointment and arrangement of God. The
departure of God's servants is never accidental or unforeseen. II. The last
attentions and ministrations of pious friendship. Such ministrations and
attentions are a privilege to—1. Those about to depart; 2. Those who for a
season are to survive. III. The tokens of Divine favor. In one respect
Aaron's death was a sign of Divine displeasure, but this displeasure was only
partial. He was allowed to go to the place of his death in his robes of office.
IV. The pledge of perpetuity to the Divine cause. A successor was imme-
diately, authoritatively, and unquestionably secured to the office that Aaron
held. V. The prospect of immortal happiness. Mount Hor was near enough
to permit a vision of Canaan. — *J. Parsons*.

"Like birds whose beauties languish, half-concealed
Till mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes
Expanded, shine with azure, green, and gold;
How blessings brighten as they take their flight!" — *Young*.

"It so falls out
That what we have we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,
Why then we rack the value; then we find
The virtue that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours." — *Shakespeare*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-6. (1) when . . Canaanite, R. V., "the Canaanite, the K. of Arad." *south*, R. V., "South." by . . spies, R. V., "by the way of Atharim." *fought*, perh. this was bef. d. of Aaron. (2) *vow*, wh. was fulfilled.^d While
the Lord did not command the destruction of the Canaanites, it was
undoubtedly a part of His plan for the children of Israel's security from
idolatry in their new home. (3) *Hormah (ban)*, called the ban-place, bec. here
the Israelites were defeated. (4) and, the hist. now resumed fr. d. of Aaron.
to . . *Edom*, being prevented fr. passing through. *soul* . . *way*, it was hot,
arid, sandy, and stony, hemmed in by mountains; water was scarce: Kitto
affirms that modern travelers reiterate the same complaint, and if it had not
been for miraculous power the Israelites would all have perished. (5) *light*,

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"The more we
sink into the in-
firmities of age,
the nearer we
are to immortal
youth. All people
are young in the
other world. Now,
to be decrepit one
minute and all
spirit and activity
the next, must be
a desirable change.
To call this dying
is an abuse of
language." — *Jeremy Collier*.

death of Aaron

a Nu. xxxiii. 37-39;
cf. Ex. vii. 7.

b De. x. 6.

"Death has no ter-
rors for me; it is
an event I always
look to with cheer-
fulness, if not with
pleasure; and be-
assured, the sub-
ject is more grate-
ful to me than any
other. There is a
spot near the vil-
lage of Dauphny
where I should
like to be buried.
Suffer no pomp to
be used at my fu-
neral, no monument
to mark the spot
where I am laid;
but put me quietly
in the earth, place
a sun-dial over my
grave, and let me
be forgotten." —
John Howard.

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the fiery serpents

c Nu. xxxiii 40;
Jud. i. 16. Arad,
a city on a hill, now
called *Tel Arad*,
ab. 20 ms. S. of
Hebron. *Robinson*
Bib. Res. ii. 101,
201. "Human habi-
tations have now
disappeared fr the
spot; but a ruined
reservoir remains,
and fragments of
pottery are still
found there." —
Syk. Comm. See
also *Stanley, S. P.*
161.
d Jos. xii. 14; Jud,
i 17.

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The most malignant of the serpent tribe is the *leffah*; it is ab. a foot long, it is not always the same color, but varies acc. to the earth, etc., where it is found. The modern name is derived from an Arabic word,—"to burn," whence some think that the fiery serpents were *leffahs*, or vipers.

R. V., "vile." (6) **fiery**, so called fr. poisonous inflammatory bite, or from their bright color.

The discouragements of pious men.—I. Some discouragements that the Christian meets with, though he is in the way to heaven. 1. The way is circuitous; 2. It is through a wilderness: it has no natural tendency to nourish spiritual life: it has much intricacy; 3. It lies through a hostile country; 4. The false steps that are taken are discouraging; 5. The total defection of some from the way; 6. The length of the way. II. Some considerations to remove discouragement. 1. It is the right way; 2. God is with His people in it; 3. There is no other way that leads to heaven. — R. Hall.

Serpents in the south country of Palestine.—In this very neighborhood Captain Frazier met with a reptile of the adder species, called *hannish*; and he adds, "All the Arabs say there are flying serpents here, three feet long, very venomous, their bite deadly; they have no wings, but make great springs" (Forster's *Sinai*, pp. 137, 138). Niebuhr found, near Basrah (Burseirah) a venomous species called *Heie Thiare*, i. e. "flying serpent," because it was said to fling itself from one tree to another (*Cycl. of Bibl. Lit.*, art. "Serpent"). This latter statement furnishes a satisfactory explanation of one epithet applied to these serpents. The other ("fiery"), if indeed it denotes the burning sensation produced by the bite (which is the rendering of the Arabic version), is also not without its appropriate illustration. Mr. Churton, when S. W. of the Dead Sea, fell in with a large red-colored serpent, which issued from a hollow tree; it was accounted dangerous by his Arab guides, who first fired at it, and then hewed it to pieces with swords (*Land of the Morning*, page 130). Schubert also states, in his journey to Mount Hor, that "a large and very mottled snake was brought to us, marked with fiery spots and spiral lines, which evidently belonged, from the formation of its teeth, to one of the most poisonous species. . . . The Bedawins say that these snakes, of which they have great dread, are very numerous in this locality." — Wilton.

the brazen serpent

a Ps. lxxviii. 34; 1 S. xii. 19; xv. 30, 31; Ac. viii. 24.

b Jo. iii. 14, 15; xlii. 23; Re. xii. 9; 1 Jo. iii. 8; 2 K. xviii. 4.

7-9. (7) **people** . . said, etc.,^a as usual, and, as usual, he interceded. This is the only recorded instance, with the possible exception of xi. 2, where the people directly besought Moses' intercession. and . . **people**, an indication of his meekness; though as often reproached he still humbles himself before the people. (8) **make . . serpent**, in appearance like the serpents wh. bit the people. **set . . pole**, R. V., "a standard," where it might be easily seen. **looketh . . live**, the look of faith: the cure, Divine; foregleam of a crucified Jesus. The book of Wisdom calls it a *σύμβολον σωτήριον*, a *symbol of salvation*. (9) **brass**,^b that shining in the sun it might be seen afar, and also resemble the living serpents. **beheld**, looking with faith in the promise. **lived**, healthily, fearlessly, at once.

The brazen serpent, a type of Jesus Christ.—I. The malady. 1. In both cases it was communicated; (2) In both it is painful; (3) In both it is deadly; (4) In both, human remedies are unavailing. II. The remedy. 1. The remedy in both cases was of Divine origin; 2. There is an analogy as to the means by which the remedy was effected. III. The appropriation. 1. Is simple and easy; 2. Is unmeritorious; 3. Is indispensable. IV. The result. "It came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

"A type is a fact precedent to some other greater than itself, designed to prepare the way for it, and to be a voucher for it as preordained and brought to pass by the Divine wisdom and power. It is the shadow of a coming truth projected far before it, showing its figure rather than its substance, its image, not its properties."—G. Steward.

Fiery serpents.—"In January, 1834, I was walking with Mr. Rogers in a forest near the River Padang Bessie, when, stopping for a moment to admire an immense tree, covered as with a garment of creepers, I beheld a serpent fly from it, at the height of fifty or sixty feet above the ground, and alight upon another, at the distance of forty or fifty fathoms. Its velocity was as rapid as that of a bird; its motion that of a serpent swimming through water; it had no appearance of wings. Its course was that of a direct line, with an inclination of ten or fifteen degrees to the horizon. It appeared to me to be three or four feet long. Thus was I convinced of the existence of flying serpents, and, on inquiry, I found some of the natives, accustomed to the forest, aware of the fact. Those acquainted with the serpent called it *Ular tampang hari*, or *Ular api*, the fiery serpent, from the burning pain and mortal effect of its bite, so that the fiery flying serpent of the Scriptures was not an imaginary creature, though it appears now extinct in the regions it formerly inhabited. — Ward.

10—16. (10) *Oboth* (*water skins*), supp. to be the present el-Ahsa,^a one of the halting-places on the pilgrim route betw. Mecca and Damascus. (11) *Ije-abarim* (*ruins of Abarim*), or *Ilim*.^b (12) *the . . Zared*, *lit.* the brook of Zared, or Zered^c (*osier*), now called the *Wady Ain Franjy*.^d (13) *Arnon* (*zired stream*), now called the *Wady el-Mojeb*. (14) *book . . Lord*, of wh. nothing beyond this notice is known. The quotation, which is poetical, may possibly have been taken from some poetic writer among the Israelites or some writing of the Amorites recounting in poetic style the victory of Sihon, their king. The R. V., gives the quotation as follows: "Vaheb in Suphah (or in storm) and the valleys of Arnon, and the slope of the valleys that inclineth toward the dwelling of Ar, and leaneth upon the border of Moab." (15) *Ar* (*city*), ab. 10 ms. S. of the Arnon.^e Also known as Rabbath Moab and Areopolis. Ruins still called *Rabba*. (16) *Beer* (*a well*), prob. the same as Beer-Elim^f (*the well of heroes*).

The well of heroes. — May be regarded as a type of the Word of God. I. It is a well of refreshing water. II. Moral heroism derives invigoration from it. III. That it may yield abundant and true refreshment, men must dig into its meaning and appropriate its contents.

Well-digging (vs. 18). — Michaelis observes on this passage, that Moses seems to have promised the Israelites that they would discover in this neighborhood, and that by ordinary human industry and skill, a spring hitherto unknown; and that this promise was fulfilled. The discovery of springs, which often flow at a considerable depth below the surface of the earth, is of great importance to a country so poor in water as Arabia. Often a spot that is dry above has even subterranean lakes, to reach which it is necessary to dig to some depth. We have a remarkable instance in a part of Africa, which Shaw describes at the end of the eighth chapter of his geographical remarks on Algiers: — "The villages of Wadraag are supplied in a particular manner with water; they have, properly speaking, neither fountains nor rivulets; but by digging wells to the depth of a hundred, and sometimes two hundred fathoms, they never want a plentiful stream. In order, therefore, to obtain it, they dig through different layers of sand and gravel till they come to a flaky stone-like slate, which is known to lie immediately above the *bahar tāht el erd*, or the sea below the ground, as they call the abyss. This is easily broken through, and the flux of water, which follows the stroke, rises generally so suddenly, and in such abundance, that the person let down for this purpose has sometimes, though raised up with the greatest dexterity, been overtaken and suffocated by it." In some parts of Arabia, as at Farnard in the valley of Dschirondel, water is found, according to Niebuhr, on digging only a foot and a half deep. — *Rosenmüller*.

17—20. (17) *song*,^g expressive of faith, joy, zeal, making memorable this oasis in the desert. (18) *by . . lawgiver*, R. V., "with the sceptre and with their staves," that is under the direc. of Moses. Mattanah (*a gift*), not identified. (19) *Nahaliel* (*valley or brook of God*), perhaps the *Wady Encheyle*. *Bamoth*^h (*heights*), or Bamoth-Baal. (20) *Pisgah*, (*part, piece*), a summit in the mts. of Abarim on E. of Dead Sea. Also called Nebo.ⁱ *Jeshimon*^j (*the waste*), prob. some high waste land to the E. of Dead Sea.

The well of Beer in the wilderness. — Famous was the well of Beer in the wilderness, inasmuch as it was — I. The subject of a promise. The people needed water, and it was promised by their gracious God. II. The cause of a song. Before the water gushed forth, cheerful faith prompted the people to sing; and as they saw the crystal fount bubbling up, the music grew yet more joyous. III. The centre of prayer: "Spring up, O well!" What God has engaged to give, we must inquire after, or we manifest that we have neither desire nor faith. IV. The object of effort: "the nobles of the people digged it with their staves." The Lord would have us active in obtaining grace. — *Spurgeon*.

Songs of the well. — The Eleusianian women practiced a dance about a well, which was called *callichorus*, and their dance was also accompanied by songs in honor of Ceres. These songs of the well are still sung in other parts of Greece, as well as in Syria. De Guy mentions them. He says that he has seen the young women in Prince's Island, assembled in the evening at a public well, suddenly strike up a dance while others sung in concert to them. The ancient poets composed verses which were sung by the people while they drew the water, and were expressly denominated songs of the well. Aris-

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the well of heroes

a Near S. end Dead Sea, and E of Edom.

b Nu. xxxiii. 45.

c De. ii. 13.

d "The name Wady Safsâf—'willow brook'—still clings to the trib. wh. unites with Wady Ain Franjy below Kerak. Poss. one of these is identical with the 'brook of the willows' of Is. xv. 7."—*Spk. Com.*

e Is. xv. 1. Prob. it was to this city that Balaam was brought (Nu. xxii. 36).

f Is. xv. 8.

the song of the well

g Ps. cv. 2; cvi. 12. "In after times it may have been the water-drawing song of the maidens of Israel."—*Spk. Com.*

h Nu. xxii. 41; Jos. xiii. 17; Is. xv. 2. On the Moabite stone Mesha says he rebuilt Beth-Bamoth.

i De. xxxii. 49; xxxiv. 1.

j Nu. xxiii. 28.

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the message
to Sihon and
the reply

α De. ii. 26, 27; Ju.
xi. 19.

b Jos. xiii. 18; xxi.
36; Jer. xlviii. 21;
1 Ch. vi. 78.

c Ge. xxxii. 22, 23;
De. ii. 37; iii. 16;
Jos. xii. 2; Jud. xi.
13, 22.

d Nu xxxii. 3, 37;
De. i. 4; ii. 24-30;
iii. 2, 6; iv. 46;
xxix. 7; Jos. ix. 10;
xii. 2, 5; xiii. 10-27;
xxi. 39; Jud. xi.
19, 26; 1 Ch. vi. 81;
Is. xv. 4; xvi. 8, 9;
Jer. xlviii. 2, 34, 35;
xlix. 3.

"I will govern
my life and my
thoughts as if the
whole world were
to see the one and
to read the other;
for what does it
signify to make
anything a secret
to my neighbor,
when to God, who
is the Searcher
of hearts, all our
privacies are
open?"—*Seneca*.

On vs. 22 *Blunt*,
Scrip. Cohn. 64.

Sihon
defeated

e Jer. xlviii. 7, 13,
46; Jud. xi. 24;
K xi. 7, 33; 2 K.
xxiii. 13; iii. 26, 27;
f Nu. xxxii. 3, 34;
Jos. xiii. 17; Is.
xv. 2; Jer. xlviii.
18, 22.

g Perh. *Arneibah*.
10 ms. S. E. of
Mádeba.

h Jos. xlii. 9, 16;
1 Ch. xix. 7; Is.
xv. 2.

totle, as cited by Winkelmann, says, "The public wells serve as so many cements to society, uniting the people in bands of friendship by the social intercourse of dancing so frequently together around them. This may serve to explain the cause of the variety of beautiful lamps, pitchers, and other vessels of terra-cotta, which have been found at the bottom of wells in different parts of Greece."—*Clarke's Travels*.

21—25. (21) Sihon^a (*sweeping away*), the memory of this man lingered in the mind of Israel for many years, and shows him to have been a very formidable rival. Josephus asserts that the cause of his defeat was the inability of his men to fight out of their cities. (22) *let*, etc., see xx. 17. (23) *went . . wilderness*, not content with a bare denial of his request as in the case of Edom, but he went forth into the wilderness to attack Israel, thus planning his own ruin. *Jahaz*^b (*a place trodden down*), not yet identified. (24) *smote . . sword*, utterly defeated and routed his army. *Jabbok*^c (*a pouring out*), now called the *Zerka* (*blue river*), a trib. of Jordan ab. half-way betw. Lake Tiberias and Dead Sea. *for . . strong*, this is stated to show the reason why the Amorites had not extended their borders into the domains of Ammon, rather than why the Israelites proceeded no further. (25) *Heshbon*^d (*reason, device*), of wh. the ruins, called *Heshbân*, still remain at 20 ms. N. of Dead Sea.

Cruelty of man.—I do not know anything else that is so cruel as man. Lions are not, tigers are not, wolves are not, serpents are not. A lion was made to eat meat, but he never kills any more than he wants, and he does not kill that for cruelty. He makes use of his power simply for the purveyance of his own necessities. It is only man that revenges. It is only man that studies cruelty, and makes it exquisite, and prolongs it, and carries it out with appliances of art. From the despot on the throne to the despot of the household, all men alike carry vengeance, bitterness, wrath, hurtfulness, as characteristic of the race. There has been enough blood shed by the hand of man to bear up the navies of the globe. When a lion sheds blood, he laps it up. When man sheds blood, he does not eat it; it falls to the ground, and cries for vengeance. The earth has been wet with blood. Tears have flowed like rivers. This has not occurred merely once in some great cycle. It has been the constant history of mankind. Time has walked ankle-deep in tears and blood on the face of the earth from the beginning.—*Beecher*.

But war's a game, which, were their subjects wise,
Kings would not play at. Nations would do well
To extort their truncheons from the puny hands
Of heroes, whose infirm and baby minds
Are gratified with mischief; and who spoil,
Because men suffer it, their toy, the world.—*Cowper*.

"War is a monster all with blood defiled,
That from the aged father tears his child:
A murderous fiend, by fiends adored,
Who slays the sire and starves the son,
The husband slays, and from her hoard
Steals what his widow's toil hath won.
Plunders God's world of beauty; rends away
All safety from the night, all comfort from the day."—*Coleridge*.

26—33. (26) *all . . Arnon*, i. e. the part. sit. on the N. of the Arnon. (27) *they . . proverbs*, poets, historians, bards. *Come . . Heshbon*, jubilation of the Amorites when victorious over Moab. (29) *Chemosh*^e (*subduer*), the national god of Moabites: by some identified with Mars, by others with Saturn. (30) *Dibon*^f (*a pining, wasting*), some ruins in the Rom. road, 3 ms. N. of the Arnon, are still called *Dhibân*. *Nophah*^g (*windy place*). *Medeba*^h (*waters of quiet*), ab. 4 ms. S. E. of Heshbon; and the ruins still called *Mádeba*.

Historical taunts (vs. 27).—I. Showing the folly of men in giving occasion of reproach and scorn. II. Showing the facility with which men carve epithets, and proverbs of reproach. III. Showing the place of proverbs in popular philosophy. 1. Cautions for the boastful; 2. Encouragements to the timid and oppressed.

God's hatred of cruelty.—How should you feel if you were to enter the room

where your child is sleeping, and find upon it a stealthy cat, stationed at the portal of life, and stopping its very breath? How should you feel were you to find upon your child a vampire that had fastened into its flesh his blood-sucking bill, and was fast consuming its vitality? How do you feel when one of your children tramples upon another? or when your neighbor's children crush yours; or when ruffian violence strikes against those whose hearts forever carry the core of your heart? Judge from your own feelings how God, with His infinite sensibility, must feel when He sees men rising up against their fellow-men; performing gross deeds of cruelty on every hand; waging wars that cause blood to flow like rivers throughout the globe—when, in short, He sees them devastating society by every infernal mischief that their ingenuity can invent. — *Beecher*.

31-35. (31) dwelt, encamped, as conquerors. (32) Jaazer,* (whom *He i. e. God, helps*), prob. es-Sir, ab. 10 ms. N. of Heshbon. (33) Bashan,^b prob. included all Gilead and distr. extending to Hermon. Og,^c (? long-necked), according to Deut. iii. 11 ff. he was a man of gigantic height, and perhaps he relied upon his individual prowess to save himself from the fate of Sihon. Edrei,^d (strong), prob. now *Edha'arh*, or *Der'a*, but some^e say *Edr'a*. (34) fear . . not, he who has God on his side has already conquered before he meets the foe. *thou, etc., i. e.* utterly rout and conquer. (35) and . . land, this completed the conquest of the tribes E. of Jordan.

Seasonable encouragement (vs. 34) — Fear not. I. The "fear nots" of the Bible, all seasonable. II. They had reason to fear, since they were sinful, etc. III. They were likely to fear, since — 1. They had before them a powerful foe, warlike and well posted; 2. They were weakened by previous battles; 3. They had enemies behind and around them. IV. But they were not to fear, because they had the promise of victory from their covenant God. V. The absence of fear one condition of successful perseverance.

Courage strengthened by past deliverances. — Sir Francis Drake, being in a dangerous storm in the Thames, was heard to say, "Must I, who have escaped the rage of the ocean, be drowned in a ditch!" Will you, experienced saints who have passed through a world of tribulation, lie down and die of despair, or give up your profession because you are at the present moment passing through some light affliction? Let your past preservation inspire you with courage and constrain you to brave all storms for Jesus' sake. — *Spurgeon*. *True courage.* — A distinguished general said to Luther, as the latter was about to enter the presence of his judges at the Diet of Worms, "Poor monk! Thou art now going to make a nobler stand than I or any other captains have ever made in the bloodiest of our battles. But if thy cause is just, and thou art sure of it, go forward in God's name, and fear nothing. God will not forsake thee." Of John Knox, the Scottish Luther, it was said by one who stood by his grave, "Here lies one who never feared the face of man!"

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND

1-4. (1) on . . Jericho, *lit.* across the Jordan of Jericho, implying in general at the passage of Jordan. (2) Balak^f (*emptier, spoiler*). Zippor (*a little bird*). saw, not as an eyewitness, but as one who had been told. (3) was . . because, *lit.* shrank fr. before them. (4) elders, or kings,^g or princes.^h Midian, S. of Moab, not the Midian where Moses fled when he left Egypt; but its people may have originated there. as . . licketh, note the accuracy of this comp. Balak . . time, perh. himself a Midianite who had recently conquered Moab.

The phrase "lick up." — A native gentleman, who has many people depending upon him, says, "Yes, they are all grazing upon me. If I am not careful, they will soon graze up all I have." Of people who have got all they can out of one rich man, and who are seeking after another, "Yes, yes, they have done grazing there, and are now looking out for another place." "These bulls are grazing in every direction." — *Roberts*.

Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind;
The thief doth fear each bush an officer. — *Shakespeare*.

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vss. 27-30, *Origen*, Op. ii. 311; *Bp. Horsley*, Ode on the Conquest of Sihon's Kingdom in *Biblical Criticism*, ii. 405.

Og defeated

a Nu. xxxii. 35; Jos. xxi. 39; I. Ch. xxvi. 81; Ja. xvi. 8, 9; Jer. xlviii. 32.

b 1 Ch. v. 11; Deut. iii. 1-10; Jos. xlii. 29-31; xxii. 9; Jud. xx. 1; 1 K. iv. 13; 2 K. x. 32, 33; xv. 29.

For Bashan see *Porter's Giant Cities of Bashan*. Also *Jour. of Sac. Lit.* 1854, p. 313. Also *Cambridge Essays*, 1853, 155-164.

c Nu. xxxii. 33; De. i. 4; iii. 1-13; iv. 47; xxix. 7, 8; xxxi. 4; Jos. ii. 10; ix. 10; xii. 4, 5; xiii. 12, 30, 31; 1 K. iv. 19; Ne ix. 22; Ps. cxxxvi. 11; cxxxvi. 20.

d De. i. 4; iii. 10; Jos. xii. 4; xiii. 31.

e *Porter, Damascus*, 271 ff.

the story of Balaam

Balak takes counsel

f Jos. xxiv. 9; Jud. xi. 25; Mic. vi. 5.

g Nu. xxxi. 8.

h Jos. xiii. 21, 22.

"Fear is that uneasiness of mind which arises from an apprehension

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of danger, attended with a desire of avoiding it."—*C. Buck.*

Balak sends for Balaam

a Jos. xxiv. 9; De. xxiii. 3, 4; Ne. xiii. 1, 2.

b Jos. xiii. 22.

c Nu. xxiv. 3, 15; xxi. 8; De. xxiii. 4; Jos. xxiv. 9; Mi. vi. 6.

d Nu. xxiii. 7; cf. De. xxiii. 4.

e Jer xvii. 5.

f Hist. speaks of whole armies being devoted to destr.

For Balaam see Jos. Ant. iv. 6, 5. Dr. J. H. Newman's Serm. vol. iv.

God forbids Balaam to go

g Nu. xxiii. 20; Ge. xxii. 17; Re. xxii. 19.

h Ps. xxix. 4.

"Tis not the curses that come from anybody, that hurt me because they come from them, but because I do something ill against them that deserves God should curse me for it. On the other side, 'tis not a man's blessing that makes me blessed; he only declares me to be so."—*Selden.*

"I have heard a good man say that a curse was like a stone flung up to the heavens, and

What a state is guilt,
When everything alarms it! Like a sentinel
Who sleeps upon his watch, it wakes in dread
E'en at a breath of wind.
When apprehension can form naught but fears,
And we distrust security itself.—*W. Havard.*

5—8. (5) *Balaam*^a (*foreigner*, or *destruction of people*), a soothsayer.^b *Beor*^c (*torch*). In 2 Pet. ii. 15, Balaam is spoken of as the son of Bosor. This is prob. a Chaldeeism for Beor. *Pethor* (? *a table*), prob. in Mesopotamia.^d *river . . people*, Euphrates. (6) *curse, etc.*,^e superstitious belief in efficacy of curse or blessing when pronounced by a priest.^f *I wot, etc.*, sugg. of the great fame of Balaam, and intended as a piece of flattery to win his help. (7) *rewards . . hand*, that was their view of the work for wh. they wished to hire B. St. Peter calls them "the wages of unrighteousness," which the corrupt and avaricious soul of Balaam coveted. (8) *night*, in wh. as he expected, he might have a vision. But vision or no vision he would have gone to get the reward. *Lord . . me*, his knowledge of the true God acc. for by his residence in Mesopotamia. "The religious state of Balaam is to be regarded as one excited and developed on heathen soil, by the traditions from monotheistic antiquity, and, indeed, by isolated sounds from the revelations to the patriarchs, which had resounded into the heathen world, and had not then entirely died away. This opinion is the general one."—*Hengstenberg.*

Balaam.—I. We see in the fact of Balaam's inspiration, although he was a heathen soothsayer, an evidence and witness to the wider relations that God holds with man than is sometimes supposed. II. The Divine communications have never been limited to any one people, or country, or age. III. Great goodness is not always associated with great gifts. IV. Great gifts involve great responsibility and grave peril. V. The temptation to covetousness is of great subtlety and strength, and assails even the most gifted natures.

Use of magicians in the East.—The Orientals, in their wars, have always their magicians with them to curse their enemies, and to utter incantations for their destruction. Sometimes they secretly convey a potent charm among the opposing troops, to cause their destruction. In our late war with the Burmese the generals had several magicians, who were much engaged in cursing our troops; but as they did not succeed, a number of witches were brought for the same purpose. — *Roberts.*

9—14. (9) *came*, prob. a vision. *what . . thee?* not a request for information, but a rebuke, as when God called Adam, saying, "Where art thou." (10, 11) *Balak, etc.*, see vs. 5, 6. (12) *thou . . them*, thy curses will not avail: they shall not be encouraged in their opposition. *blessed,*^g and by One who will not permit the impious ravings of man to reverse the blessing. (13) *for . . you,*^h he does not declare himself unwilling. (14) *Balaam . . us*, acc. to their reply, the going or staying of B. was his own act alone, and naturally Balak thought a little more urgency would bring him round; Balaam "had his price."

Companionships.—Human companionships are—I. Observed by God. II. Challenged by God. III. Our associates indicate our character. IV. Our associates influence our character.

Cursing instead of blessing.—Was hand or voice raised (in the Netherlands) against clerical encroachment, the priests held ever in readiness a deadly weapon of defense; a blasting anathema was thundered against their antagonist, and smote him into submission. The disciples of Him who ordered His followers to bless their persecutors and to love their enemies invented such Christian formulas as these: "In the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, the blessed Virgin Mary, John the Baptist, Peter and Paul, and all other saints in Heaven, do we curse and cut off from our communion him who has thus rebelled against us. May the curse strike him in his house, barn, bed, field, path, city, castle. May he be cursed in battle, in praying, in speaking, in silence, in eating, in drinking, in sleeping. May he be accursed in his taste, hearing, smell, and all his senses. May the curse blast his eyes, head, and his body, from his crown to the soles of his feet. I conjure you, Devil, and all your imps, that you take no rest till you have brought him to eternal shame; till he is destroyed by drowning or hanging, till he is torn to pieces by

wild beasts, or consumed by fire. Let his children become orphans, his wife a widow. I command you, Devil, and all your imps, that even as I now blow out these torches, you do immediately extinguish the light from his eyes. So be it—so be it. Amen. Amen." So speaking, the curser was wont to blow out the two waxen torches which he held in his hands. — *Motley*.

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most like to return on his head that sent it."—*Str W. Scott*.

15-17. (15) Balak, thinking he had only human resistance to overcome. *more, etc.*, in number and higher in station: Balaam's self-importance flattered. (16) *nothing*,^a human or Divine: the possibility of an adverse result not anticipated. (17) *honour, etc.*, how many, with a truer knowledge of God, find the world's fair promises too much for them.

Balak sends again

Balaam, or spiritual influence—human and Divine.—I. The influence of a bad man upon society: Balaam, a pretender to spiritual endowments: his influence on Balak, who "sent" princes more and more honorable. This influence shows—1. That a man's influence in the world is no proof of his moral worth; 2. That society, in relation to true intelligence and right sympathy, is in a very lamentable state; 3. The high probability of a future retributive economy. II. The influence of a great God upon a bad man. Observe—1. That God does exert a spiritual influence over the minds of bad men; 2. That this spiritual influence is of a restraining character; 3. That it is for the good of society. — *Thomas*.

^a Hengstenberg thinks that Balak regarded Balaam's resistance "as the remains of a weakly fear of God, or simply as a *ruse*, adopted for the purpose of obtaining better conditions."

True wisdom.—In worldly matters, "think twice;" but in duty, it has been well said, "first thoughts are best;" they are more fresh, more pure, have more of God in them. There is nothing like the first glance we get at duty, before there has been any special pleading of our affections or inclinations. Duty is never uncertain at first. It is only after we have got involved in the mazes and sophistries of wishing that things were otherwise than they are, that it seems indistinct. Considering a duty, is often explaining it away. Deliberation is often only dishonesty. God's guidance is plain, when we are true. — *F. W. Robertson*.

18-21. (18) *cannot, etc.*,^b the inability flowed fr. moral awe of God, and dread of His punishment. — *Keil*. (19) *know, etc.*^c While he desires to obey Jehovah for fear of punishment, his cupidity is such that he would ask God again as though He would change His mind to satisfy Balaam's greed. (20) *rise . . . them*, his evident desire is granted. This seems like an inconsistency, in view of vs. 12, but if we understand that Jehovah permits him to go that he might find out the folly of following his own heart's devices, we shall find no contradiction. *word . . . do*,^d Balaam, blinded by avarice, did not see the peril this involved. "God makes the wrath of man to praise Him."

God permits Balaam to go conditionally

Balaam's character.—We will show—I. The inconsistency of Balaam's character. Notice the contrariety which there was between—1. His sentiments and desires; 2. His professions and conduct. II. The consequences resulting from it. Look at those which resulted to—1. His employers; 2. Israel; 3. Himself. Learn—(1) The danger of indulging any besetting sin; (2) The necessity of acting conformably with our principles and professions.—*C. Simeon*.

^b He. iv. 12, 13; Da. iv. 35.

^c Jer. xlii. 4-6, 19-21.

^d Is. xlvii. 9-11.

The asses of the East.—We learn from Niebuhr, that in Egypt the asses are very handsome, and are used for riding by the greater part of the Mohammedans, and by the most distinguished women in that country. The same variety serves for the saddle in Persia and Arabia; and must therefore have been common in Palestine. They are descended from tamed *onagers*, which are taken young, and sold for a high price to the nobles of Persia and the adjacent countries for their studs. They cost seventy-five ducats; and Tavernier says that fine ones are sold in Persia dearer than horses, even to a hundred crowns each. He distinguishes them properly from the baser race of ordinary asses which are employed in carrying loads. These saddle asses, the issue of *onagers*, are highly commended by all travelers in the Levant. Like the wild ass, they are extremely swift and rapid in their course; of a slender form, and animated gait. They have vigorous faculties, and can discern obstacles readily; at the sight of danger they emit a kind of cry; they are obstinate to excess, when beaten behind, or when they are put out of their way, or when attempts are made to control them against their will: they are also familiar and attached to their master. These particulars exactly correspond with several incidents in the history of Balaam's ass; from whence it may be inferred, that he rode one of the superior breed, and by consequence was

"Fr. begin. to end this fact was firmly estab. in B.'s mind, viz., that in the work to wh. Balak summoned him he could do nothing at all, except through Jehovah. This knowledge he had acquired by virtue of his nat. gifts as seer, and his previous experience. But this clear knowledge of Jehovah was completely obscured again by the love for the wages wh. ruled in his heart." — *Baumgarten*.

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"Gold can gild a rotten stick, and dirt sully an ingot."—*Sir P. Sidney*.

an angel withstands him

a 1 S. ii. 3; xvi. 7.

b Ex. iv. 24; Is. xxxvii. 28, 29.

c Ex. xiv. 19.

d Jos. v. 13.

e Je. viii. 7; Is. i. 3; Job xii. 7.

f 2 K. vi. 15-17; Da. x. 7; Ac. xxii. 9.

"To the great disgrace of the prophet the glory of the angel was first of all apparent to the ass. . . . Whence came this blindness, but by the avarice by which he had been so stupefied that he preferred filthy lucre to the holy calling of God?"—*alvin*.

Balaam's ass reproves him

g 2 Pe. ii. 16.

h 1 Ch. xxi. 15-20.

"The reproof of a good man resembles fuller's earth; it not only removes the spots from our character, but it rubs off, when it is dry."—*Wilkinson*.

the angel admonishes him

i Pr. xli. 10.

a person of considerable wealth and eminence in his own country. The high value which people of rank and fashion in the East set upon that noble race of asses, excludes them from the purchase of the commonalty, and restricts the possession of them to the great or the affluent. This fact is confirmed by the manner in which the sacred writers express themselves on this subject.

22—27. (22) **anger . . . went,**^a he being influenced chiefly by sordid motives. **angel . . . way,**^b the leader of Israel; ^c capt. of Lord's host.^d This angel was an adversary only to the wicked, but a friend and helper to the righteous. **for . . . him,** against the purpose and wish of his heart. **two . . . him,** he went with some state. (23) **ass . . . way,**^e (See for comment on whole passage, vs. 28). **sword,** evidence of Divine anger. **went . . . field,** started, left the road. (24) **wall . . . side,** so that the ass could no longer leave the way. (25) **she . . . wall,** to pass the angel. **he . . . again,**^f but did not consider the cause of this unusual conduct of his beast. (26) **way, etc.,** the walls more closely approached ea. other. (27) **she . . . Balaam,** fell down in fear.

Balaam and his ass; or restraints from sin.—I. Let us notice, concerning restraints from sin—I. Their forms. They appear in—1. External appliances; 2. Addresses to the understanding; 3. Stirrings of conscience; 4. Excitements of the emotions. II. Their characteristics. They are—1. Frequent; 2. Progressive; 3. Near, though oft unnoticed.—*D. G. Watt*.

Narrow passages in the East.—In the neighborhood of Ain-Yebrūd (on the way from Jerusalem to Samaria), which abounds in vineyards, we rode for nearly two miles, hemmed in all the way between long lines of walls, rudely formed of the stones gathered out of the adjacent vineyards (Isa. v. 1), and where there was often hardly any space for one horseman to pass another. No doubt it was in just such a position that the angel of the Lord obstructed the progress of Balaam.—*Buchanan*. *Another illustration.*—The narrow road leading through fields and vineyards along which we passed often had on either side of it a stone wall. The animals on which we rode seemed perpetually inclined, whenever they encountered a slough, or any strange appearance, to rush up against the sides of one of these walls, and it was only by using the greatest precaution that we prevented our feet several times from being crushed. This propensity in our donkeys strongly reminded me of Balaam's adventure in going to the king of Moab.

28—31. (28) **opened . . . ass,** to remove the madness of the prophet.^g The reality of this incident has always been a matter of great controversy. Some commentators would say that inasmuch as the incident occurs in a historical book, it must be real. Moreover the N. T. writers, like Peter, referred to it as an actual occurrence. But other commentators, as Hengstenberg, hold it to be all a vision, something subjective to the mind of Balaam, and for these reasons: (1) Visions and dreams are the ordinary modes of Divine communication in the book of Numbers; (2) Balaam received visions in that way (see xxiv. 3, 4, 15, 16; (3) the fact that Balaam expresses no astonishment at his beast speaking. (31) **opened . . . hand,**^h eye of the mind opened, so that he perceived God. **fell . . . face,** in awe and terror. "Here is another evidence of the miserable effects of disobedience to God's will and word."

Balaam obstructed by the angel.—I. God often mercifully interposes to obstruct sinners in their ways. II. His most signal interpositions often excite only the wrath of those for whose benefit they are sent. III. Those interpositions which are acknowledged to have been sent in mercy, produce, for the most part, a very transient effect.—*C. Simeon*.

The folly of sin.—It is a strange, sad picture this. The first man in the land, gifted beyond most others, conscious of great mental power, going on to splendid prospects, yet with hopelessness and misery working at his heart. Who would have envied Balaam if he could have seen all—the hell that was working at his heart?—*F. W. Robertson*. It is a man's own dishonesty, his crimes, his wickedness, and boldness, that take away from him soundness of mind; these are the furies, these the flames and firebrands of the wicked."—*Cicero*.

32—35. (32) **wherefore . . . times,**ⁱ whose act saved thy life; and should have led thee to reflection. **perverse, lit. headlong.** (34) **I . . . sinned,** in abusing his beast and setting out on his journey; not a confession of his

covetousness and malicious designs against God's people. if . . thee,^a had he not just heard (*vs* 32) that his way was perverse? (35) go . . men,^b only . . speak, he could not avoid delivering God's message. so . . Balak, but thoroughly cautioned by the King of kings.

Unwilling helpers of the good (*vs* 35). — I. Consider Balaam as a type of those who, at all hazards, will keep their own welfare before them as their one aim in life. II. Consider Balaam as a type of those who while pursuing, as they think, their own aims, are overruled by God for the carrying forward of His purposes.

The dumb ass speaking. — The miracle by which the dumb ass was enabled to speak with a man's voice has been the frequent subject of cavil and ridicule with unthinking men; but when we consider that the power of God alone gave to any of His creatures the faculty of speech, and might as easily have given it to the brute as to the human race, we need not wonder that He should, in a single case and for a specific purpose, confer that power on a dumb animal. Certainly we must admit that the miracle was most significant and appropriate to the occasion, for as God was about to restrain the tongue of Balaam, and make him say what it was not in his heart to say of Israel, it was well to show him how entirely the power of thought and speech was within Divine control. And indeed, as Bishop Newton has well observed, the ass being merely passive, the restraint of Balaam's tongue was a greater miracle than the freedom of the tongue of the ass. — *Eadie*.

36-41. (36) which . . coast,^c farthest limit of Moab. (37) did, *etc.*, like all men clothed with power, Balak could not understand why his command should not be immediately obeyed. am . . honour, a worldly-minded man can think of no higher motive. (38) Balaam, the warning still in his mind. have . . thing, a prophet or enchanter must speak as the spirit — Divine or demoniacal — shall urge. the word, *etc.*,^d wh. might not be cursing aft. all. (39) Kirjath-huzoth^e (*city of streets*). (40) offered . . Balaam, "supplicatory offerings for the success of the undertaking bef. them, perhaps offered to Jehovah, Balaam's God, and not to Chemosh, the god of the Moabites; if offered to Chemosh, it was but another evidence of Balaam's sin. (41) high . . Baal, or Bamoth-Baal.^f that . . see, *lit.* and thence he saw. the . . people, it was necessary that the subject of the curse should be in view.

Obedience without love. — Consider — I. Balaam's character and relations to God. He was — 1. High in God's favor; 2. Very conscientious: observe how he obeys God, besides *talking* about religion; 3. Also, in another sense, under God's displeasure. II. The meaning of this startling exhibition of God's ways. No strictly conscientious man can be displeasing to Him. But a man may be generally conscientious, and yet be destitute of religious fear. This was Balaam's case. He obeyed God, not from fear and love, but from a sense of its being right to do so. Hence God's displeasure with him. Reflections: — 1. See how little we can depend in judging of right and wrong, on the apparent excellence and high character of individuals. 2. Notice the wonderful secret providence of God, working while all things seem to go on according to the course of this world. Balaam did not see the angel, though he came out as an adversary. 3. When we have begun an evil course, we cannot retrace our steps. 4. God gives us warnings now and then, but does not repeat them. Balaam's sin consisted in not acting upon what was told him once for all. — *Neuman*.

Parallels to the case of Balaam. — Parallels to the case of Balaam are not difficult to find. Cardinal Wolsey, dispensing ecclesiastical ban and blessing, at the mandate of Henry the Eighth; Richelieu and Mazarin, each betraying his churchly trust for the sake of political power — are well-known instances. Contrast with these Ambrose's stern arraignment of Theodosius.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

1-5. (1) build . . altars, wh. Balak, a heathen, might think in honor of Baal. seven, mystic number. (2) offered,^g Balak to Chemosh: Balaam to Jehovah. (3) and . . place, whence he might better see the earth and heavens. (4) met, perhaps a visible manifestation in the form of an angel. (5) put . . mouth,^h perhaps he did not himself know the word until he began to speak.

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^a Ex. ix. 24; Jos. vii. 20, 21; 1 S. xv. 20-24; Job xxxiv. 31, 32; 1 K. viii. 38, 39; Ma. xv. 7, 8; Je. xvii. 9, 10; Ps. vii. 9; 1 Ch. xxviii. 9.

^b Ps. cvi. 15; Ro. ix. 17-22.

"Balaam, no longer a faithful servant of God, was henceforth overruled in all his acts, so that he might subserve the Divine purpose as an instrument." — *Spk. Com.*

the meeting of Balak and Balaam

^c "The higher the rank of the expected guest, politeness requires a greater distance to be gone to welcome his arrival." — *Port. Com.*

^d 1 K. xxii. 14.

^e "The great city wh. is the city of Sion, wh. is Birs-ha." — *Targums*.

^f Nu. xxi. 19, 20; De. xii. 2.

"Balak started with the supposition that B. must necessarily have the Israelites in view, if his curse was to take effect." — *Hengstenberg*.

God tells Balaam what to say

^g Ps. i. 16, 17.

^h Je. i. 9.

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"By the very constitution of our nature, moral evil is its own curse."—*Chalmers*.

vs. 4. "The sacrifices offered are alleged by Balaam as a ground for looking that God on his part would do what was expected and desired by the donor. The spirit of these words is thoroughly that of a heathen worshiper expecting in all his devotions, 'quid pro quo.'"—*Spk. Com.*

Balaam's parable and wish

a Ps. lxxxii. 2; Ez. xvii. 2; Mi. ii. 4; Hab. ii. 6; Is. xlvii. 12, 13.

b Ge. x. 22.

c Job xxxiv. 29.

d Ex. xxxiv. 12-16; viii. 22, 23; De. xxxiii. 28; Est. iii. 8.

e Ge. xlii. 16; xxli. 17.

f Ps. cvi. 15; Re. xiv. 13.

g Pr. xl. 7; Nu. xxxi. 8.

"The host of Israel dwelt by itself in a separate encampment upon the plain. In this his spirit discerned the inward and essential separation of Israel fr. all the heathen."—*Baumgarten*.

"For two reasons B. could not curse Israel: 1. They were a people outwardly and inwardly different from other nations; 2. They were a people richly blessed and highly favored by God."—*Keil*.

Balaam's sacrifice.—I. Objectively this sacrifice was as perfect as the offerers could make it. II. Subjectively it was very imperfect and sinful. The sacrifice was offered:—1. With an admixture of faith and superstition. 2. Under the impression that the offering was meritorious on the part of the offerers, and placed God under an obligation to them. 3. As a means to induce God to change His mind. 4. With a view of obtaining permission and power to curse the people of God.

Illustrations.—1. From an inanimate instrument of music sweet sounds may be produced—the noblest compositions of the noblest musician. A parrot may speak words he does not understand. So the prophets often spoke what they did not understand. As beauty dwells often in the cups of poisonous flowers, so selfish and corrupt man may utter words of the highest wisdom, as in Balaam's case. He had a base heart, and yet uttered holy words. 2. "The death of the righteous." Blissful and hopeful! A dying man said to his wife, "Come not to my grave in the evening, when all nature is sad; come in the morning, when the sun shines and the birds sing, and nature is full of gladness." This is the time to visit a Christian's grave."

3. And can he choose but fear,
Who feels his God so near,
That when he fain would curse, his powerless tongue
In blessing only moves?
Alas! the world he loves
Too close around his heart her tangling veil has flung.

6—10. (6) he... sacrifice, quite confident the reply would be favorable. (7) parable, a Heb. *masnal*, similitude; any kind of allegorical or figurative speech. *Aram*^b (*high region*). *defy*, to execrate with violent rage. (8) *how, etc.*,^c he could speak only what God permitted. (9) *for, etc.*, the only portent he beholds is the camp of a great people. *shall... alone*,^d having no political, social, or religious alliances; the Jews have ever been a separate and a pure race unmixed with other nations. Though vanquished many times, they have never been assimilated with their conquerors. (10) *count, etc.*,^e ref. to vast number of Israel. *let... righteous*,^f their happiness begins where the happiness of other people ends, and he covets that happiness. *let... end*,^g my last estate, reward in the future.

Balaam's wish shows.—1. That solemn thoughts of death and judgment may often occupy, though to little purpose, the minds of irreligious men. 2. That irreligious men are often constrained to bear a reluctant testimony in favor of religion, and against themselves. 3. That men cheat themselves with the fallacy of wishing to die by a religion by which they are not willing to live. 4. That none go as far from God as those who fly in the face of their own convictions. *The death of the righteous.*—I. Righteous men die. II. Bad men would die like them. 1. The death of the righteous is a desirable death. No moral remorse, no terrible forebodings. Peaceful conscience. Glorious hope. 2. This desirable death is only gained by a righteous life. — *Homilist*. *The fate of Balaam.*—I. In the comparison of a good man's and a bad man's end, we see that death is indeed the testing time of life. It is the thing that tries and manifests our character. We may exaggerate its importance, may treat it as more important than life, whereas its chief importance is in relation to life. In this relation its importance is scarcely to be exaggerated. II. In the contrast of these two we see the terrible disadvantage, in the hour and article of death, of having lived a sinful and unholy life. — *W. Roberts*.

Confidence at death.—Dr. Simpson on his deathbed told a friend that he awaited his great change with the contented confidence of a little child. As another friend said to him that he might, as St. John at the Last Supper, lean his head on the breast of Christ, the doctor made answer, "I fear I cannot do that, but I think I have grasped hold of the hem of His garment." — *Koenig's Life of Dr. Simpson*. *Frances Ridley Havergal's death.*—She got her feet wet standing on the ground preaching temperance and the gospel to a group of boys and men, went home with a chill, and congestion set in, and they told her she was very dangerously sick. "I thought so," she said, "but it is really too good to be true that I am going. Doctor, do you really think I am going?" "Yes." "To-day?" "Probably." She said, "Beautiful, splendid, to be so near the gate of heaven." Then after a spasm of pain she nestled down in the pillows and said, "There, now, it is all over—blessed rest." Then she tried to sing, and she struck one glad, high note of praise to Christ,

but could sing only one word, "He," and then all was still. She finished it in heaven. — *Talmage*. *A glorious death*. — The biographer of Dr. Norman Macleod says that, the night before his death, "he described with great delight the dreams he had been enjoying, or rather the visions which seemed to be passing vividly before his eyes, even while he was speaking. He said, 'You cannot imagine what exquisite pictures I see! I never beheld more glorious highlands, majestic mountains and glens, heather tinted with purple, and burns — clear, clear burns; and above, a sky of intense blue — so blue, without a cloud.' On the day of his death he said: 'I have had constant joy, and the happy thought continually whispered, 'Thou art with me!' Not many would understand me, they would put down much I have felt to the delirium of weakness, but I have had deep spiritual insight.' Very shortly before he died he said to one of his daughters, 'Now all is perfect peace and perfect calm. I have glimpses of heaven that no tongue, or pen, or words can describe.'"

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"Balaam desires for himself the entire, full, indestructible, and inalienable blessedness of the Israelites, of wh. death is both the close and completion, and also the seal and the attestation." — *Kurtz*.

11—13. (11) *Balak, etc.*,^a the heathen king thought his money would secure Balaam; and B.'s power the co-operation of his God. "Sometimes God makes the enemies of his church a vexation one to another, while He that sits in the heavens laughs at them, and the efforts of their impotent malice." — *Henry*. (12) *answered, etc.*,^b as a true prophet I can only utter the words given to me; but as a greedy man he would cling to Balak for reward. (13) *come . . place*,^c he superstitiously imagines that the spot is unfavorable. *see . . them*, as if B. had simply been confounded by the vast number. *curse . . thence*, wh. will be poss. when your mind is deliv. fr. the terrible influence of numbers.

Balak reproves Balaam

^a Ge. xxvii. 29, 33.

^b Jo. xix. 11.

^c Jud. xvii. 5, 13.

Man proposes, God disposes (vs. 11). — I. It is a question whether either Balak's curse, or Balaam's blessing, could do Israel either much harm or much good. The curse of impotent rage; the blessing of covetousness. II. We may regard this as an illustration of God's mode of instructing ungodly men. Balak may learn, if he will, God's will concerning Israel.

Sinning against convictions. — Balaam's worst sins were committed after he had uttered the pious prayer of the text, and his end was miserable. Beware lest any of you be in like manner tempted to evil; you may see the excellence of religion; you may be even led to utter high aspirations for the rest which remains for the people of God; but it is only a diligent walking in God's ways, a constant battle against self and sin and impurity and worldly lusts and the like, a constant serving of God in all things which He Himself has commanded, which can ensure you against making shipwreck of your faith. — *Bp. Harvey Goodwin*. *Dangers of curses*. — Diogenes warned a child, whom he saw throwing stones at random among the people, to take heed he did not hit his own father. Such is the condition of all cursing men, whose tongues run with great speed on the Devil's errands: whose maledictions are shot out of their mouths like fool's bolts, not regarding where they light; whereas many times they fall upon their friends, their children, and often themselves; or like guns which, while men discharge at others, recoil on their own heads. If every curse should stick a visible blister on the tongue, as it doth insensible ones on the soul, how many men's tongues would be too big for their mouths, and their mouths as an open sepulchre full of dead men's bones!

"Balak seems to hope that the prophet's words, 'Who can count,' etc., reflected the impression conveyed by the scene bef. him at the moment of the augury; and so that the sight of a few straggling Israelites in the utmost part of the camp might induce a dif. estimate of their resources and prospects." — *Spk. Com.*

"Malevolence is that disposition of mind which inclines us to wish ill to any person. It discovers itself in frowns and lowering countenance, in uncharitableness in evil sentiments, hard speeches to or of its objects.

14—17. (14) *Zophim*^d (*watchers*). *Pisgah* (*part, piece*), *see* xxi. 20. *bullt, etc.*, as bef. vs. 1. (15, 16)^e *see on* vs. 3—5. (17) *Balak said, etc.*, his question betrays anxiety.

Balaam taken to the top of Pisgah

The field of watchers (vs. 14). — Zophim an image of the world. Full of watchers. I. Covetous eyes. II. Angry eyes. III. Superstitious eyes. IV. Anxious eyes. V. The eyes of the saints watch for the Lord's coming.

^d Mr. Grove sugg. its identity with Mizpah of Moab.

Exposure of superstition. — When John Knox began the work of reform in Glasgow, the idea prevailed that if a heretic should but touch the great bell in the church there, he would be struck dead instantly. He accepted the test on condition that the bell be lowered into the street. He declared that it should either kill him, or he it. Then he stood over it, anathematized the Church of Rome, the Pope, and the wicked priests. The superstitious crowd looked in vain to see the bold heretic fall dead. Instead, men armed with hammers, at Knox's order, broke the bell in fragments. Thus a great imposture was detected, Romanism defeated, and Protestantism established.

^e Je. 1. 9; Jud. iii. 20.

"This is the curse of every evil deed, that, propagating still, it brings forth evil." — *Cole-ridge*.

B. C. 1452.

**Balaam's
reply to
Balak**

a Job xxiii. 13;
Ro. xi. 29; Tit. i. 2;
Ja. i. 17; 1 S. xv.
29; Mal. iii. 6.

b Ge. xii. 2 xxii.
17; Pr. xvi. 4; Ex.
ix. 16.

"The unchange-
ableness of the Di-
vine purposes is a
necessary conse-
quence of the un-
changeableness of
of the Divine na-
ture."—*Keil*.

"Longsuffering is
a virtue by which
God suspends His
anger, lest it
should instantly
hasten to the de-
pulsion of the evil,
as soon as the
creature has by his
sins deserved it."
—*Arminius*.

**Balaam
blessed
Israel**

c Ro. iv. 7, 8.

d De. xxxiii. 17;
Job xxxix. 10, 11;
Ps. xxii. 21, xcli.
10.

Unicorn, *See Tris-
tram, Nat. Hist.
of Bib.* 146 ff.

e Ex. vii. 10-12,
viii. 16-19; Ez. xxi.
21-23.

f Ps. cxxvi. 1-3;
xxx. 19; xlv. 1.

g Ju. xiv. 18; Pr.
xxx. 29, 30; xxviii.
1; Ge. xlix. 9; Re
v. 5; Je. i. 43-46.

18-20. (18) rise . . hear, a call to close attention. (19) God . . lie, or permit His servants to do so for their own ends. *repent*,^a change his mind. Scripture sometimes predicates repentance of God, but it is *apparent*, and not *real*; an anthropomorphism—an attributing of human characteristics to God. (20) I . . it,^b I have no authority to alter or qualify his words.

The veracity of God.—Introduction.—Remarks on the character of Balaam, and the circumstances that led to the utterance of his prophecy. Here is—I. A purpose presupposed. He saw—1. Israel as the objects of the Divine protection, so that all the devices of their enemies were rendered vain; 2. Their prosperity in the face of all opposition; 3. The blessedness of their prosperity, in the tokens of the Divine presence and power with which they were accompanied. II. The ground of its stability asserted. 1. God *Himself* is unchangeable; 2. He is so in His will and purpose; 3. There is no cause why God should alter. Inferences:—(1) The perpetual obligation of religion; (2) Reproof of the inconstancy of man; (3) Religion directs us where alone we may safely put our trust; (4) It teaches patience under God's providences; (5) Here is an awful warning to sinners.

God's immutability.—Independent of all possible beings and events, Jehovah sits at the head of the universe, unchanged, and incapable of change, amid all the successions tossings and tumults, by which it is agitated. When empires are overthrown, or angels fall; when suns are extinguished, and systems return to their original nothing: He is equally impassive and unmoved as when sparrows expire, or the hair falls from our heads. Nothing can happen, nothing can be done beyond His expectation, or without His permission. Nothing can frustrate His designs, and nothing disappoint or vary His purposes. All things, beside Him, change and fluctuate without ceasing. Events exist and vanish. Beings rise and expire. But His own existence, the thoughts which He entertains, the desires which He admits, the purposes which He forms, are "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Throughout the coming vast of eternity also, and the boundless tracts of immensity He sees with serene complacency His own perfect purposes daily and invariably advancing, with a regular fulfilment, towards their absolute completion. In its own place, in its own time, and in its own manner, each exists in exact obedience to His order, and in exact accordance with His choice; nothing lingers, nothing hastens; but His counsel exactly stands, and all His pleasure will be precisely accomplished. — *Timothy Dwight*.

21-24. (21) iniquity,^c Heb. *aven* = vanity. perverseness, Heb. *amal* = labor; *i. e.* resistance of God. . While Israel was somewhat iniquitous and perverse, not sufficiently so to inflict the punishment desired by Balak and Balaam. shout . . them, people rejoicing in a present God; they were flushed with victory like a king returning in triumph from the battle. (22) unicorn,^d R. V., "the wild ox;" this is said of Israel, not of God. (23) no . . Israel,^e magical arts and soothsayings were valueless in overcoming a people whose strength was the Lord. according . . Jacob.^f (24) rise . . lion,^g strong, prudent. young lion, eager, bold, furious. and . . slain, Israel shall not rest till Canaan is conquered.

The prophecies of Balaam.—We have here—I. A declaration of the principles that lie at the foundation of all true national and church life. 1. The absence of that iniquity and perverseness which is the root and substance of all iniquity and perverseness, viz., the denial of God's presence, and a refusal to submit to Him; 2. Separation from the rest of the earth (*see vss.* 8, 9); 3. The principle of order. II. The blessedness of those in whom these principles are realized and embodied. III. The dignity and majesty of those who are thus blessed. Every symbol of strength and vigor, of safety and security, is here attributed to them. IV. The advantages that may be enjoyed by those who are only somewhat remotely related to the people of God (*see x.* 29). There is such a thing as being blessed by being related to the blessed (*vs.* 9).—*W. Roberts*.

What hath God wrought!—Many years ago an old man might have been seen walking the streets of Gloucester leaning upon the arm of a younger friend. As they reached a certain place, "Stop," said the aged man; and, so saying, he stood uncovered his white head, and passed some moments in silent prayer. That place was the site of the first Sabbath school; that venerable man was Robert Raikes, its founder. The tears rolled thick and fast down his cheeks as he said to his companion, "This is the spot on which I saw the des-

titution of the children and the desecration of the Sabbath, and first asked, 'Can nothing be done?' A voice answered, 'Try.' I did try; and see what God hath wrought!"

God sufficient. —

Let nothing disturb thee,
Nothing affright thee;
All things are passing;
God never changeth;
Patient endurance,
Attaineth to all things;
Who God possesseth
In nothing is wanting;
Alone God sufficeth.

— Santa Teresa's book-mark.

25-30. (25) *neither, etc.*, if to speak was to bless, silence would be preferable. (26) *all, etc.*,^a I must speak, and speak as commanded. (27) *I . . place*, superstition attaching importance to places. Balak thinks that opportunity might change the mind of God. *thou . . thence*, as if the standpoint of the seer could affect the covenant relations of God and His people. (28) *Peor*^b (*cleft*), a N. peak of mts. of Abarim. *Jeshimon*, see xxi. 20. (29, 30) *build, etc.*,^c sacrifices as bef., see vss. 1, 2, 14.

The policy of indifference (vs. 25). — I. Balak did not reflect that his curse could do no harm; but he feared the blessing might do some good. II. He did not consider that Israel might be equally indifferent and still march forward to Canaan. III. The world or certain sections of it, still affects a lofty contempt for the people of God, and they pursue the even tenor of their way.

Difference between cunning and wisdom. — Cunning differs from wisdom at twilight from open day. He that walks in the sunshine goes boldly forward by the nearest way; he sees that, where the path is straight and even, he may proceed in security, and where it is rough and crooked, he easily complies with the turns, and avoids the obstructions. But the traveler in the dusk fears more as he sees less; he knows there may be danger, and therefore suspects that he is never safe; tries every step before he fixes his foot, and shrinks at every noise, lest violence should approach him. Wisdom comprehends at once the end and the means, estimates easiness or difficulty, and is cautious, or confident in due proportion. Cunning discovers little at a time, and has no other means of certainty than multiplication of stratagems and superfluity of suspicion. The man of cunning always considers that he can never be too safe, and, therefore, always keeps himself enveloped in a mist, impenetrable, as he hopes, to the eye of rivalry or curiosity. — *Johnson.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

1-4. (1) *saw . . Israel*, he was slow to see this; greed had blinded him. *he . . times*, see xxiii. 3-15. *enchancements*,^a auguries to determine the purpose of God by omens and signs in the natural world. *he . . face*, heart and mind went with that steadfast gaze. *wilderness*, whitened with the tents of Israel grouped ab. the tabernacle. (2) *spirit . . him*,^f a higher state of inspiration than the expression "God put a word into his mouth." (3) *parable*, see xxiii. 7. *man . . open*, at last, to see clearly the will of God. (4) *but . . open*,^g with bodily eyes beholding the tents, etc.; with spiritual vision seeing the purposes of God.

A prophet in spite of himself. — I. What his carnal eyes saw. The lords who came. The king who received him. The wealth and honor awaiting him. II. What his opened eyes beheld. A great people living in peace as an organized community. The purpose of God concerning that people.

"Balaam is made the involuntary instrument of further revelations; and what he now utters when the Spirit of God comes upon him, is in the very highest style and strain of lofty inspiration. We cannot fix on any portion of Scripture that bears a nobler or more sustained elevation than these effusions poured forth by Balaam from the mountains, as he looked down on the tents of Israel stretched out in full and far perspective before him." — *Chalmers.*

The *Spk. Com.* sugg. that perh. it was a lion coming up in his strength fr. the swelling of Jordan that furnished B. with the augury he awaited, and so dictated the final similitude of the parable.

Balaam is led to the top of Peor

^a Am. iii. 4-8.

^b Jos. xlii. 20; De. iii. 29; iv. 49.

^c Pr. xxix. 1; xvi. 25.

Clericus quoting fr. Suetonius, Curtius, Gellius, etc., observes, "it was the opinion of the heathen that what was not obtained through the first, second or third victim, might, nevertheless, be secured through a fourth."

Balaam's eyes are opened

^d Nu. xxiii. 23; Is. xlii. 24-26; Ac. xvi. 16-18; Ez. xlii. 22, 23; 2 K. xix. 21-22.

^e Nu. ii. 1 ff.; iii. 38.

^f Nu. xi. 25; 1 S. x. 10; xix. 20-24; 2 Ch. xv. 1.

^g Ge. xv. 12; Ez. i. 28; Da. viii. 18; x. 15, 16; 2 Co. xii. 2-4; Re. i. 10-17; Ac. x. 9, 10.

"It profiteth us nothing to be peaceful towards all men, if we be at war with God." — *St. Chrysostom.*

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Balaam once more blesses Israel

α Ge. xxvii. 27; Ps. i. 3; Je. xvii. 8; Ps. civ. 16, 17. Lign-aloës, prob. the fragrant wood of *Aquilaria Agallochum*. The wood is used in the E. for scenting dresses and rooms, is given as a cordial in fainting or epileptic fits; also used in embalming. Jo. xix. 39, 40; cf. Ps. xiv. 8; Pr. vii. 17; Song iv. 14.

b 1 S. xv. 32, 33.

c Ge. xvii. 4-8, 15-20; 2 S. v. 12; 1 Ch. xiv. 2; Da. ii. 44; Is. ix. 6, 7; Lu. i. 31-33; Ac. v. 30-31.

d Nu. xiv. 9; Ps. ii. 4-12; cx. 2; xlv. 5; 1 Co. xv. 25.

e Ge. xlix. 9; Re. v. 5.

f Ge. xlii. 3; xxvii. 28, 29; xxii. 17, 18.

"Speech is divine, but silence Deity. As sleep in life, and dreams in sleep, is truth in dreams to man." *Bailey*.

Balak threatens Balaam and is counseled

g Ez. xxi. 14, 17; Prov. xiv. 16.

h De. xxiii. 4, 5; Jos. xxiv. 9, 10; Ne. xiii. 2.

i Ma. xxiv. 25; Nu. xxii. 18; Jude 11.

j De. ii. 23, x. 14.

k "Balaam's view stretches into the distant future, far beyond David. His aspirations become, in a wide sense, Messianic; they long for and foretell a glorious time of conquest, of wh. David's was but the prelude"—*Davidson*.

5—9. (5) **goodly**, in appearance, order, number; in the eye of God. (6) **valleys . . forth**, wide-reaching; fruitful. **gardens . . side**, cultivated, well situated. **trees . . aloës**,^a i. e. trees of alœe-wood. Ref. to fragrance, incense, sacrifice. **cedar**, strength, majestic beauty, durability. (7) **buckets**, all. to unfailing and Divine sources of blessing. **seed . . waters**, overspreading and fertilizing the country. **Agag**^b (*fire, flaming*). Commentators who favor a late authorship of the Pentateuch would cite this as a proof. Agag was the king whom Saul slew; but it may be a generic name for all the kings in Amalek as Pharaoh was in Egypt. **exalted**,^c Israel to bec. a great political power among the nations; a gleam of the Messianic times, (8) **unicorn**,^d see xxiii. 22. (9) **who . . up?**^e i. e. none shall have the temerity to provoke the wrath of Israel. **blessed**,^f etc., the relation of men to God's people involves their own weal or woe. Here Jehovah puts the same words into the mouth of Balaam that many years before Isaac used in his benediction upon Jacob, and which Jehovah himself spoke to Abraham.

Hints for teachers.—1. The Church a beautiful garden, Num. xxiv. 6. The Christian a tree, Ps. i. 3. 2. The Star. The polar star guiding over the sea of life.

3. Sceptre and Star Divine,
Who in Thine inmost shrine
Hast made us worshipers. O claim Thine own.
More than Thy seers we know —
O teach our love to grow
Up to Thy heavenly light, and reap what Thou hast sown.

— *Keble*.

4. H. Kirke White's "Star of Bethlehem." 5. Sceptre. Compare with Queen Esther's approach to the king, Esther iv. 11, v. 1-4.

The lign-aloë.—Gabriel Sionita, a learned Syrian Maronite, thus describes the cedars of Mount Lebanon, which he had examined on the spot. "The cedar-tree grows on the most elevated part of the mountain; is taller than the pine, and so thick that five men together could scarce fathom one. It shoots out its branches at ten or twelve feet from the ground; they are large, and distant from each other, and are perpetually green. The cedar distils a kind of gum, to which different effects are attributed. The wood of it is of a brown color, very solid, and incorruptible if preserved from wet; it bears a small apple, like that of the pine." Maundrell, who visited Mount Libanus in 1697, gives the following description of the cedars still growing there: "These noble trees grow among the snow, near the highest part of Lebanon, and are remarkable, as well for their own age and largeness, as for those frequent allusions to them in the Word of God. Some of them are very old, and of a prodigious bulk; others younger, and of a smaller size. Of the former I could reckon only sixteen, but the latter are very numerous. I measured one of the largest, and found it twelve yards and six inches in girth, and yet sound; and thirty-seven yards in the spread of its branches. At about five or six yards from the ground it was divided into five limbs, each of which was equal to a great tree."

10—14. (10) **and . . together**, in token of great rage.^g The clapping of hands, which with us is a mark of approval, was in those days a mark of disapproval. **altogether**,^h without qualification. (11). **flee . . place**, anxious to be rid of the seer that he was once desirous to propitiate. **the . . honour**, "the irony with wh. Balak scoffs at B.'s confidence in Jehovah is unmistakable." He would say, "You have a queer sort of a God, who deprives his servant of such honor as you might have had," (12, 13) **and**,ⁱ etc., B. reminds Balak of what he had said at the first. Had he been permitted to follow his own desires he would have helped him, but he was under the constraint of Jehovah. (14) **I . . people**, I will return as you desire. **what . . days**,^j supposed by many to ref. to times of the Messiah.^k

An Assyrian Machiavelli (vs. 14).—For key to this advice, see Re. ii. 14. I. The nature of the advice given by Balaam. Balak was to corrupt a people whom he could not hope to conquer. The next chap. further explains it. II. The reason of it. Balaam saw that the strength of Israel lay in their alliance with God; and that this, though conditioned on a covenant relation, might be affected by their moral character. III. The motive of it. The desire to appease the king, and secure worldly wealth and honor.

15-19. (15, 16) *see* xxiv. 3, 4. (17) I shall see, *R. V.*, "I see him." *now*,^a *lit.* though he be not now. I shall behold, *R. V.*, "I behold him." *star*,^b the star in scripture is often used to indicate a "brilliant" personage. *sceptre*, *i. e.* kingly office. *all . . Sheth*, *lit.* all the sons of confusion. (18) *Seir*,^c anc. name of mts. of Moab. *for his enemies*, *R. V.*, "which were his enemies."

Balaam's prophecy.—Every candid interpreter of prophecy will confess that this prediction could not be understood at the first, as afterwards, when the accomplishment of it in the mission of Christ supplied its interpretation; nor could it direct men's ideas, either as to the character of the person whom it foretold, or the nature of his mission, so strongly, when it stood by itself, as when supported by other predictions relating, or seeming to relate, to the same general subject. But yet it was a vivid prophecy, and adapted to keep men's minds and hopes intent, and prepare them for something beyond the law, and that of no small importance, since it was to be ushered in by a person of a remote advent, whose symbols, a star and a sceptre, imported most naturally the display of some new revelation, and a dominion combined with it.—*Davison on Prophecy.* *Renwick the martyr.*—Mr. Renwick, the last of the Scottish martyrs, speaking of his sufferings for conscience sake, says, "Enemies think themselves satisfied that we are put to wander in mosses, and upon mountains; but even amidst the storms of these last two nights, I cannot express what sweet times I have had, when I had no covering but the dark curtains of night. Yea, in the silent watch, my mind was led out to admire the deep and inexpressible ocean of joy, wherein the whole family of heaven swim. Each star led me to wonder what He must be, who is the Star of Jacob, of whom all stars borrow their shining."

20-22. (20) *Amalek . . nations*,^d "The pride of Amalek is rebuked, because they claimed superiority for themselves over other nations, and this on the score of their antiquity, as if they had been created together with the sun and moon. There is a pointed comparison between this noble origin, and the slaughter which awaited them at their end."—*Calvin.* (21) *nest . . rocks*, there is here a play upon words; the Heb. word *Ken*, *Kenite*, is also the word for *nest*. If they were the Canaanitish Kenites, they probably made their abode in some strong mountain fastness. (22) *Asshur*, the Assyrian imperial power.

The destruction of heathendom.—We have here—I. Three typical nations—Amalek, Kenites, Asshur; chief of nations, strong in situation, etc. II. The agents of their destruction. One destroys the other, and is presently destroyed himself.

Periodic changes in nations.—Nations seem to have their periods like the year. Neither in civilization nor in Christian elements do they seem to mount up with a steady growth. They move, rather, as it were, in spirals. They often return as if falling back, and yet their progress, on the whole, is onward. There are times of struggle, of darkness, and of disaster in the history of every nation. And we have had our hours in this nation, young as we are, of apathy, of winter. But, God be thanked, though it be this blowing, blustering March of our affairs, the winter has gone, the spring has come, and the sound of birds is in the air. Summer is not yet. Now is the time for sowing seeds; now is a time of expectation. The past—let it not be forgotten; but let us not take our lessons of joy from that. The autumn is ended, the winter is gone, the spring has come, and virtue, religion, justice, liberty, truth, and the freedom that truth gives to its children, are ours.—*Beecher.*

23-25. (23) *when . . this*,^e the seer beholds a judgment, in the distant future, falling upon his own people. In those awful days when judgment goes forth who shall be able to stand. (24) *Chittim*,^f Cyprians, prob. used to represent that unknown west, fr. whence the conquerors of the east should come. *Eber*, the posterity of Shem. (25) *went . . place*, if Balaam went home, he must have returned again, as he was slain in the Midianite camp. The better understanding is that "he proposed to return home."

The parting of the plotters (vs. 25).—I. They parted dissatisfied with each other. II. They parted to take different paths—Balak to follow the advice given; Balaam to be tortured by remorse, to be execrated by the good, to die on the field of battle. III. They parted to meet again at the Judgment day and receive the reward of their doings.

B. c. 1452.

Balaam's
prophecy
concerning
Israel

a Job xix. 25-27; Re. i. 7.

b Ma. xlii. 15, 16; Re. vi. 12-17; Ma. ii. 2; Re. xxii. 16; Ge. xlix. 10; Lu. xxiv. 27.

c Ge. xxxvi. 8; De. ii. 1; 2S. viii. 14; 1 Ch. xviii. 12, 13; Ps. ix. 8-12; Ez. xxv. 12-14; Is. lxiii. 1-4.

"A star is so nat. an image and symbol of imperial greatness and splendor, that it has been employed in this sense in almost every nation."—*Hengstenberg.*

his prophecy
concerning
Amalek, etc.

d Ex. xvii. 14-16.

On vs. 22. "The words are not as they appear in A. V., a prediction of evil to the Kenites, but a promise, on the contrary, of safety to be long continued."—*Spk. Com.*

Balaam re-
turns to his
own place

e Je. ix. 1; Le. i. 15, 16.

f Ge. x. 4; Da. xi. 30; Ge. x. 21-25; Is. x. 12.

"Look not mournfully into the past, — it comes not

B. C. 1432.

back again; wisely improve the present,—it is thine; go forth to meet the shadowy future without fear and with a manly heart.” — *Longfellow*.

Israel is seduced by Moab

a Nu. xxxiii 40; Jos. ii. 1.

b Ps. xvi. 4.

c De. iv 3; Jos. xxii. 17; Ps. cvi. 28, 29; Hos. ix. 10

d De. xxi. 22, 23.

e Ge. xvii. 21, 25; Ex. xxxii. 27; De. xiii. 6-15; Ma. x. 37

f “This command of Moses to the judges was not carried out, however, bec. the matter took a dif. turn.” — *Keil*.

the zeal of Phinehas

g Joel ii. 17.

h Ps. cvi. 30; De. iv 3; Nu. xxxi. 16.

i 1 Co. x. 8.

“Every man is to be a Phinehas to himself, and to mortify, and kill his own sinful affections and lusts, and then the plague of God’s wrath will cease.” — *Bp. Andrews*.

“Zeal and discretion united together are like the two lions which supported the throne of Solomon, and he which hath them both is like Moses for mildness, and like Phinehas for his service; therefore, as wine is tempered with water, so let discretion temper zeal.” — *Henry Smith*.

Knowledge of future ill events. — We may add, concerning ill events, it is not only needless to foreknow them, but better to be ignorant. Think what a case we were in had we the prospect lying distinctly before us of all the evils that shall befall us through our whole life. “Such a day I shall have a terrible fit of the colic or the stone; such a day my house will be burnt, or I shall be undone, and reduced to beggary; and such a day my husband, wife, or this or that pleasant child, will die; at such a time I shall break a bone, or be in prison,” etc. Were this knowledge a felicity? Divine mercy in these respects keeps us ignorant. — *J. Howe*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

1-5. (1) *Shittim*^a (*acacias*), verdant valley with acacia trees on E. side of Jordan. began . . Moab, not the whole body of people, but a portion who afterwards were visited with punishment. Plainly instigated by Balaam (see Rev. ii. 14). (2) *they called*, the verb is in the feminine, showing that it was the women who called. bowed . . gods,^b strange women led to strange gods. (3) *Baal-Peor*^c (*lord of the opening*). (4) *heads*, chiefs, they were responsible for the sin; if they did not actually commit it, they countenanced it (see vs. 14). hang . . sun,^d not so much for the sake of publicity, but to show that the victims were devoted to the wrath of God. (5) *slay . . men*,^e i. e. such of the evil-doers as belonged to his jurisdiction.

A lesson for libertines (vs. 3). — The just anger of the Holy One. I. What caused it? II. How was it manifested? III. What it teaches us.

Losing modesty. — Shame at first is a restraint to sinners, but that too soon wears off; and when any have lost their innocence, then modesty will not be long after: for impudence then comes on with vice, and grows up with it, and especially great crimes make persons shameless; and those who, after a course of sin, have the heart to do bad things, seldom want the face to bear them out. — *Scragg*.

6-9. (6) *behold*, even when the anger of God was known. one . . Israel, see vs. 14. in . . Moses, unblushingly, defiantly. weeping,^f mourning bec. of Divine wrath and impending punishment. (7) *Phinehas*, only son of Eleazar, and his probable successor. javelin, spear. (8) and . . through,^h caught and killed them in the act. (9) *were . . thousand*, St. Paul said 23,000;ⁱ he prob. foll. the trad. wh. deducted 1,000 for those slain by hands of their brethren. — *Spk. Com.*

The doom of seducers. — I. Their sin. They had tempted others from the way of holiness. II. Their punishment. 1. Ordered of God; 2. Inflicted by those whose ruin they sought. III. Their testimony to all ages. Harken to the voice of wailing from the barren and depopulated wastes of Moab.

I think I could give my own life, if called to do so, for the cause of Christ and the welfare of men. Why, then, should I hesitate to denounce anything that is opposed to the cause of Christ? Why should I hesitate to inveigh against anything, however sacred it may be to others, which is injurious to the welfare of men? I will not fear to condemn any organization, or any institution, that seems to me to stand in the way of God’s glory or man’s redemption. It is not personal bitterness that leads me to use severity. It is for men, and not against men, that I am inflamed and aroused. And my indignation is strong just in proportion as those for whom it is called out are weak and unable to defend themselves. — *Beecher*. *Zeal*. — The word “zeal” is used indiscriminately in Scripture in order to denote a strong feeling of the mind, whether bent upon evil design, or on cultivating the things which are of good report and lovely. Hence in the 17th verse of the 5th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we read that “the high priest and they that were with him were filled with envy,” — with zeal, as it is in the original; while in the Book of Numbers, Phinehas is commended for the zeal with which he rose up against those who had violated the law of the Lord: and when once, just once, in the Redeemer’s incarnate life, His disciples saw His holy indignation burn as the merchandise was scattered and the baffled money-changers driven from the temple they had profaned, they remembered the place where it is written — “The zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up.” — *Punshon*.

10-15. (10, 11) **Phinehas, etc.**,^a he risked his own life for the honor of God. (12) **my . . peace,**^b "The assurance of peace with God is appropriately bestowed on the man who had regained this peace for others."—*Spl. Com.* (13) **even . . priesthood,** to the captivity^c. (save time of Eli)^d the priesthood was in the line of P.^e and aft. the captiv. Ezra restored it.^f (14) **Zimri (celebrated in song). Salu (weighed). prince, etc.,** hence his sin and punishment, and zeal of Phinehas the more conspicuous. (15) **Cozbi (lying). Zur (rock),** aft. slain by the Israelites.^g

The zeal of Phinehas.—Consider—I. The nature of a godly zeal. It is a holy ardor for the honor of God. It expresses itself in—1. Grief that He should be dishonored; 2. Holy indignation against such as dishonor Him; 3. A desire of removing the disgrace brought upon His cause. II. The acceptableness of such a principle to God.—*R. Cecil.*

Holy earnestness.—Do we want examples of holy earnestness—earnestness calmly surveying the path of duty, and then, with the full knowledge of all its roughnesses, difficulties, and trials, cheerfully hastening along it? Turning over the pages of the Old Testament, we light on the name of a Noah—an Abraham—a Moses—a David—a Hezekiah—an Elijah—and a Daniel, all of whom, in their day, wrought deeds of godly prowess in the service of their Lord. Then coming to the New Testament, among many others of lesser note, we find one pre-eminent example of burning zeal, in that man of unrivaled piety and unprecedented labors, the Apostle Paul. What earnestness was his! How it made him smile at reproach, scorn suffering, and welcome death! But oh! even his name is eclipsed by that of another—the God-man Jesus. He only could say of all that ever lived, "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten Me up. My earnestness has preyed upon My vitals like a consuming flame!" Beloved friends, here, then, are our models. Christ first—after Him, those who come nearest to Him.—*C. M. Merry.* Mr. Andrew Melville, Professor of Divinity at St. Andrews in the reign of James VI., was a very bold and zealous man for the cause of God and truth. When some of his more moderate brethren blamed him for being too hot and fiery, he was wont to reply, "If you see my fire go downwards, set your foot upon it, and put it out; but if it go upward, let it return to its own place."

16-18. (16, 17) **vex . . them,**^h *i. e.* "treat them as enemies;" the Midianites were prob. the chief offenders bec. their sin was more deliberate than that of Moab. In the case of Moab the women followed their individual passion; in the case of Midian there was a conspiracy to corrupt Israel. (18) **wherewith.**ⁱ

Retribution.—At Larida, Spain, the banker, José Nunez, had two strong-rooms, one of which was only had recourse to when any heavy payments in gold had to be made. Originally there were two keys, but some time ago one was lost. A few days back a necessity arose to visit this safe, when the cashier found a key in the lock. He informed his employer, and they opened the door, and found the corpse of a man formerly employed in the bank. He had probably stolen the key, and visited the depository with the intention of robbery but the door had accidentally closed, and as it fastened with a spring he had died miserably in the midst of the wealth he had desired.—*Guardian.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

1-4. (1) **and . . plague,** the slaughter of the 24,000 to be remembered in considering the numbers. **Eleazar,** his father, Aaron, took the census bef. (2) **sum, etc.,** same principle adopted as bef. The object of this census was perh. with a view to the distribution of the inheritance so soon to take place in Canaan. (3) **the . . Moab,** Heb. *Arboth Moab*: steppes of Moab: prob. fr. Dead Sea to Jabbok.

The warriors of Israel (vs. 2).—I. Who were they? All that were able to go to war in Israel. II. How many were there? As many as there were of a certain age. All over twenty. Every man was to be a fighting-man.

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God rewards Phinehas

a Ps. cvi. 31.

b Ep. ii. 13, 14; He. ii. 17.

c 1 Ch. vi. 4-15.

d Who was of the line of Ithamar.

e 1 S. xxii. 18-23; 1 K. ii. 27; cf. 1 Ch. vi. 4.

f Ez. vii. 1, 5.

g Nu. xxxi. 8; Jos. xiii. 21.

"The hist. of the sin and punishment of Cozbi is related with such minuteness by the sac. histn. as to confirm the belief that it is not only a true hist., but has also a spiritual meaning. *Wordsworth*, who suggests that Cozbi is a fig. of a corrupt church."

Israel commanded to vex Moab

h "In order that the practical zeal of Phinehas against sin, by wh. expiation had been made for the guilt, might be adopted by all the nation."—*Baumgarten.*

i Ro. ii. 14.

the census of Israel at Moab

j Nu. i. 3; Ex. xxx. 12-16.

"The existence of war always implies injustice in one, at least, of the parties concerned."—*Hall.*

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The Two Census Tables.

vs. 1. "These words serve to show approximately the date at wh. the census was taken, and intimate the reason for the great decrease in numbers wh. was found to have taken place in certain tribes."—*Spt. Com.*

"Force is at best a fearful thing, 'en in a righteous cause, God only helps when man can help no more."—*Schüller.*

Reuben numbered

a Ge. xvi. 10.

b Ex. vi. 24; 1 Ch. vi. 22.

"To reprove a brother is like as, when he has fallen to help him up again; when he is wounded, to help to cure him; when he hath broken a bone, to help to set it; when he is out of the way, to put him into it; when he is fallen into the fire, to pluck him out; when he had contracted defilement, to cleanse him."—*M. Henry.*

Simeon and Gad numbered

"A good man is like the day, enlightening all he shines on, and always ascending to a region of more constant purity. The bad man is like the night, dark and scattering fears and unwholesome vapors upon all which rest beneath."—*Felltham.*

Judah numbered

TRIBE.	Sinai.	Moab.	TRIBE.	Sinai.	Moab.
Reuben.....	46,500	43,730	Ephraim.....	40,500	32,500
Simeon.....	59,300	22,200	Manasseh.....	32,200	52,700
Gad.....	45,650	40,500	Benjamin.....	35,400	45,600
Judah.....	74,600	76,500	Dan.....	62,700	64,400
Issachar.....	54,400	64,300	Asher.....	41,500	53,400
Zebulun.....	57,400	60,500	Naphtali.....	53,400	45,400

Analysis of above.—Seven tribes had ea. an increase; five, a decrease. Largest increase, 20,500 (*Manasseh*); largest decrease, 37,100 (*Simeon*). Gross increase, 59,000. Gross decrease, 61,020. Total decrease, 1,820.

5—11. (5, 6) the . . Reuben, see on Ex. vi. 14. (7) numbered, decrease of 2,770. (8) *Eliab*, see xvi. 1, 12. (9, 10) *Nemuel* or *Jemuel*^a (*day of God*). *Dathan*, etc., see xvi. (11) the . . not,^b at the time their father perished at the door of the tab.

Punishment is inevitable.—The pea contains the vine and the flower and the pod in embryo; and I am sure, when I plant it, that it will produce them, and nothing else. Now, every action of our lives is embryonic, and, according as it is right or wrong, it will surely bring forth the sweet flowers of joy, or the poison-fruits of sorrow. Such is the constitution of this world; and the Bible assures us that the next world only carries it forward. Here and hereafter, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—*Beecher.* *The destruction of Korah.*—There is certainly a discrepancy between this text and the narrative of the 16th chapter, and more particularly Ps. cvi. 17, from which, as well as from the reason of the thing, it would appear that as *Dathan* and *Abiram* were swallowed up with the other Reubenites, so *Korah* was consumed with the Levites who burned incense with him. There can be little doubt that the Hebrew text of the passage under consideration was originally in accordance with this, since we learn from *Clement*, *Ignatius*, and *Eusebius*, that the LXX, in their time agreed with the Samaritan text, which has no doubt preserved the genuine reading. It is as follows:—"And the earth swallowed them up, what time that company died; and the fire devoured *Korah*, with the two hundred and fifty men, who became a sign."—*Carpenter.*

12—18. (12, 13) sons . . families, see Ex. vi. 15. (14) these, etc., decrease of 37,100. This large decrease due to their sin "in the matter of *Peor*." *Zimri* was a prince in the house of *Simeon*, and prob. led many of his followers astray. (15—17) the . . families, see Ge. xvi. 16. (18) numbered, decrease, 5,150.

The stream of humanity.—Doubtless, if we could stand—as so many brave hearts have striven to do—beside the fount of the Nile, it would be hard to think that little trickling stream was actually the same as the great river of Egypt, and that it should grow and swell deeper and stronger, receiving the floods of heaven and the tribute of earth, till at last it should roll in resistless seas of water, bearing fertility and blessing over all the land. Hardly could we bring ourselves to call that poor weak rill the Nile? But before one Eye at least in the universe the feeble spring and the mighty river are one. He sees it all mapped out from its source in weakness to its end in power. And can we never rise high enough into the upper air of thought to see like Him our human fellow-rivers, not only in their feeble struggles through the rocks and stones in their path, but as they shall be hereafter, far away, perhaps a thousand years to come, down cataracts of death, and past long deserts of unknown worlds—but as they shall surely be at last, each flowing on, a majestic benediction through the universe, reflecting on His ever-swelling bosom the infinite glory of God—*Miss Cobbe.*

19—22. (19—21) the . Judah, see Ge. xvi. 12. (22) numbered, increase 1,900.

Mere names.—You must have already noticed that this chapter is as true

as any chapter in human history, especially as it shows so clearly what we ourselves have found out, that the most of people are extremely uninteresting. They are names and nothing more. They are producers and consumers, tenants and taxpayers, and that is all; they are without wit, music, piquancy, enterprise, or keenness of sympathy. They listen to your best anecdotes, and say, "na;" they hear of Livingstone with a shudder; they suppose there must be a great noise at Niagara. Such people were Seth and Enos, Mahalaleel and Jared; respectable, quiet, plodding; said "Good night" to one another regularly, and remarked briefly upon the weather and died. Just what many now-a-days seem to do. Put down on paper everything that has passed between you and some people, and you will find how very little paper is needed. Now I want to show you that such people are often unjustly estimated, and to remind you that if all stars were of the same size the sky would look very odd, much like a vast chess-board with circles instead of squares. — *Joseph Parker.*

23-27. (23, 24) of . . Issachar, *see* Ge. xlv. 13. (25) numbered, increase 8,900. (26) of . . Zebulun, *see* Ge. xlv. 14. (27) numbered, increase 3,100.

Unwritten heroism. — The best part of human history is never written at all. Family life, patient service, quiet endurance, the training of children, the resistance of temptation — these things are never mentioned by the historian. The man who burns down an abbey or a minster is immortalized in history; the poor house-wife who makes a pound go as far as thirty shillings, and pinches herself that she may give her boy a quarter's more schooling, is not known even to have lived. Guy Fawkes is known all over the world; but your honest father, who has given you a good example and a good training, is hardly known six doors away from his own residence. If we remember these things we shall mitigate the contempt with which we are apt to speak of so-called nobodies. Because we admire brilliance we need not despise usefulness. When your little child is ill, he needs kindness more than genius, and it will be of small service to him if his mother is good at epigrams, but bad at wringing out a wet cloth for his burning brow. — *Joseph Parker.*

28-34. (28) the . . Joseph, *see* Ge. xlviii. 1. (29) Machir, Ge. i. 23. Gilead* (*hard, rough*), grandfa. of Zelophehad. His mo. or grandmo. was an Aramite; hence, prob. his name. (30) Jeezer, *contr. fr. Abiezer (father of help)*. Gideon desc. fr. him. Helek (*portion*). (31) Asriel (*vow of God*). Shechem (*the shoulder-blade*). (32) Shemida (*fame of wisdom*). Hephher (*a pit or well*). (33) Zelophehad (*? firstborn*). had . . daughters, hence the laws relating to heiresses were made.^b Mahlah (*disease*). Noah (*motion*). Hoglah (*partridge*). Milcah (*queen or counsel*). Tirzah (*delight*). (34) numbered, increase 20,500.

Worldly fame. — It is wonderful how oddly and whimsically fame is gained: Methuselah is famed because he was the oldest man, and Samson because he was the strongest man; another is known because he can walk upon a tight rope, and another because he can swim across a channel. If it were in my power to preach the most splendid sermon ever uttered by mortal lips, not a newspaper in the world would take the slightest notice of it; but if I put up an umbrella in the pulpit or tore the pulpit Bible in two, many a paragraph would report the eccentricity. A splendid sermon would be thought of as interesting only to the few, but an act of folly would be regarded as of universal interest. Thus it is (though it may not seem so) that things get into history. Robertson, of Brighton, was hardly known in his own town during his life-time, whereas another clergyman in Brighton dressed himself in a coat of many colors, and made quite a figure in the principal newspapers. Any man living can have a world-wide notoriety to-morrow, can have his name telegraphed throughout the whole range of civilization, and be the subject of editorial comment throughout Christendom. Shoot any member of the royal family, and see if this be not so. Everybody knows that Methuselah lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years, but nobody knows that but for you two orphan boys would never have had a chance in life. No preacher has a really world-wide name, known in slums and garrets, backwoods, steamboats, thoroughfares and palaces, who did not in some way get it through "contemptible speech." — *Joseph Parker.*

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"Man is so great that his greatness appears even in his knowing himself to be miserable. It is true that to know our misery is to be miserable; but it is also great to know our misery. Thus his greatness is shown by his miseries. They are the miseries of a prince, the miseries of a king dethroned." — *Pascal.*

Issachar numbered

"It is always incumbent upon us to learn how to regulate our conduct for each day, and those days which are to come; we are under obligation to preserve our virtue invariably on the alert, urging us to new actions; and we are equally bound to recollect our faults, and to repent of them." — *Silvio Pellico.*

Joseph numbered

a Nu. xxvii. 1; xxxvi. 1; Jos. xvii. 1, 3; 1 Ch. ii. 21-23; vii. 14, 17.

b Nu. xxvii. 1; xxxvi. 2-11; Jos. xvii. 3; 1 Ch. vii. 15.

"Men's lives should be like the day, more beautiful in the evening; or like the summer, aglow with promise; and the autumn, rich with the golden sheaves, where good works and deeds have ripened on the field."

"Mankind in the gross is a gaping monster, that loves to be deceived, and has seldom been disappointed." — *Mackenzie.*

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Ephraim and
Benjamin
numbered

a 1 Ch. vii. 20-29.
b Ge. xlv. 21.

"What a piece
of work is man!
How noble in
reason; how in-
finite in faculties;
in form and mov-
ing, how express
and admirable!"—
Shakespeare.

Dan and
Asher num-
bered

c Ge. xlv. 23.

"Man is a jewel
robbed of its pre-
cious stone, with
only the costly
setting left; and
even of that we
must exclaim—
'How is the gold
become dim, and
the most fine gold
changed!'"

Naphtali
numbered

d Nu. i. 44-46.

"It is a favorite
speculation of
mine, that if
spared to sixty,
we then enter on
the seventh decade
of human life; and
that this, if pos-
sible, should be
turned into the
Sabbath of our
earthly pilgrim-
age, and spent
sabbatically, as if
on the shores of an
eternal world, or
in the outer courts,
as it were, of the
temple that is
above, the taber-
nacle in heaven."
— *Chalmers.*

the division
of the land
anticipated

e Jos. xi. 23; Nu.
xxxiii. 54; xxxiv.
13.

f Jos. xiv. 2; xviii.
10; xxi. 8; Pr. xvi.
33.

"The greatest
truths are the

35-41. (35) Shuthelah^a (noise of breaking). Becher (first-born, or young camel). Tahan (camp, station). (36) Eran (watchful). (37) numbered, decrease, 8,000. (38) Bela (destruction). Ashbel (? determination of God). Ahiram (brother of the high), or Ehi.^c (39) Shupham (? serpent), also Muphim.^b Hupham (? coastman), also Huphim.^c (40) Ard (fugitive). Naaman (pleasantness). (41) numbered, increase, 10,200.

Earthly possessions.—Earthly inheritances are but of brief continuance. The possession of them is limited and uncertain. To every one they are but at most for term of life. As one of the kings of Spain answered to one of his courtiers, who, thinking to please his master, wished that kings were immortal: "If that had been," said he, "I should never have reigned."—*Leighton.*

42-47. (42) Shuham (? pit-digger), also Hushim.^c (43) numbered, increase 1,700. (44-46) of . . Asher, see Ge. xlv. 17. (47) numbered, increase 11,900.

The dignity of man.—

Thou hast a mind; intellect wingeth thee to heaven,
Tendeth thy state on earth, and by it thou divest down to hell;
Thou hast measured the belt of Saturn, thou hast weighed the moons of
Jupiter,

And seen, by reason's eye, the centre of the globe;
Subtly hast thou numbered by billions the leagues between sun and sun,
And noted in thy book the coming of their shadows:
With marvelous unerring truth thou knowest to an inch, and to an instant,
The when and the where of the comet's path that shall seem to rush by at thy
command;
Arise, thou king of mind, and survey thy dignity!—*Tupper.*

48-51. (48, 49) of . . Naphtali, see Ge. xlv. 24. (50) numbered, decrease 8,000. (51) numbered, being 1,820 less than the census return at Sinai.^d

True manhood among the poor.—More true greatness comes from the cot-
tage than the palace. Socrates worked with his father as a statuary; and
with chisel in hand had learned to touch the stone into a figure ere he knew
how to reason with philosophers in the schools. Luther came up from the dark
deep mines at Mansfield to be the head and the leader of a movement only
second in importance to the introduction of Christianity. Richardson, in the
humble capacity of a printer's apprentice, was wont to buy his own candle,
that his master might not be defrauded, and steal an hour from sleep to
improve his mind and lay the foundation for future literary fame. The
author of Lorenzo de Medici, surrounded by the dry dust of a lawyer's office,
and with nothing more than the rudiments of a common education, rose to
the highest eminence; while Morrison, the Chinese scholar and missionary,
labored at the trade of a last and boot-maker, and kept his lamp from being
blown out by so placing a volume of Matthew Henry's Commentary, as at
once to guard the flame, and make it easy for him to lay up its contents in
his mind and memory. Genius and greatness are the property of no one
class. Heaven bestows His gifts according to His own will, but that will is
supremely gracious to every order and every rank. While a Moses is taken
from the court of Pharaoh, an Elisha is found following the plough: there is a
David tending sheep, as well as a Daniel mingling with princes. If Milton is
qualified to be the secretary of the Protector of England, at a crisis in Eng-
land's history, Bunyan is Divinely taught to be the guide and the counselor
of his race on their way to glory. — *Robert Ferguson.*

52-56. (52, 53) for . . names, i. e. the area allotted was to be acc. to the
number of the tribe. (54) numbered,^e hence some would receive much less
than if they had marched in fr. Sinai—Simeon for example. (55) land . .
lot, extent settled by number; situation by lot. (56) lot, employed to
ascertain the Divine will or to avoid the suspicion of favoritism.

The lordship of man.—Scripture is no story of the material universe. A
single chapter is sufficient to tell us that "God made the heavens and the
earth." Man is the central figure there; or, to speak more truly, the only
figure; all which is there besides serves but as a background for him. He is
not one part of the furniture of this planet, not the highest merely in the
scale of its creatures, but the lord of all; sun, moon, and stars, and all the

visible creation, borrowing all their worth and their significance from the relations where they stand to him. Such he appears there in the ideal worth and dignity of his unfallen condition; and even now, when only a broken fragment of the sceptre with which once he ruled the world remains in his hand, such he is commanded to regard himself still.—*Abp. Trench.*

57-62. (57) they .. families,^a see Ge. xlv. 11. The Levites were numbered apart bec. they were to have no inheritance, altho. they were to have 48 cities and their suburbs for habitations. (58) these .. Levites, see Ex. vi. 16-19. (59) the .. wife,^b see Ex. vi. 20. (60) unto .. born, see Ex. vi. 23. (61) and .. died,^c see Le. x. 1, 2. (62) numbered, an increase of 1,000.^d because .. Israel,^e see Nu. xviii. 20-24.

The destiny of man.—I cannot believe that earth is man's abiding place. It can't be that our life is cast up by the ocean or eternity to float a moment upon its waves and then sink into nothingness! Else why is it that the glorious aspirations, which leap like angels from the temple of our heart, are forever wandering about unsatisfied? Why is that the rainbow and clouds come over us with a beauty that is not of earth, and then pass off and leave us to muse upon their favored loveliness? Why is it that the stars, who hold their festival around the midnight throne, are set above the grasp of our limited faculties, forever mocking us with their unapproachable glory? And, finally, why is that bright forms of human beauty are presented to our view, and then taken from us, leaving the thousand streams of our affection to flow back in Alpine torrents upon our hearts? We are born for a higher destiny than that of earth; there is a realm where the rainbow never fades, where the stars will be spread before us like islands that slumber on the ocean—and where the beings that pass before us like shadows will stay in our presence forever.—*Bulwer.*

63-65. (63) plains, etc., see vs. 3. (64) these .. man, etc., see Nu. xiv. 28. 29. (65) and .. them,^f some hold that Eleazar and Phinehas entered the promised land, and that the sentence of exclusion applied to the other tribes, and not to that of Levi. They had no share in the transactions which brought the curse upon the mass of the people. save .. Nun, see Nu. xiv. 30.

Perishing of the Israelites in the wilderness.—The fact here recorded was intended to show us—I. That sinners derive no security from their numbers. II. That no outward privileges or professions will save them. III. That the Divine judgments, however long delayed, will overtake them at last. IV. That no one of God's faithful servants shall ever perish.—*Simeon.*

The supremacy of God's authority over man.—He has a right to issue commands for our guidance. As our Creator and Sustainer, and especially as our wise and kind Father, His authority over us is most absolute and sacred. When they were condemning Socrates for teaching the people their duties to God, he replied, "O ye Athenians, I will obey God rather than you; and if you would dismiss me and spare my life on condition that I would cease to teach my fellow-citizens, I would rather die a thousand times than accept the proposal." How much more should we recognize and bow loyally to His authority! "He shall choose our inheritance for us." "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel." His appointments concerning us are always infinitely wise and kind.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

1-5. (1) daughters, etc.,^g see xxvi. 33. (2) they .. priest, while the census was being made. (3) but .. sin, as others did in the wilderness, his sins were private only, such as are common to the race; and not public such as those who rebelled and murmured. (4) give .. father, we, his portionless daus., are his sole representatives. (5) and .. Lord, the matter was probably too difficult and unprecedented for Moses to settle.

The rights of women.—These women who stood up for their rights were—I. Five united sisters. II. Five courageous women. III. Five reasonable women: asking only what was just. IV. Five patient women: willing to wait for God's answer.

The judgment of women.—In a conversation I once held with an eminent minister of our church, he made this fine observation: "We will say nothing of the manner in which that sex usually conduct an argument; but the

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simplest, so likewise are the greatest men."—*Helps.*

the Levites numbered

^a Ex. vi. 16; 1 Ch. vi. 1-3.

^b Ex. ii. 1, 2, 10.

^c Nu. iii. 4; 1 Ch. xxiv. 2.

^d Nu. iii. 39.

^e Nu. i. 49; De. x. 9; Jos. xiii. 14, 33; xiv. 3.

"O property! what art thou but a weight to crush all soul, and paralyze all strength, and grind all heart and action out of man!"—*Smythe.*

this and the former census compared

^f De. ii. 14, 15; 1 Co. x. 5, 6; Jude 5; Mal. iii. 15.

"A man's nature is best perceived in privateness, for there is no affectation; in passion, for that putteth a man out of his precepts; and in a new case or experiment, for there custom leaveth him."—*Lord Bacon.*

the daughters of Zelophehad

^g Jos. xvii. 3.

King John gave lands at Kepperton, in Kent, to Solomon Attefield, to be held by this singular service—that as often as the king should cross the sea, the said Solomon, or his heirs, should

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accompany him, to hold his Majesty's head—that is, if he should be seaisick; and it appears, by the record in the Tower, that this office of head-holding was actually performed in the reign of Edward the First.

the Divine law of entail

a Jos. xvii. 4; Is. lvi. 4-7.

"He who sees his heir in his own child, carries his eye over hopes and possessions lying far beyond his gravestone, viewing his life, even here, as a period but closed with a comma. He who sees his heir in another man's child, sees the full stop at the end of the sentence." — *Bulwer Lytton*.

"She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested." — *Shakespeare*.

Moses prepared for death

h Nu. xxxiii. 47, 48; De. xxxii. 49; xxxiv. 1-3.
c De. xxxi. 2; xxxiv. 4.

d De. i. 37; xxxii. 51; Ps. cvi. 32, 33.

"This announcement was made that he might set his house in order, i. e. might finish as much as he could while still

intuitive judgments of women are often more to be relied upon than the conclusions which we reach by an elaborate process of reasoning." No man that has an intelligent wife, or who is accustomed to the society of educated women, will dispute this. Times without number you must have known them decide questions on the instant, and with unerring accuracy, which you had been poring over for hours, perhaps, with no other result than to find yourself getting deeper and deeper into the tangled maze of doubts and difficulties. It were hardly generous to allege that they achieve these feats less by reasoning than by a sort of sagacity which approximates to the sure instinct of the animal races; and yet there seems to be some ground for the remark of a witty French writer, that, when a man has toiled, step by step, up a flight of stairs, he will be sure to find a woman at the top; but she will not be able to tell how she got there. How she got there, however, is of little moment. If the conclusions a woman has reached are sound, that is all that concerns us. — *Boardman*.

6-11. (6, 7) right,^a reasonable, just. thou . . . them, to share and share alike. (8) if, etc., hence the application of these women led to the issue of a gen. law of inheritance. (9-11) and if, etc., i. e. it was not to be claimed by strangers, but was to be equitably divided betw. the next of kin. a . . . judgment, i. e. a statute determining right.

The law of entail. — I. Observe the good done by these women. Their appeal led to the settlement of the law of inheritance. They spoke for themselves: the answer affected all. II. Observe, hence, how much greater, sometimes, is the good done than the good aimed at.

Woman, the world's conscience. — Woman has been said to be the conscience of the world, and there is a profound truth in that. Her moral intuition is clearer, her moral affection is apt to be sweeter and more powerful. It was the startled conscience of a Roman woman that almost held Pilate back from his transcendent crime. It was the conscience of Blanche of Castile which melted the noblest king France ever had, Louis IX. It was the sense of righteousness in the Scotch, in the Dutch, in the French, in the German women which upheld the Reformation and would not let it sink and die. It was the conscience of the American women which was the one invulnerable, irresistible, unsilenced enemy of American slavery. Whatever statesmen might plan about it, whatever political economists might think about it, whatever merchants might dream about it, every woman's heart knew, that was not blighted and overshadowed by the influence of the present system, that it rested on a lie, and it was that conscience in the American women sending half a million of men out, its instruments and ministers, on the bloody field, which finally overcame and swept from existence that detestable system. *The greatness of women.* — In my soul I think God meant to teach the world the way to purity and nobility through women; and in spite of the seeming evidence that I have occasionally had to the contrary, I have never for an hour, or a moment, ceased to feel towards woman in her ideal character almost as a devotee feels towards the Virgin Mary; and the individual exceptions never take anything from the brightness of Divine glory which there is in the conception of mother, wife, sister, and friend, in woman. And I believe, with old Martin Luther, that the noblest thing God ever made on earth is the heart of a right, noble, loving woman. — *Beecher*.

12-14. (12) Abarim^b (*regions beyond*), a range E. of Jordan, of wh. Pisgah was a ridge and Nebo a prominent point. see . . . Israel, see the hy. — "There is a land of pure delight." (13) when . . . it, etc.,^c he should see the earthly Canaan, and enter the better country. (14) for, etc.,^d when he dishonored God at the waters of Meribah, by failing to sanctify Him in the eyes of the people. See xx. 10-13.

The Christian at death. — The Christian, at his death, should not be like the child who is forced by the rod to quit its play, but like the one who is wearied of it, and willing to go to bed. Neither ought he to be like the mariner, whose vessel, by the violence of the tempest, is drifted from the shore, tossed to and fro upon the ocean, and at last suffers wreck and destruction; but like one who is ready for the voyage, and the moment the wind is favorable, cheerfully weighs anchor, and, full of hope and joy, launches forth into the deep. The pious monk, Stanpitz, says, "Die as Christ did, and then, beyond all doubt, your death will be good and blessed." But how, then, did

Christ die? "No man," He Himself says, "taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." And St. Luke tells us that "When the time was come that He should be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem;" that is, He took the way to it with a confident and cheerful heart, and an intrepid look. Let us follow this great Forerunner; and that we may do it with alacrity and confidence, and be at all times ready, let us so order our affairs, that when we come to die we may have nothing else to do. — *Scriven.*

15-17. (15) saying, submissively accepting the Divine decree. (16) the . . flesh,^a the Creator, Renewer, and Ruler of all human lives and souls. set . . congregation, note the old man's care for the people. No vain regrets; no desire to question God's will; he seeks first of all the welfare of the people. (17) which . . out, as a guide and leader in war. and . . them, as a prudent counselor and bright example. that . . shepherd,^d they constantly needed an under-shepherd to remind them of the Great Shepherd.

Appointment of Joshua to succeed Moses. — Consider — I. The concern of Moses for the people committed to him. In this he acted as — 1. A true patriot; 2. A faithful minister. II. The gracious provision which God made for them. 1. He selected a suitable person for the office; 2. He prescribed the mode of his ordination to it; 3. He promised him all needful assistance in it. Learn — (1) The blessedness of the Christian Church; (2) The duty of advancing in every possible way its best interests. — *Simeon.*

A worthy commander. — He is one that accounts learning the nourishment of military virtue, and lays that as his first foundation. He never bloodies his sword but in heat of battle, and had rather save one of his own soldiers than kill ten of his enemies. He accounts it an idle, vainglorious, and suspected bounty, to be full of good words: his rewarding, therefore, of the deserver, arrives so timely, that his liberality can never be said to be gouty-handed. He holds it next his creed that no coward can be an honest man, and dare die in it. He doth not think his body yields a more spreading shadow after a victory than before; and when he looks upon his enemy's dead body 'tis with a noble heaviness, not insultation; he is so honorably merciful to women, in surprisal, that only that makes him an excellent courtier. — *Sir T. Overbury.*

18-23. (18) a . . spirit,^c spiritual endowment requisite for the office he was called to fill. and . . hand, by this ceremony of the imposition of hands the gifts and powers of Moses are symbolically transferred. (19) charge . . sight,^e that he might feel his responsibility, and they own his authority. (20) honour,^f authority. (21) Urim,^g see Ex. xxviii. 30. (22, 23) and . . congregation, elders.

A leader's qualifications (vs. 18). — I. It may be useful to note that the qualifications of Joshua were not overlooked in his appointment. II. He had exercised his gifts before he was appointed to the command. III. His crowning qualification — that from which all other elements of fitness grew — was his possession of the Spirit of God.

A good man. — A good man, though unlearned in secular knowledge, is like the windows of the temple — narrow without and broad within; he sees not so much of what profits not abroad; but whatsoever is within, and concerns religion and the glorification of God, that he sees with a broad inspection; but all human learning without God is but blindness and folly. One man discourses of the sacrament, another receives Christ: one discourses for or against transubstantiation; but the good man feels himself to be changed, and so joined to Christ that he only understands the true sense of transubstantiation, while he becomes to Christ bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh, and of the same spirit with his Lord. From holiness we have the best instruction. For that which we are taught by the Holy Spirit of God, this is new nature, this vital principle within us, it is that which is worth our learning; not vain and empty, idle and insignificant notions, in which, when you have labored till your eyes are fixed in their orbs, and your flesh unfixed from its bones, you are the reproof of heresies, for the detection of no better and no wiser. If the Spirit of God be your teacher, He will teach you such truths as will make you know and love God, and become like to Him, and enjoy Him forever, by passing from similitudes to union and eternal fruition. — *J. Taylor.*

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alive, and provide as much as possible what would make up aft. his death for the absence of his own person." — *Baumgarten.*

he desires the appointment of a successor

^a Nu. xvi. 22; Ez. xviii. 4; He. xii. 9; Ec. xii. 7.

^b Ps. lxxvii. 20; lxxviii. 52; 1 Pe. v. 4; 1 K. xxii. 17; Ma. ix. 36; Ps. lxxx. 1; He. xiii. 20; Jo. x. 11-16; Is. xl. 11; Zec. xiii. 7; 1 Pe. ii. 24, 25; Ps. xxxiii.

"The bravest trophy ever man obtained is that which o'er himself, himself hath gained." — *Earl of Stirling.*

Joshua is selected and charged

^c De. xxxiv. 9; Is. lxiii. 11.

^d De. xxxi. 7.

^e Nu. xi. 17; Jo. i. 16, 17.

^f De. xxxiii. 8; 1 S. xxviii. 6; Ezra ii. 63; Pr. iii. 5, 6; Jos. ix. 14; Ju. xx. 18-23; Ps. lxxiii. 24.

"A man ought to carry himself in the world as an orange-tree would if it could walk up and down in the garden, — swinging perfume from every little censer it holds up to the air" — *Beecher.*

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CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

offerings

continual

burnt-offering

a Le. i. 1, 2, 10-13;
1 Pe. i. 19; ii. 22;
Is. liii. 7; Ge. xxii.
8; He. ix. 14; Jo
i. 29; Re. xiii. 8;
xxi. 23.

Word for offering
here is *corban*, see
Mk. vii. 11.

28. 7. "Strong
wine, Heb. *shecar*,
not intoxicating
drink, but strong
drink as dis. fr.
water as simple
drink."—*Keil*.

Sabbath and
new moon
offering

b Le. xix. 3; Ex.
xx. 8-10; Le. xxiii.
3; Is. lvi. 2, viii. 12,
14; Ne. xii. 15-22;
Ez. xlv. 4.

In aft. times the
new moon became
a feast-day; trade
suspended (Am
viii. 5); the pious
sought instruction
(2 K. iv. 23); some
presented yearly
thankoffering (1 S.
xx. 6, 29). Some
abstained fr. fast-
ing; hence ref. to
by prophets as a
feast resembling
the Sabbath (Is. i.
13; Hos. ii. 13; Ez
xli. 1).

offerings at
the passover

c Ex. xii. 6, 18;
Le. xxiii. 5; Ex. xii.
27, 43-49; De. xvi.
1-8; Ex. xiii. 6-10;
xxiv. 18.

"Among the Jews,
the wave-offering
was waved hori-
zontally to the
four points, and
the heave-offering
heaved up and
down, to signify

1-8. (1, 2) offering, etc., see Le. ii. 1, 2. in . . season, at the prop. time.
(3-8) offering . . Lord,^a see Ex. xxix. 38-42.

The morning and evening sacrifice.—Let us consider—I. The matter of which this offering consisted. 1. The lamb: the type of Christ; 2. The meat-offering and the drink-offering. II. The manner in which it was presented. Many offerings were only occasional; but this was stated and was renewed daily throughout the year. The things we should particularly notice are: 1. The union of the different materials; 2. The frequency with which they were offered; 3. The increase of them on the Sabbath-day.—*Simeon*.

Safety in Christ.—We lately read in the papers an illustration of the way of salvation. A man had been condemned in a Spanish court to be shot, but being an American citizen, and also of English birth, the consuls of the two countries interposed, and declared that the Spanish authorities had no power to put him to death. What did they do to secure his life when their protest was not sufficient? They wrapped him up in their flags, they covered him with the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack, and defied the executioners. "Now fire a shot if you dare, for if you do so you defy the nations represented by those flags, and you will bring the powers of those two great empires upon you." There stood the man, and before him the soldiery, and though a single shot might have ended his life, yet he was as invulnerable as though incased in triple steel. Even so Jesus Christ has taken my poor guilty soul ever since I believed in Him, and has wrapped around me the blood-red flag of His atoning sacrifice, and before God can destroy me or any other soul that is wrapped in the Atonement, He must insult His Son and dishonor His sacrifice, and that He will never do, blessed be His name!—*Spurgeon*.

9-15. (9, 10) sabbath, etc.,^b the Sab. offering here appointed for the first time. Two lambs are to be given in addition; a doubling of devotions on the Sabbath day. (11-15) in . . months, i. e. at the new moons. This off. here commanded for the first time. From Amos viii. 5, it is evident that the feast of the new moon became to the month exactly what the Sabbath was to the week—a day of rest and of worship (see also Judith viii. 6).—*Pulp. Com.*

Sabbath offerings.—I. They pointed to Him who, by the sacrifice of Himself, obtained a Sabbath of rest for all. II. They indicated the right spirit of real Sabbatarians in the old time. Trust in the Messiah whom the lambs prefigured. III. They kept constantly in mind the Great Deliverer, through whom they would enjoy the rest of heaven.

Mercy better than sacrifice.—When the Romans had ravaged the province of Azazene, and seven thousand Persians were brought prisoners to Amida, where they suffered extreme want, Acases, bishop of Amida, assembled his clergy, and represented to them the misery of these unhappy prisoners. He observed, that as God had said, "I love mercy better than sacrifice," He would certainly be better pleased with the relief of His suffering creatures, than with being served with gold and silver in the churches. The clergy were of the same opinion. The consecrated vessels were sold; and with the proceeds the seven thousand Persians were not only maintained during the war, but sent home at its conclusion with money in their pockets. Varenes, the Persian monarch, was so charmed with this humane action, that he invited the bishop to his capital, where he received him with the utmost reverence, and for his sake conferred many favors on the Christians.

16-25. passover, see on refs.^c Offerings of wh. particulars not bef. pre-
scribed, the same as that of new moon.

Christ's sacrifice.—We have read of Leonidas and his brave three hundred stopping the ravaging march of the Persians at Thermopylæ, and devoting themselves to the salvation of their country. We have read of the King of the Locrians, who when his son had broken the laws, the demand of which was that both eyes should be put out, mitigated the punishment by giving, in exchange for one of them, an eye of his own: thus enduring self-devotedly, a part of the suffering allotted to his child. We have read of the queen who sucked the poison from the wound of the king, her consort, though convinced that death would be the consequence of her heroic act. And numerous have been the instances wherein soldiers have caught the deathblows intended for

their commanders, not merely risking, but devoting their own lives for the salvation of a life which they held to be more important than their own. And is such conduct reprobated by the general mass of mankind? Far from it. Why then should the sacrifice of Christ be?—*T. Ragg.*

26-31. also . . firstfruits,^a see Le. xxiii. 15, 22.

First fruits to God.—It is said that when a gold mine was discovered in one of the provinces of Japan, some centuries ago, before any private gain was permitted a sufficient quantity of the first products of the mine was taken to plate anew the images of all the gods in the provincial temple. It was thus that the people would recognize their obligations to the supreme powers that had provided for them these treasures. The tide of returning business prosperity is now (1898) passing over our land; our wheat, and corn, and other products, are abundant beyond precedent, and are bringing unlooked-for prices. Our railroads, and arts, and manufactures are, for the first time for years, reaping large profits. Is it not fitting that, out of thankfulness to the Giver of this prosperity, a goodly share of the first fruits gathered should be given to God, that His kingdom may come on earth?

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

1-6. and . . month, etc.,^b see Le. xxiii. 24, 25.

Trumpets.—Look at some of the modern trumpets. These may be divided into—I. The censurable. These are many—very loud, and we fear, very popular. There is the trump of—1. Bigotry; 2. Adulation; 3. A corrupt evangelism; 4. Vanity; 5. Cant; 6. Officialism. II. The commendable. There is the trump of—1. Genuine philanthropy; 2. Reverent devotion; 3. Spiritual incentive.—*Thomas.*

The fulness of the Atonement.—Oh! who shall measure the heights of the Saviour's all-sufficiency!—first tell how high is sin, and then remember that, as Noah's flood prevailed over the tops of earth's mountains, so the flood of Christ's redemption prevails over the tops of the mountains of our sins. In heaven's courts there are to-day men that once were murderers, and thieves, and drunkards, and whoremongers, and blasphemers, and persecutors; but they have been washed, they have been sanctified. Ask them whence the brightness of their robes hath come, and where their purity hath been achieved, and they, with united breath, tell you that they have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.—*Spurgeon.*

7-11. tenth . . month,^c the great day of atonement, see Le. xvi. and xxiii. 26-32.

Appropriation of the atoning blood.—But we cannot realize the blood until we have realized the sin. Where there is no conviction of sin, there can be no felt need of so extreme a remedy as it offered by the outpouring of the blood of Christ. A self-palliating iniquity may be cleansed by water. The light dust which bespots the outer garments may be removed by gentle means. When a man feels that he has not sinned *deeply*, he is in no mood to receive what he considers the tragic appeals of the gospel; they exceed the case; they destroy themselves by exaggeration; they speak with self-defeating violence. But let another kind of action be set up in the heart; let the man be brought to talk thus with himself—"I have sinned until my very soul is thrust down into hell; my sins have clouded out the mercy of God, so that I see it no longer; I have wounded the Almighty, I have cut myself off from the fountain of life, I have blown out every light that was meant to help me upward. I am undone, lost, damned," and *then* he needs no painted cross, no typical sacrament, no ceremonial attitude, no priestly enchantment; he can be met by nothing but the sacrificial blood, the personal blood, the living blood, the precious blood of Christ.—*Parker.*

12-34. fifteenth . . month, feast of tabernacles commenced at sunset of the 14th day, see Lev. xxii. 34-36, 39-43.

"One could see," says Professor Franz Delitzsch, "even before the dawn of the first day of the feast, if this was not a Sabbath, a joyous throng pouring forth from the Jaffa Gate at Jerusalem. The verdure of the orchards, refreshed with the first showers of the early rain, is hailed by the people with shouts of

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that He was Lord of heaven and earth."—*Bowen.*

firstfruits

^a Ex. xxiii. 16; xxxiv. 22; De. xvi. 9, 10; Nu. xv. 19-21.

"As flowers carry dewdrops, trembling on the edges of the petals, and ready to fall at the first waft of wind or brush of bird, so the heart should carry its beaded words of thanksgiving."—*Beecher.*

feast of trumpets

^b Nu. x. 1-10; Ps. lxxxi. 3; Is. xxvii. 13; Ps. lxxxix. 15.

"The first mo. of the civil yr., corresponding to our Sept. It was, in fact, the New Year's Day wh. had been celebrated among the Heb. and other contemporary nations with great festivity and joy, and ushered in by a flourish of trumpets."—*Port. Com.*

day of humiliation

^c Is. lviii. 3-7; III. 6; 1 Co. xv. 56, 57; 1 Jo. ii. 2; Ro. viii. 32.

"The soul is in heaven even while it is in the flesh if it be purged of its natural corruptions, and taken up with Divine thoughts and contemplations."—*Seneca.*

feast of tabernacles

"The offs. required at this feast were the largest of all.

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The F of tab. was esp. one of thankfulness to God for the gift of the fruits of the earth, and the quantity and the nature of the offs. were determined accordingly."—*S p k. Com.*

the eighth day of the feast

a 2 Ch. xxxi. 3; Ezra iii. 5; Ne. x. 33; He. ix. 11-14; x. 10-12; Jo. i. 17

You say you are full of business; but remember that the great business of life is to serve the Lord Jesus Christ faithfully.

"The good are Heaven's peculiar care."—*Ovid.*

on vows

b De. xxiii. 21; Ec. v. 4-6; Ps. lxxvi. 11; Na. i. 15; Ps. xxii. 25, lxxvi. 13, 14; cxvi. 14; Ju. xi. 30, 35.

c 1 Ti. iii. 4; Ep. vi. 1-3; Col. iii. 20; Ha. xii. 5, 6.

"In the intercourse of social life, it is by little acts of watchful kindness, recurring daily and hourly—it is by words, by tones, by

joy as they scatter on either side of the bridge which crosses the brook fringed with tall poplar-osiers, some in order with their own hands to pluck branches for the festal display, others to look at the men who have been honored with the commission to fetch from Kolonia the festal leafy adornment of the altar. They seek out right long and goodly branches of these poplar-osiers, and cut them off, and then the reunited host returns in procession, with exultant shouts and singing and jesting, to Jerusalem, as far as the Temple hill, where the great branches of poplar-osier are received by the priests and set upright around the sides of the altar, so that they bend over it with their tips. Priestly trumpet-clang resounded during the decoration of the altar with foliage, and they went on that feast day once, on the seventh day seven times, around the altar with willow branches, or the festive posy entwined of a palm branch and branches of myrtles and willows, amidst the usual festive shouts of Hosanna; exclaiming after the completed encircling, 'Beauty becomes thee, O Altar! Beauty becomes thee, O Altar!'

35-40. (35-38) eighth, etc., see Le. xxiii. 36, "the last day, that great day of the feast" (John vii. 37). (39) vows, see Le. vii. 16. peace-offerings, see Le. iii. 1. (40) told, minutely, all . . . Moses, in ref. to sacrifices, etc., of this and previous chapter. "All the offerings commanded in these chapters amounted to 1071 lambs, 113 bullocks, 37 rams, 30 goats, in the lunar year, together with 112 bushels of flour, more than 370 gallons of oil, and about 340 gallons of wine, supposing that the drink offering was proportionate throughout."—*Pulp. Com.*

Christian fidelity.—There have been men on this earth of God's, of whom it was simply true that it was easier to turn the sun from its course than these from the paths of honor. There have been men like John the Baptist, who could speak the truth which had made their own spirits free, with the axe above their neck. There have been men, redeemed in their inmost being by Christ, on whom tyrants and mobs have done their worst, and when, like Stephen, the stones crashed in upon their brain, or when their flesh hissed or crackled in the flames, were calmly superior to it all.—*F. W. Robertson.*

The reward of fidelity.—

Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintained
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence; for this was all thy care,
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
Judged thee perverse.—*Milton.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTIETH.

1-5. heads, etc., see i. 4-16, vii. 2. This is peculiar in that the instructions concerning such matters here referred to are usually given to the people as a whole, and not to the heads. A late authorship is inferred on account of this remark. (2) *vow*,^b engage to give, or do, something for God. *bond*, deny himself some pleasure or privilege. (3) *being* . . . youth, under her father's power: *i. e.* not betrothed or married. (4) *father* . . . her, *i. e.* not forbid the fulfilment of her vow. (5) *father*,^c with his wider experience and knowledge. *disallow*, forbid. *forgive*, the non-performance of her vow.

Religious vows.—I. Vows made to the Lord should be made thoughtfully, as befits the nature of Him to whom they are made, and the circumstances of him who makes them (contrast Jephthah's rash vow). II. Vows so made should be religiously observed. He who breaks a vow with God may not be trusted to keep his word with man.

King John and his hostage.—John, king of France, left in England two of his sons as hostages for the payment of his ransom. One of them, the Duke of Anjou, tired of his confinement in the Tower of London, escaped to France. His father, more generous, proposed instantly to take his place; and, when the principal officers of his court remonstrated against his taking that honorable but dangerous measure, he told them, "Why, I myself was permitted

to come out of the same prison in which my son was, in consequence of the treaty of Bretagne, which he has violated by his flight. I hold myself not a free man at present. I fly to my prison. I am engaged to do it by my word; and if honor were banished from all the world, it should have an asylum in the breast of kings." The magnanimous monarch accordingly proceeded to England, and became the second time a prisoner in the Tower of London, where he died in 1364.

6-12. (5) if . . husband,^a i. e., either married or betrothed. (7) held peace, silence gives consent. (8) disallowed,^b he having marital authority. (9) widow, no father or husband now to forbid. (10) she . . house, this contemplates the vow of a widow or wife divorced, made while her husband was yet alive; its fulfilment depends upon his consent or refusal when she was under his power. (11) and . . not, by silence approving the vow. (12) void, of no effect.

The legal annulling of vows. — Vows made to the Lord could be annulled on two conditions. I. The vow-maker must be under the legal control of another; e. g., a child under a parent; or a wife under a husband. II. He who had that control must know of the vow and formally absolve the maker of it from its binding nature.

Forgotten vows. — In English, we say, "The river past, and God forgotten," to express with how mournful a frequency He whose assistance was invoked, it may have been earnestly, in the moment of peril, is remembered no more as soon as by His help the danger has been surmounted. The Spaniards have the proverb too, but it is with them: "The river past, the saint forgotten," the saints being in Spain more prominent objects of invocation than God. And the Italian form of it sounds a still sadder depth of ingratitude: "The peril passed, the saint mocked." — *R. C. Trench.*

13-16. (13) husband . . void,^c since the fulfilment of the vow might, in some way, affect his property or reputation. (14) hold . . day, knowing her vow. then, etc., he tacitly approves of them. (15) then . . iniquity, since by not disallowing he has taken her vows upon himself. (16) these, etc., now just recounted.

Responsibilities growing out of human relations. — I. These responsibilities were calculated to induce a watchful care on the part of husbands and parents; lest wives and children should be seduced into making rash or difficult promises. II. They would tend also to make those under control careful, lest, by their rash vows, they should involve their guardians in perplexities.

Duties toward our own. —

We have careful thought for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometimes guest;
But oft for our own the bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

1-6. (1, 2) *avenge* . . Midianites,^d for the sin of seducing Israel. • The justice and morality of this wholesale destruction has been questioned again and again, but it should be remembered, as Dr. Watson says in the *Exp. Bib.*, that in this act "there is no patriotic zeal in the narrow sense, — 'My country right or wrong.' The underlying idea in the whole story is the sacredness of morality, not of Israel; and the suppression or extinction of this tribe of Midianites with their obscene idolatry is God's will, not Israel's." afterwards, etc.,^e Moses was to die as he had lived, protesting ag. idolatry.^f (3) Lord,^g the God of Israel, the true Lord of Midian, as of the whole earth. (5) delivered, *lit.* told off. (6) *Phinehas*,^h whose zeal had been previously tested. *holy instruments*,ⁱ i. e. the trumpets; wherewith to signal the attack.

Israel's great leader called to his last work for God and man (vs. 2). — I. The work to which he was summoned. Last words and deeds of great men

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gestures, by looks, that affection is won and preserved."

vows made void

a 1 S. i. 21-23.

b Ep. v. 22-24, 33; 1 Ti. ii. 11-14; Col. iii. 18.

"Andreas, a Hungarian king, having vowed to go to the holy wars, went to Jerusalem with all his forces, and when there bathed himself as if to wash off his promise, and returned home again without striking a blow. Such is the case of many at present." — *Spencer.*

statutes relating to domestic relations

c Ge. iii. 16.

"What thou bid'st unargued I obey; so God ordains; God is thy law; thou mine; to know no more is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise." — *Milton.*

war against Midian

d Ps. xciv. 1; Ro. xii. 19; Is. lxiii. 4; xxxiv. 8; xlvii. 3; Ro. iii. 5, 6.

e Nu. xxv. 17, 18.

f Nu. xxvii. 12-14.

g 2 Ti. iv. 6, 7.

h Je. xxv. 31; Ho. iv. 1, 2.

i Nu. xxv. 11.

j Nu. x. 2, 9; 2 Ch. xiii. 12.

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"There is an Australian missile called the boomerang, which is thrown so as to describe singular curves, and fall at last at the feet of the thrower. Sin is a boomerang, which goes off into space, but turns again upon its author, and with tenfold force strikes the guilty soul that launched it."

Midian conquered

α De. xx. 13; Ju. xxi. 11; 1 K. xi. 16.

β Jos. xiii. 21.

γ Nu. xxv. 15. Fr. Jos. xiii. 21, it appears that these chiefs were dependent upon Sihon.

δ Ps. cxix. 118, 119; cxxxix. 19; xxxiv. 21; Pr. x. 25; Ps. xxxvii. 7 ff.; Pr. xi. 5-7.

ε De. xx. 10-19.

the women saved

ζ 2 Pe. ii. 15; Re. ii. 14.

"Like the gambler who hath lost at one venture nearly all his property, and thinks he may risk the remainder, being so small; the desperate sinner, feeling that he hath lost his peace of conscience, acts as if the commission of farther crimes would make him no worse than he really is." — Dr. McCosh.

invested with peculiar sanctity, and remembered. Moses' first act to deliver men's bodies from bondage: his last to punish those who had imperiled their moral freedom. II. The considerations by which he was urged to its prompt and perfect performance. 1. From this work he would go to his account; hence would be careful in the execution; 2. From this work he would go to his rest, hence would be anxious to finish it. Learn:—(1) Is our present work worthy of being our last? (2) With what spirit are we pursuing it? (3) Has the great work of our salvation been attended to?

War.—Among the causes which justify war, none is more unanimously asserted by political writers, than an attempt on the part of one community against the civil institutions, and so against the integrity and internal peace, of another. The Hebrews therefore had an undoubted right, even apart from the Divine command, to attack the people of Midian, who had treacherously endeavored to withdraw them from their allegiance, and thus to unsettle the foundations of all their union, prosperity and peace, and prepare them to become an easy conquest to their own arms.

7-12. (7) slew . . males,^a who opposed them in battle. (8) beside . . slain, in the battle. Evi^b (*desire or dwelling*). Zur (*a rock, shape, form*), the father of Cozbi.^c Hur (*cavern*). Reba (*a fourth part*). Balaam . . sword, this marks the end of this miserable man. (9) women . . captives, bringing temptation into their camp, *see vs. 15*. (10) all . . castles,^d R. V., "encampments." (11) spoil,^e goods. prey, captives, live stock. (12) brought . . Moses, for him to divide. unto . . Israel, to share with them the spoil of war.

The doom of the double-hearted.—I. He wanted to serve two masters. These were the same as the Lord in after days designated God and mammon. He wanted not to offend either; to please both. He was like Is. achar crouching between two burdens. Such is the certain failure of all who make the like attempt. II. He wanted to earn two kinds of wages. The wages of righteousness and the wages of unrighteousness (2 Pet. ii. 15), were both in his eyes. III. He wanted to do two opposite things at the same time. He wished both to bless and to curse. He was willing to do either according as it might serve his interests. The only question with him was, "Would it pay?" IV. He wanted two kinds of friendship. V. He wanted to have two religions.

"Balaam belonged to that still numerous class who theoretically know God, and who actually do fear him—but the love and fear of whom are not the governing and regulating principles of their minds. They are convinced, but not converted. They can prize and strongly desire the privileges of God's elect—they long to "die the death of the righteous," but are unwilling to live their life. They would serve God; but they must serve mammon also; and in the strife between the two contending influences, their lives are made bitter and their deaths perilous."—Kitto.

13-16. (13) went . . camp, to welcome the victors. (14) wroth, the occasion was the sparing of the females who had seduced Israel to sin in the worship of Peor. officers, by whose orders the rest acted, and who, as selected men, should have known better. (15) have . . alive? *see vs. 9*. (16) these, *etc.*,^f *see xxv. 1 ff.*

The counsel of Balaam.—How shall we characterize the conduct of Balaam in this transaction? Consider—I. The measure of his criminality. To do this we must form some estimate of his knowledge of what was right for him to do towards Israel. He knew *everything* concerning Israel, and their relation to God. His sin was thus committed knowingly, consciously, wilfully. He set himself to do wickedly. II. His motives in this course: the meanest. He "loved the wages of unrighteousness." III. The baseness of the method he adopted to accomplish his design. God had revealed to him, in prophetic insight, the secret of Israel's greatness and strength. And Balaam used that very inspiration to injure, fatally, God's own chosen people.—W. Roberts.

Misery of the bondage of sin.—Of all miseries the bondage of sin is the most miserable. It is worse than sorrow, worse than pain. It is a ruin that no other ruin is like unto. It troubles all the peace of life. It turns sunshine into darkness. It embitters all pleasant fountains, and poisons the very blessings of God which have been for our healing. It doubles the burdens

of life, which are heavy enough already. It makes death a terror and a torture, and the eternity beyond the grave an infinite and intolerable blackness. Alas! we have felt the weightiness of sin, and know that there is nothing like it. Life has brought many sorrows to us, and many fears. Our hearts have ached a thousand times. Tears have flowed. Sleep has fled. Food has been nauseous to us, even when our weakness craved for it. But never have we felt anything like the dead weight of sin. What, then, must a life of such sins be? What must be a death in sin? What the irrevocable eternity of unrepented sin?—*F. W. Faber.*

17-20. (17) kill . . ones,^a this seems shocking to our conception of mercy, and contrary to our mode of modern warfare; and the justification lies only in the plan of God to keep Israel a pure race, free from idolatrous contamination. woman, etc.,^b those who had corrupted Israel. (18) keep . . yourselves, prob. they were relegated to slavery and became concubines. Concerning this whole brutal matter we must keep in mind the age in which it occurred, with its darkness and low moral ideals; also the stern provocation to vengeance, not unlike that which provoked the summary cruelty and vengeance of the British soldiery in the days of the Indian mutiny, when the recollection of the cruelty and lust of the rebels set mercy altogether aside.^c (19, 20) abide . . days,^d as men who needed purification, having been at close quarters with death.

Punishment of sin sure.—Fire burns and water drowns, whether the sufferer be a worthless villain or whether it be a fair and gentle child. And so the moral law works, whether the sinner be a David or a Judas, whether he be a publican or a priest. In the physical world there is no forgiveness of sins. Sin and punishment, as Plato said, walk this world with their hands tied together, and the rivet by which they are linked is a link of adamant. A writer has said that a man who cannot swim might as well walk into a river and hope that it is not a river, and will not drown, as a man, seeing judgment and not mercy, denounced upon willing sin, hope that it will turn out to be mercy, and not judgment, and so defy God's law. Will he escape? No. He who chooses sin must meet with retribution; must experience in his own individual person the *lex talionis* of offended nature—eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.—*F. W. Farrar.*

21-24. (21) Eleazar, who had now fully entered upon the office vacated by the death of Aaron. This . . ordinance, given by Moses; amplified by the high priest. We note here the beginning of the growth of tradition concerning which the Pharisees were so scrupulous. (22) brass, copper. (23) abide,^e withstand, as metals. all . . not, as woven fabrics, etc. (24) wash, etc.,^f see xix. 19, 20.

The purification of spoil.—I. Things once used in the service of sin need to be purified before they can be employed acceptably in the service of God. II. The gifts of the world for the uses of the church—missionary offerings, etc.—need to be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Importance of purity.—By the ancients courage was regarded as practically the main part of virtue: by us, though I hope we are none the less brave, purity is so regarded now. The former is evidently an animal excellence, a thing not to be left out when we are balancing the one against the other. Still the following considerations weigh more with me. Courage, when not an instinct, is the creation of society, depending for occasions of action (which is essential to it) on outward circumstances, and deriving much both of its character and its motives from popular opinion and esteem. But purity is inward, secret, self-sufficing, harmless, and, to crown all, thoroughly and intimately personal. It is, indeed, a nature rather than a virtue; and, like other natures, when most perfect is least conscious of itself and its perfection. In a word, courage, however kindled, is fanned by the breath of man; purity lives and derives its life solely from the Spirit of God.—*Hare.*

25-30. (27) two, equal^g between . . them, the 12,000, as a reward for so bravely meeting danger. and . . congregation, for cheerfully undertaking war at God's command. (28) one soul, etc.,^h i. e. the 500th part of their share of the spoil for an offering to God in acknowledgment of his help;

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the female children spared

^a "The object was to exterminate the whole nation, as it could not be perpetuated in the women."—*Keil.*

^b Ju xxi. 10-12.

^c Wordsworth, who adds: "The hist. of Ruth, the Moabitess, opens to us a refreshing view of the healthful and blessed consequences of this command. The warning as well as the mercy, working together for good. We do not know how many women were slain, but we know that 32,000 were spared. See vs. 35."

^d Nu. v. 2, xix. 11-18.

purifying the spoil

^e 1 Co. iii. 13-15.

^f Nu. xix. 9.

"Did ever any man, by his death, deliver another man from death, except only the Son of God? He, indeed, was able to safe-conduct a thief from the cross to Paradise; for to this end He came, that, being Himself pure from sin, He might obey for sinners."—*Hooker.*

division of the spoil

^g Jos xxii 8; 18.

^h xxx. 24, 25.

ⁱ Nu. xviii. 8, 19.

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The offering of the warriors a grateful acknowledgment for personal safety; of the congregation, a grateful return for national success. The Levites had a fiftieth, since they were more numerous than the priests.

undoubtedly intended to be given to Eleazar and the priests. (29) **heave-offering**, *lit.* offering. (30) **one . . . fifty**, *i. e.* a 50th part of their share.

Division of the spoils of war. — I. Note the rule according to which the spoil was divided into three parts. 1. To God; 2. To the warriors; 3. To the people. II. Note the effects of such a rule. 1. A war must be righteous since a part of the spoil was for God; 2. Such a war would be willingly undertaken, since the warrior was rewarded; 3. Such a division of spoil would tend to limit the warrior class, since those who did not fight shared the fruit of victory; and but for such division all would be anxious to go down to battle, leaving the camp undefended.

No good in war. — Dr. Johnson laughed at Lord Kames's opinion that war was a good thing occasionally, as so much valor and virtue were exhibited in it. "A fire," said the doctor, "might as well be considered a good thing. There are the bravery and address of the firemen in extinguishing it; there is much humanity exerted in saving the lives and properties of the poor sufferers; yet, after all this, who can say that a fire is a good thing?" — *Boswell*.

summary of the spoil

a Is. xxx. 6, 24.

b 2 K. vii. 7, 10.

c Ge. xxli. 3; Ju. x. 3, 4; 2 S. xvi. 2; Jo. xii. 14; Jos. xv. 18; 1 S. xxv. 20; 2 K. iv. 24.

d Ge. xlii. 26; 1 S. xxv. 18.

"If Europe should ever be ruined, it will be by its warriors." — *Montesquieu*.

division of the spoil

e Nu. xviii. 21.

"Pursue not a victory too far. He hath conquered well that hath made his enemy fly: thou mayest beat him to a desperate resistance, which may ruin thee." — *G. Herbert*.

"If you have committed iniquity, you must expect to suffer, for vengeance with its sacred light shines upon you." — *Spence*.

roll unbroken

f 2 S. i. 10.

g Ex. xxxv. 2.

h Ex. xxx. 12, 16.

i Ju. viii. 26.

31-40. (31, 32) **booty**, *etc.*, R. V., "Now the prey, over and above the booty wh. the men of war took;" prey = live stock; plunder = spoil of other kinds, *see vs.* 11. **six . . . sheep**, flocks of nomadic tribes enormously large. (33) **beeves**, cattle, oxen. (34) **asses**, used in agriculture,^a war,^b riding,^c carrying burdens.^d (35) **women**, *etc.*, who were prob. made slaves, or household servants.

The cost of war. — Give me the money that has been spent in war, and I will purchase every foot of land upon the globe. I will clothe every man, woman and child in attire of which kings and queens would be proud. I will build a school-house on every hill-side, and in every valley over the whole earth; I will build an academy in every town, and endow it; a college in every state, and fill it with able professors; I will crown every hill with a place of worship, consecrated to the promulgation of the Gospel of peace; I will support in every pulpit an able teacher of righteousness, so that on every Sabbath morning the chime on one hill should answer to the chime of another round the earth's wide circumference; and the voice of prayer, and the song of praise, should ascend like a universal holocaust to heaven. — *H. Richard, M. P.*

41-47. (41) **as . . . Moses**, *see* xviii. 14, 20. (42-47) *etc.*, *see supra*.

Returning from victory. — I. They returned laden with booty. II. They returned without the loss of a single warrior. III. They returned with a thank-offering to God. Learn: — 1. We are now in the midst of the conflict; 2. We are personally safe if we fight on the right side; 3. We shall return home enriched in heart and mind by the victory; 4. We shall spend eternity in offering a thank-offering to Him who fighteth for us.

Certain victory. — Soldier of the cross, the hour is coming when the note of victory shall be proclaimed throughout the world. The battlements of the enemy must soon succumb; the swords of the mighty must soon be given up to the Lord of lords. What! soldier of the cross, in the day of victory wouldst thou have it said that thou didst turn thy back in the day of battle? Dost thou not wish to have a share in the conflict, that thou mayest have a share in the victory? If thou hast even the hottest part of the battle, wilt thou flinch and fly? Thou shalt have the brightest part of the victory if thou art in the fiercest of the conflict. Wilt thou turn and lose thy laurels? Wilt thou throw down thy sword? Shall it be with thee as when a standard-bearer fainteth? Nay, man, up to arms again! for the victory is certain. Though the conflict be severe, I beseech you, on to it again! On, on, ye lion-hearted men of God, to the battle once more! for ye shall yet be crowned with immortal glory. — *Spurgeon*.

48-54. (48, 49) **officers**, *etc.*, upon returning from the fight, they mustered their men, and found to their joy and surprise that none had been slain. **there . . . us**, miraculous preservation. (50) **brought . . . Lord**, as a thank-offering. **chains**, armlets.^f **rings**, as finger or seal rings.^g **tablets**, neck ornaments. **to . . . Lord**,^h for wh. purpose it would be placed in the treasury of the sanctuary. (51) **jewels**, of wh. the Midianites had a great love: 'as all nomadic and barbarous tribes. (52) **was . . . shekels**, *i. e.* ab. \$100,000. (53) **for . . . war**, the common soldiers. **had . . . himself**, in addition to the spoil

of the officers; and inclusive also of less valuable things. (54) brought, *etc.* see vs. 50. We are not told what was done with this enormous amount of wealth, but possibly it was used to sustain the expense of the tabernacle.

Destruction of the Midianites.—Notice—I. The victory of the Israelites over Midian. As—1. A historical fact, this teaches us that no power can withstand the arm of the Lord; 2. A type, it shows us what shall ultimately be the fate of all our spiritual enemies. II. Their slaughter of the captives. This was not intended as an *example* to us, but as a *lesson* it is of great importance, since it shows us that peculiar judgments await those who tempt others to sin. III. Their dedication of the spoils. They were presented to God as—1. An acknowledgment of what was deserved; the Israelites really deserved death; 2. A memorial of deliverance; this deliverance was truly astonishing; 3. A testimony of gratitude. — *C. Simeon.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

1-5. (1) the . . Jazer, distr. round the city of that name, a portion of the territory taken from the Amorite kings, Sihon and Og, see xxi. 32. behold . . cattle, *i. e.* good pasture land.^a (2) came, *etc.* they had learned the wisdom of consulting their leaders. (3) Ataroth,^b (*crowns*), perh. Ataroth-Addar, Dibon,^c see xxi. 30. Nimrah,^d (*limpid*), ab. 5 ms. N. of Libias. Heshbon,^e see xxi. 25-34. Elealeh,^f (*whither God ascends*), the ruins *el-A'al*, 2 ms. fr. Heshbon. Shebam,^g (*fragrance*), noted for its vines, called also Sibmah and Shibmah, nr. Heshbon. Nebo, (*interpreter*), said to be 8 ms. S. of Heshbon. Beon, a contr. form of *Baal-meon* (*place of dwelling*), its ruins, *Miun* or *Macin*, ab. 3 ms. S. E. of Heshbon. (4) which . . smote, implying that the land had been subjugated and made a part of the promised land. and . . cattle, now increased by spoils of war. (5) wherefore, *etc.*, what others' had helped to conquer they wished to retain; leaving it to the rest to conquer Canaan.

The request of Reuben and Gad.—I. It evinced great selfishness. Having got what they needed why concern themselves about others, though what they had got was by the aid of those others? II. It showed great worldliness "A place for cattle" all they thought of. The present and material good, all that many now think of. III. It exhibited great lack of patriotism. Many forget the State or the party, in class legislation and personal wants and wishes.

6-9. (6) shall . . war, to obtain *their* inheritance and secure *yours*. and . . here? enjoying what others have striven for. (7) discourage,^h another reason: if one tribe were to rest there, others might flinch and think Reuben was fearful about the conquest of Canaan. (8) thus . . fathers, referring to the spies whom Moses had sent out, all of whom save Joshua and Caleb brought discouraging reports. Kadesh-barnea, see xiii. (9) Eshcol, see xiii. 23, 24.

Selfishness.—I warn every aspirant for wealth against the infernal canker of selfishness. It will eat out the heart with the fire of hell, or bake it harder than a stone. The heart of avaricious old age stands like a bare rock in a bleak wilderness, and there is no rod of authority, no incantation of pleasure, which can draw from it one crystal drop to quench the raging thirst for satisfaction. — *Beecher.*

10-15. (10-13) ⁱ see *xiv.* 26-34. (14) in . . stead,^k in their place and with their disposition. an . . men, a brood, a succession. (15) ye . . people,^l hence men should reflect how others may be affected by their conduct.

Wholly following the Lord.—Let us—I. Explain the term. To follow the Lord wholly is—1. To accept all He does as right and good; 1. To obey all His commands, however difficult they may appear, regardless of consequences; 3. To do so at all times with a cheerful heart and a willing mind. II. Consider the consequences of neglect in this particular. 1. Those Israelites lost Canaan; we may lose heaven; 2. They were separated from their children; ours may be eternally sundered from us. Learn:—For us the way to follow the Lord is to imitate Jesus, trust in Him, and walk in the new and living way.

Heathen devotedness.—A Spartan youth was holding the censor at a sacrifice when Alexander was offering a victim. It chanced that, while he held

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"A victory istwice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers."—*Shakespeare.*

"The smile of God is victory."—*Whittier.*

Reuben's selfish request

^a The Arabs say, "Thou canst not find a country like the Belka."

^b Jos. xvi. 2, 7.

^c Jos. xiii. 9, 17;

^d Is. xv. 2; Jer.

xviii. 18, 22.

^e Is. xv. 6; Jer.

xviii. 34; Jos.

xiii. 27.

^f De. i. 4; ii. 24-

30; iii. 2, 6; iv. 36;

xxix. 7; Jos. ix.

10; xii. 2, 5; xiii.

10-27; xxi. 59; Ju.

xi. 19, 26; 1 Ch. vi.

51.

^g Is. xv. 4; xvi. 9;

Jer. xlviii. 34.

^h Jos. xiii. 19; Jos.

xvi. 8; Jer. xlviii.

32.

Moses reproves Reuben and shows the fruit of rebellion

^h De. i. 22-28.

vs. 6. *Serm.* by W. Barrow; R. P. *Buddicom*, ii. 237.

states the case of those who died in the wilderness

ⁱ De. i. 34-36; Nu. xxvi. 64, 65; Jos. xiv. 8, 9; 1 Co. x. 5.

^k Ps. li. 5; Ep. ii. 3.

^l De. xxx. 17, 18; Jos. xxii. 16-18; 2 Ch. vii. 19, 20; xv. 2.

"I would rather be Brainerd, wrapped

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in my bearskin,
and spitting blood
upon the snow,
than to be Ga-
briel. — *Bish op*
Hamline.

Reuben's
better
resolution

a Pr. xv. 1, 2; xxv. 15

b Ju. viii. 1-3.

c Jos. xxii. 4, 9.

"It is a cust. with
the nomads of
Leya to surround
their camp with a
Sira, i. e. a wall
of stones about
the height of a
man."

Moses' promise
to Reuben

d De. iii. 12-20.

e Ge. iv. 7; xliv. 16; Is. lix. 12; Ps. xc. 8; Pr. xiii. 21.

"Little sins are
the natural stream
of a man's life;
that are of them-
selves enough to
carry the soul
down silently and
calmly to destruc-
tion; but when
greater and
grosser sins join
with them, they
make a violent
tide that hurries
the soul away with
a more swift and
rampant motion
down to hell." —
Hopkins.

Reuben's
promise
to Moses

f Jos. iv. 12, 13.

the censor, a hot coal fell upon his hand. The youth stood still and never flinched, lest by any utterance or cry the sacrifice should be disturbed; for, he said, he was in the presence of Alexander, and he would not have the sacrifice interrupted for him: and thus he bore the pain of the burning coal. Let us remember that Spartan youth, adding to what he said, "We are in the presence of the Almighty God." — *Bibl. Treas.*

16-19. (16) *near*,^a in earnest, familiar counsel. *build* . . cattle, pens for flocks, roughly built of stones. *cities*, i. e. prob. those taken, to be refortified. (17) *we* . . *armed*,^b to aid in the invasion. *before*, i. e., before the Ark of the Covenant. The three tribes, Reuben, Gad and Simeon, marched before the sanctuary (see ii. 10, 14). *because* . . *land*, the cities would have to be garrisoned. (18) *we* . . *houses*, etc., we will do for others as they have done for us. (19) *on* . . *Jordan*,^c i. e. W. of the river. *forward*, farther N. on the E. of the river.

Reuben's better resolve. — In it we notice an exhibition of real greatness of soul. I. An acknowledgment of error, as contrasted with the obstinacy of small minds in face of conviction and argument. II. A resolution to do more in the right direction than would have previously been expected. III. A surrender of personal wishes for the public good.

Thought for others. —

He's true to God who's true to man; wherever wrong is done,
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding sun,
That wrong is also done to us; and they are slaves most base,
Whose love of right is for themselves, and not for all their race.

— *Lowell.*

20-23. (20, 21) *if, etc.*, on condition that they fulfilled their word. (22) *guiltless* . . *Lord*, for lack of faith in God and of courage. *and* . . *Israel*, of withholding brotherly help, and patriotic zeal. *this* . . *Lord*,^d as the reward of your fidelity and the fulfilment of your wish. (23) *sinned* . . *Lord*, in disobeying Him, discouraging others, presenting an evil example. *be* . . *out*,^e in their future hist. they might be left to fight their own battles; somehow, sooner or later punishment will overtake them.

Sin detected. — I. Sin is frequently brought to remembrance under the powerful and searching ministry of the gospel. II. The sinner is found out in the season of sickness. III. In the various adverse changes of human life. IV. At the near approach of death. V. Sin will infallibly be found out at the great day of judgment. — *D. Black.*

Memory and conscience. —

Will no remorse, will no decay,
O Memory, soothe thee into peace?
When life is ebbing fast away,
Will not thy hungry vultures cease?

My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree;
Murder, stern murder, in the dir'st degree;
All several sins, all used in each degree,
Throng the bar, crying all — Guilty! guilty!
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me,
And, if I die, no soul will pity me —
Nay, wherefore should they? since that I myself
Find in myself no pity to myself.
Methought the souls of all that I had murder'd
Came to my tent; and every one did threat
To-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard,

— *Shakespeare, Richard III.*

24-27. (24) *build, etc*, vs. 16. (25-27) *before the Lord*,^f i. e. "immediately in front of the sacred tokens of the Lord's presence" — *Spk. Com.* See x. 18-21: or "acc. to the judgment of Jehovah, with Divine approval." — *Keil.*

The word of the just man is his bond.—I. Speech is often so fair that all that is needed is that one should do that which has proceeded out of his mouth. II. The just and honorable man will take measures to fulfil his word. Reuben went to the war unencumbered by family and property. Hence, being anxious to return, they would fight with greater zeal to bring the campaign to a speedy issue.

Keeping one's word.—I have somewhere met with an anecdote of Lord Chatham, who had promised that his son should be present at the pulling down of a garden wall. The wall was, however, taken down during his absence, through forgetfulness; but, feeling the importance of his word being held sacred, Lord Chatham ordered the workmen to rebuild it, that his son might witness its demolition, according to his father's promise.—*F. F. Trench.*

28-33. (28) so . . them, as a prudent man Moses would not be deceived by fair words. commanded, etc., gave orders to those who would have to divide the land, Eleazar and Joshua.^a (29) then . . Gilead, the whole country E. of Jordan; as a reward for their aid and fidelity. (30) they, etc., in wh. case they would be compelled to pass over. (31, 32) answered, etc., repeating their promise in the presence of Eleazar and Joshua. (33) gave, thus conditionally and by anticipation.

A wise ruler's care for the future.—I. Moses was aged, and not to pass over Jord. himself, hence he takes steps for the fulfilment of his promise to Reuben. II. He also makes it conditional on Reuben's fidelity to his word. Learn:—1. Men approaching death should provide for the fulfilment of their vows, but in such a way that their survivors shall be justly treated; 2. Men should not involve themselves in promises for which they cannot make provision.

Unexpected reward.—M. Labat, a merchant of Bayonne, ill in health, had retired in the beginning of winter, 1803, to a country house on the banks of the Adour. One morning, when promenading in his *robe-de-chambre*, on a terrace elevated a little above the river, he saw a traveler thrown by a furious horse, from the opposite bank into the midst of the torrent. M. Labat was a good swimmer; he did not stop a moment to reflect on the danger of the attempt, but, ill as he was, threw off his *robe-de-chambre*, leaped into the flood, and caught the drowning stranger at the moment when, having lost all sensation, he must otherwise have inevitably perished. "Oh, God!" exclaimed M. Labat, clasping him in his arms, and recognizing with a transport of joy the individual he had saved; "sacred humanity; what do I not owe thee? I have saved my son!"

34-42. (34) built, or restored, or fortified. Dibon, see xxi. 30. Ataroth, vs. 3, prob. now *Attarus*, betw. Kureyat and Machaerus. Aroer, prob. the ruins at 'Ar'd'ir.^c (35) Atroth, R. V., *Atroth-Shophan* (the crowns of Shophan). Jaazer, see xxi. 32. Jogbehah, prob. the ruins of *Jebeitha*. (36) Bethnimrah, or *Nimrah*, vs. 3. Beth-haran,^d or *Beth-ramphta*, now the ruins of *Rameh*. (37) Heshbon,^e see xxi. 16. Elealeh, see vs. 8. Kirjathaim, contr. of *Kirjath-jearim*, prob. now the ruins of *el-Teym*; to the S. W. of Medeba. (39) Nebo . . Shibmah, vs. 3. their . . changed, to break up idolatrous associations. Nebo and Baal were names of idol gods. (39) Machir, see Ge. i. 23. went, had gone. Gilead, the N. part of it. (40) and . . gave, etc., dealing with Machir as with Reuben and Gad. (41) Jair^f (whom God enlightens). Havoth-jair (villages of Jair). (42) Nobah (a barking). Kenath (possession), now *Kenavât*,^g in S. end of Lejah.

An unlucky name.—A singular instance of a name, and a Christian name, influencing the destiny of an individual, is told by Herrero, the Spanish historian. Louis VIII. of France, surnamed "Cœur de Lion," desiring a Spanish princess for his bride, ambassadors were sent to the Court of Madrid. The eldest and most beautiful of the royal sisters was the one destined by her own family to share the diadem of France. But where was the wise fairy god-mother who, in all nursery tales, presides at the naming of beautiful princesses? At the cradle of the unfortunate daughter of Spain, it would seem, there was no fairy godmother, nor even an earthly sponsor gifted with musical or æsthetic tastes. Her name, Urraca, harsh in sound, was in its signification still more objectionable, for in Spanish it signified a magpie. A magpie queen! and to mate with a lion-heart! Impossible! the dismayed ambassa-

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"We who live now, and the Israel of old, are like soldiers ranged side by side in one spiritual army of the same church militant under the banner of the Cross."—*Bp. Wordsworth.*

the promise confirmed

a Nu. xxxiv. 17 ff.

b Jos. xii. 1, 6; De. xxix. 8; Nu. xxi. 24, 33, 35.

"The worst governments always cost the people dearest, as all men in courts of judicature pay more for the wrongs that are done them than for the right."—*Butler.*

"All great men are characterized by three things: simplicity in manners, simplicity in speech, simplicity in spirit."—*John Bate.*

places builded

c Burckhardt, 633.

d Jos. xiii. 27.

e Rob. Bib. Res. ii. 276.

f De. iii. 14; Ju. x. 4.

g "The ruins are very extensive even now, being no less than two and a half or three ms. in circum., and containing magnificent remains of palaces fr. the times of Trajan and Hadrian. It is on the W. slope of Jebel Hauran, and is only inhab. by a few f. a. m. s. of Druses."—*Keil.*

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—

dors felt themselves compelled to reject the young beauty. Her name had deprived her of a noble husband and of a crown. The lovely Urraca saw her younger sister (less fair than herself except in name) preferred before her, and Blanche the Fair, of Castile, was carried in triumph to France to become the honored wife of Louis the Lion-heart and the proud mother of St. Louis.

—S. Moody.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

the journeys
of Israel
from Rame-
ses to Suc-
coth

a De. viii. 2.

b Ge. xlvii. 11; Ex.
xii. 2; xiii. 4; xiv.
8.

"History maketh
a young man to be
old, without either
wrinkles or gray
hairs, privileging
him with the ex-
perience of age,
without either the
infirmities or in-
conveniences
thereof."—Fuller.

"History makes us
some amends for
the shortness of
life."—Skelton

from Suc-
coth to Sin

"History is a great
painter, with the
world for canvas,
and life for a fig-
ure. It exhibits man
in his pride and
nature in her mag-
nificence—Jeru-
salem bleeding
under the Roman,
or Lisbon vanish-
ing in flame and
earthquake. His-
tory must besplen-
did. Bacon called
it the pomp of bus-
iness. Its march
is in high places,
and along the pin-
nacles and points
of great affairs."—
Willmott.

"History is neither
more nor less than
biography on a
large scale."—La-
martine.

1-5. (1) journeys, *lit.* removings, breakings up, marches, since they left Egypt, 42 in num. (2) wrote . . Lord,^a as a memorial of God's providential care. It will be noted that this itinerary is definitely ascribed to Moses, perhaps being a part of his diary. (3) Rameses,^b see Ex. xii. 37. (4) for . . first-born, R. V., "while the Egyptians were burying," etc. The Egyptians were so busy burying their dead that the Israelites had ample leisure to make their departure. upon . . judgments, wh. explains the force of the wonders wrought in Egypt. Since these gods had no existence, they could be affected only in the imaginations of their worshipers; they were made contemptible in the eyes of those who feared them. (5) Succoth, see Ex. xii. 37.

A journal of progress.—I. Life is a journey from one point of time, and often from one place, to another. II. A story of this journey is written in the book of memory, of providence, etc. III. The story of the journey of life will bear reading only as it lies parallel with the will of God. Learn:—Have we surrendered ourselves to Divine guidance? "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord," etc.

Life's journey.—

Life! we've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather,
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear, —
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not Good Night, — but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good Morning. — A. L. Barbauld.

6-11. (6) Etham, see Ex. xiii. 20. (7) Pi-hahiroth, etc., Ex. xiv. 2. (8) Marah, see Ex. xv. 23. (9) Elim, see Ex. xv. 27. (10) by . . sea, this encampment not named bef.; nor are Dophkah and Alush (*vs.* 13). Nothing whatever is known of these three places, and doubtless nothing of importance occurred at them. (11) in . . Sin, see Ex. xvi. 1.

Israel's wanderings a picture of religious life.—I. Rameses, the mustering of thoughts, feelings, etc. II. Succoth, resting for retrospect and prayer. III. Etham, looking out upon the future. IV. Pi-hahiroth and Migdol, flying for life, watchtower of the enemy. V. Red Sea, struggle of faith, deliverance. VI. Marah, bitter waters of memory and fear, sweetened by grace. VII. Elim, rest, prayer, preparation for the future. VIII. Red Sea, a safe view of past dangers. The safe side of trouble.

Obstacles surmounted.—

"Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star,"

he can do wonders — almost "all things are possible to him."

"Dark and wide the sea appears,
Every soul is full of fears,
Yet the word is onward still,
Onward move and do His will;
And the great deep shall discover
God's highway to take thee over."

12-17. (17) Dophkah,^a (*knocking*). (13) Alush,^b (? *place of wild beasts*).
 (14) Rephidim, *see* Ex. xvii. 1. (15) in . . Sinai, *see* Ex. xix. 1, 2. (16)
 Kibroth-hattaavah, Nu. xi. 34. (17) Hazeroth, *see* Nu. xi. 35.

A varied experience.—

"Bits of gladness and of sorrow,
 Strangely crossed and interlaid:

Days of fever and of fretting,
 Hours of kind and blessed calm.

Tears of parting, smiles of meeting;
 Paths of smooth and rugged life.

Such are our annals upon earth,
 Our tale from very hour of birth,
 The soul's true history."—*Bonar.*

18-24. (18) Rithmah^c (*broom*), in wild. of Paran, Nu. xii. 16. (19)
 Rimmon-parez (*pomegranate of the breach*). (20) Libnah (*whiteness*). (21)
 Rissah (*a ruin*). (22) Kehelathah (*convocation*). (23) Shapher (*pleasant-*
ness). (24) Haradah (*fear*).

Progress in grace.—Be always displeased at what thou art, if thou desirest
 to attain to what thou art not; for where thou hast pleased thyself there thou
 abidest. But if thou sayest, I have enough, thou perishest; always add,
 always walk, always proceed; neither stand still; nor go back, nor deviate:
 he that standeth still proceedeth not; he goeth back that continueth not; he
 deviateth that revolteth; he goeth better that creepeth in his way than he
 that runneth out of his way.—*Quarles.*

25-30. (25) Makheloth (*assemblies*). (26) Tahath (*place*). (27) Tarah
 (*station*). (28) Mithcah (? *sweet fountain*). (29) Hashmonah^d (*fat soil*).
 (30) Moseroth^e (*bonds*).

True progress.—He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer,
 whose blood, warmer, whose brain, quicker, whose spirit is entering into
 living peace.—*Ruskin.*

31-37. (31) Bene-jaakan^f (*sons of Jaakan*). (32) Horhagidgad (? *mount*
of thunder). (33) Jotbathah (*goodness*). (34) Ebronah^g (*passage*). (35)
 Ezion-gaber^h (*the giant's backbone*), aft. Solomon's naval port. (36)
 pitched, *etc.*, *see* xx. 1. (37) Hor, *see* xx. 22, 23.

Onward, Christian soldier.—

"Forward! be our watchword
 Steps and voices joined;
 Seek the things before us,
 Not a look behind:

Burns the fiery pillar
 At our army's head;
 Who shall dream of shrinking,
 By our Captain led?

Forward through the desert,
 Through the toil and fight;
 Canaan lies before us,
 Zion beams with light."—*Alford.*

38, 39. Aaron, *etc.*,ⁱ Nu. xx. 25-28.

Death of Archbishop Whately.—To one who, observing his sufferings,
 asked him if he suffered much pain, he said, "Some time ago I should have
 thought it great pain, but now I am enabled to bear it." His intellect was
 unclouded by illness; he could think and speak. Some one said to him, "You
 are dying as you have lived, great to the last;" the reply was, "I am dying
 as I have lived, in the faith of Jesus." Another said, "What a blessing that
 your glorious intellect is unimpaired;" he answered, "Do not call intellect

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from Sin to
 Hazeroth

^a Perh. at the junction of Mukat-
 teb-road with
 Wady Feiran. *Porter, Hd. Bk. for*
Syria, 22.

^b Perh. at entrance
 of Wady es Sheikh.
See Keil on Ex.
xvii. 1.

from Haze-
 roth to
 Haradah

^c Prob. the Wady
Ain Retemat, not
 far S. of Kadesh.
 "A wide plain,
 with shrubs and
retem," *i. e.* broom
(Rob. Bib. Res. i.
279), nr. wh. is a
copious spring
called Ain-el-Ku-
deirat.—*Keil.*

from Hara-
 dah to
 Moseroth

^d Acc. to *Wilton*
(Negib. 126, 134),
Heshmon; Jos.
xv. 27; now prob.
Ain Hasb.
^e Not far fr Mt.
 Hor; *De. x. 6.*

from Mose-
 roth to
 Mt. Hor

^f Or, Beeroth-
 bene-jaakan—the
 wells of the sons
 of Jaakan; *De. x.*
6.

^g Nr. head of Elan-
 titic gulf of Red
 Sea.

^h *De. ii. 8; 1 K. xi.*
26; 2 Ch. viii. 17; 1
K. xxii. 48; 2 Ch.
xx. 36, 37.

death of
 Aaron

ⁱ *De. x. 6; xxxii.*
50.

"Death only this
 mysterious truth
 unfolds, the
 mighty soul how

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small a body holds." — *Dryden*.
 "The notice that A. was 123 yrs old at his death, in fortieth year of Exod. accords with notice of Ex vii. 73; that he was 83 yrs. old when he stood bef. Pharaoh." — *Spk. Com.*

from Mt. Hor to Ije-abarim

a By some deriv. fr. *zelem*, images. It was here or at Punon, prob. that the brazen serpent was set up, cf. xxi. 4-6.

b Prob. the same as *Phinon* (Ge xxxvi. 41), "a little village in the desert, where copper was dug up by condemned criminals, betw. Petra and Zoar." — *Jerome*.

from Iim to Abel-shittim

c Je. xlviii. 22; Ez. vi. 14.

d De. xxxii. 49.

"The student is to read history actively, and not passively; to esteem his own life the text, and books the commentary; thus compelled, the muse of history will utter oracles as never to those who do not respect themselves." — *Emerson*.

expulsion of Canaanites commanded

e Ex. xxiii. 33; Jos. xxiii. 11-13; Ju. ii. 3; Ez. xxviii. 24.

f Ez. xii. 8-16.

"If it were possible for those who have been for ages in hell to return to the earth (and not to be regenerated), I firmly believe, that notwithstanding all they have suf-

glorious; there is nothing glorious out of Christ." Another said, "The great fortitude of your character now supports you." "No, it is not my fortitude that supports me, but my faith in Christ." — *Hamilton*.

40-44. (40) Arad, see xxi. 1-2. (41) they . . Hor, xxi. 4. Zalmonah,^a (shady). (42) Punon,^b (darkness). (43) Oboth, xxi. 10. (44) Ije-abarim, xxi. 2.

Retreat of the ten thousand. — Xenophon accompanied Cyrus the younger in the expedition against his brother Artaxerxes, King of Persia. In the army of Cyrus, Xenophon showed that he was a true disciple of Socrates, and that he had been educated in the warlike city of Athens. After the decisive battle in the plains of Cunaxa, and the fall of young Cyrus, the prudence and vigor of his mind were called conspicuously into action. The ten thousand Greeks who had followed the standard of an ambitious prince, were now at a distance of above six hundred leagues from their native home, in a hostile country, and surrounded on every side by a victorious enemy, without money, without provisions, and without a leader. Xenophon was selected among the officers, to superintend the retreat of his countrymen; and though he was often opposed by malevolence and envy, yet his persuasive eloquence and unceasing activity convinced the Greeks of the justness of their choice, and that no general could extricate them from every difficulty better than the disciple of Socrates. To every danger he rose superior; across rapid rivers, though vast deserts, and over lofty mountains; exposed continually to the attacks of a vigilant enemy; without any other resources than his own prudence and the devotion of his troops, he succeeded at last, after a perilous march of two hundred and fifteen days, in restoring his countrymen to their native home.

45-49. (45) Iim (ruins), same as Ije-abarim, vs. 44. Dibongad, vs. 34. (46) Almon-diblathaim^c (concealment of the twin cakes). (47) Abarim^d xxvii. 12. (48) plains, etc., xxii. 1. (49) Abel-shittim, xxv. 1.

Let him that loves me follow me. —

"Armies of fearful harts will scorn to yield,
 If lions be their captains in the field." — *Allegn*.

Francis I. of France had not reached his twentieth year, when he was present at the celebrated battle of Marignan, which lasted two days. The Marshal de Trivulce, who had been in eighteen pitched battles, said, that those were the play of infants; but that this of Marignan was the combat of giants. Francis performed on this occasion prodigies of valor; he fought less as a king than as a soldier. Having perceived his standard-bearer surrounded by the enemy, he precipitated himself to his assistance in the midst of lances and halberts. He was presently surrounded; his horse pierced with several wounds; and his casque despoiled of its plumes. He must have been inevitably overwhelmed, if a body of troops detached from the allies had not hastened to his succor. Francis hazarded this battle against the advice of his generals; and cut short all remonstrance by the celebrated expression, which became afterwards proverbial, "Let him that loves me follow me."

50-56. (50, 51) when . . over, etc., next to accom. them, it must have been a comfort to him to know that they would pass over. (52) pictures, R. V., "figured stones." quite pluck down, R. V., "demolish." (53) dispossess, etc., Ex. xxiii. 27-31. (54) divide, etc., Nu. xxvi. 53-56. (55) prieks . . sides,^e "like thorns and brambles left in a field that ought to have been cleared." (56) shall . . them,^f you having bec. as bad as they were.

The indulgent treatment of evil. — I. There is a tendency to this. 1. The doctrine of many is, let us rest and be thankful; 2. We all sigh for rest; 3. We are apt to look at remaining evils as small and powerless. II. There are great evils resulting from this course. 1. What remains of evil will increase if not uprooted; 2. Familiarity with the presence of evil will accustom us to its unconcerned growth; 3. The presence of evil is demoralizing. Learn: — Spare no little sin, or evil habit.

The necessity of progress. —

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
 Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage — what to me were sun or clime?
 I, the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time —
 I, that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
 Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon!
 Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward, let us range,
 Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.
 Through the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day:
 Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay. — *Tennyson*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

1-6. (1, 2) this . . . thereof, *i. e.* these are the bounds of your inheritance. (3) **outmost** . . . eastward^a the most S. point of Dead Sea. (4) **Akrabbim** ^b (*scorpions*), perh. the *Wady es-Safieh*. **Kadesh-barnea**, xiii. 26. **Hazar-addar** (*village of Addar*, or of *greatness*), perh. *Ain el-Kudeirât* or *Adeirât*, W. of Kadesh. **Azmon** (*strong*), pos. the *Wady el-Kusaimeh*. (5) **the** . . . **Egypt**, *i. e.* the *Wady el-Arish*. and . . . **sea**, *i. e.* the end of this S. boundary shall be at the Mediterranean Sea. (6) **great** . . . **sea**,^d the Mediterranean.

The inheritance. — I. Canaan, the home of God's people — now heaven. II. Canaan a selected, heaven a chosen, place. III. Canaan wrung from reluctant possessors; heaven a prepared place. IV. The boundaries of Canaan fixed and wide enough; yet there is room in heaven. V. Canaan a goodly land; of the glories of heaven the half is not told.

The Christian's inheritance. —

How far from here to heaven?

Not very far, my friend;

A single hearty step

Will all thy journey end.

Hold there! where runnest thou?

Know heaven is in thee!

Seekest thou for God elsewhere!

His face thou'lt never see. — *Angelus Silesius*.

The way to heaven lies through heaven, and all the way to heaven is heaven. — *Farrar*.

7-12. (7) **north border**, wh. cannot be accurately determined. **Hor**, perh. *Mt. Casius*,^a S. W. of Antioch, on the Orontes. (8) **entrance**, confines, or beginnings of Hamath, kingdom of that name.^f **Zedad** (*mountain side*), now *Ziddâd*,^g (Subud in Robinson). (9) **Ziphron** (*sweet odor*), prob. ruins of *Zifran*,^h S. E. of Hamath towards Palmyra. **Hazar-enan** (*village of fountains*), prob. *Kuryetein*,ⁱ E. N. E. of Damascus. (10) **Shepham** (*spot naked of trees*). (11) **Riblah**^k (*fertility*), perh. *Ribleh*. **Ain** (*fountain*) perh. "the great fountain of *Neba Anjar*, at foot of Antilibanus, oft. called *Birket Anjar*, on acc. of its rise in a small pool." — *Rob., Bib. Res.* **Chinnereth**^l (*lyre*), aft. called Gennesaret. (12) **Jordan** . . . **salt sea**, this river and sea formed the rest of the E. boundary.

The Dead Sea. — Another delusion is, that the shores are silent; that no birds can live upon the waters. In fact, the natural history of the region is very rich. Kingfishers stalk along the shores. The sportsman brings down wild duck and teal, sandpipers, Norfolk plovers, and even large Greek partidges. Thrushes hop amongst the acacias; chiff-chaffs and black-headed warblers resort to the rills; wheatears are plentiful on the cliffs; and pretty little blackstarts may be obtained in any number. Nightingales, larks, and doves have been heard singing and cooing in this wild neighborhood. Mr. Tristram states: "I collected one hundred and eighteen species of birds, several of them new to science, on the shores of the lake, or swimming or flying over its waters. The cane-brakes and oases which fringe it are the homes of about forty species of mammalia, several of them animals never before brought to England; and innumerable tropical or semi-tropical plants, of Indian or African affinities, perfume the atmosphere." The rich plain of the Safieh is cultivated for indigo, maize, and barley, to within a few feet of the water's edge, and the date palm still waves over the mouth of the Arnon and the Zerka. — *Stoughton*.

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ferred for sin, they would still love it and return to the practice of it." — *Ryland*.

the boundaries of the land of promise south and west

^a Ez. xlvii. 14, 19; Jos. xv. 1, 2.

^b Jos. xv. 3, 4. The steep pass of *es-Sufah*, 1,434 ft. high, wh. leads S. W. fr. Dead S. along N. side of *Wady Fikreh*, over wh. the road fr. Petra to Heshbon passes. See *Rob. Bib. Res.* ii. 587, 591.

^c 1 K. viii. 65; 2 K. xxiv. 7; 2 Ch. vii. 8; Isa. xxvii. 12.

^d De. iii. 16, 17; Jos. xiii. 23, 27; xv. 47.

north and east

^e So *Rob. Bib. Res.* iii. 461; but the *Spk. Com.* says, *Hor* = the whole W. crest of Lebanon, 80 ms. long.

^f 2. Ch. viii. 4.

^g With 3,000 inhab. is S. E. of Hums, on E. of road fr. Damascus to Hunes.

^h *Knobel, Wetstein; Porter's Hd. Bk. for Syria*, 621.

ⁱ *Porter*. Large fountains here.

^k 2 K. xxiii. 33; xxv. 6, 20, 21; Je. xxxix. 5, 6; iii. 9, 10, 26, 27.

^l Jos. xii. 3; xiii. 27.

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rule relating
to the divi-
sion of the
land

a Jos. xiv. 1, 2;
Nu. xxvi. 56.

b Nu. xxxii. 33;
Jos. xiv. 8.

c Jos. xiv. 1; xix.
51.

"Variety is the
principal ingre-
dient in beauty;
and simplicity is
essential to gran-
deur."—*Shenstone*.

the tribal
assessors

d See art. "Caleb,"
in *Smith's Bib.
Dict.*, for theory of
Ld. A. C. Hervey.

e Nu. i. 4, 16.

"The breadth of
the country from
the Jordan to the
sea is rarely more
than 50 miles. Its
length, from Dan
to Beersheba, is
about 180 miles.
But, whatever may
be its measure-
ments, the glory of
this land consists
in its having been
the theatre of the
most marvelous
and momentous
events in the his-
tory of the world,
and is in inverse
ratio to its size."

the Levitical
cities

f Jos. xxi. 1, 2;
xiv. 3, 4; Ez.
xviii. 8-14.

g Ab. 583 yds. for
cattle, and 2,000
more on every side
for fields, etc.—
Maimonides.
2,000 cub. for
cattle, and 1,000
beyond, for vine-
yards — *Raschi*.
Or 1,000 cub.
measured every
way, fr. wall of
city, wh. was in
the centre; hence
2,000 cub. of sub-
urb fr. E. to W.,
and fr. N. to S. —
Michaelis.

h Le. xxv. 32-34.

i De. iv. 41-43;
Jos. xx. 7, 8; xxi.
13 ff.

k Nu. xxvi. 54.

13-18. (13) which . . tribe,^a *i. e.* deducting those named in vs. 14. (15) on . . Jericho,^b R. V., "beyond the Jordan at Jericho." (16, 17) Eleazar . . Nun,^c the high priest and the chief commander. (18) one . . tribe, *ea. tr.* to be fairly and equally represented.

The division of the land. — I. Note the faith manifested in making this provision in respect of a land not yet conquered. II. Note the just regard for tribal claims in the appointment of representative surveyors. III. Note the confirmation of the promise made to Reuben, *etc.* IV. Note the wise forethought which thus took steps to prevent strife.

A heritage of love. —

"This God is the God we adore,

Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;

Whose love is as great as His power,

And knows neither measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,

Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;

We'll praise Him for all that is past,

And trust Him for all that's to come." — *Hart*.

19-29. (19) Caleb^d (*dog*), see xxxii. 12. (20) Shemuel (*heard of God*). Ammihud (*kindred*). (21) Elidad (*whom God loves*). Chislon (*confidence*). (22) Bukki (*wasting*). Jogli (*exiled*). (23) Haniel (*grace of God*). Ephod (*vestment*). (24) Kemuel (*? assembly of God*). Shiptan (*judicial*). (25) Elizaphan (*whom God protects*). Parnach (*? nimble*). (26) Paltiel (*deliverance of God*). Azzan (*very strong*). (27) Ahihud (*brother of union*). Shelomi (*pacific*). (28) Pedahel (*whom God delivers*). Ammihud (*kindred*). (29) these,^e *etc.*, prob. selected by the tribes respectively.

An inheritance that must be won. — It is not ease, but effort—not facility, but difficulty—that makes men. There is, perhaps, no station in life in which difficulties have not to be encountered and overcome before any decided measure of success can be achieved. Those difficulties are, however, our best instructors, as our mistakes often form our best experience. We learn wisdom from failure more than from success; we often discover what *will* do by finding out what *will not* do; and he who never made a mistake never made a discovery. Horne Tooke used to say of his studies in intellectual philosophy, that he had become all the better acquainted with the country, through having had the good luck sometimes to lose his way. And a distinguished investigator of physical science has left it on record that whenever in the course of his researches he encountered an apparently insuperable obstacle, he generally found himself on the brink of some novel discovery. The very greatest things—great thoughts, discoveries, inventions—have generally been nurtured in hardship, often pondered over in sorrow, and at length established with difficulty. — *Samuel Smiles*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIFTH.

1-8. (1, 2) that . . in,^f that the Levites, as instructors in holy things might be spread over the whole country. suburbs, pasture grounds. (3) cattle, *i. e.* all their animals, great and small. (4) shall reach,^g *etc.*, concerning this measurement there have been many ingenious conjectures.^g (5) measure, *etc.*^h We encounter a difficulty here which it is difficult to explain. "The simplest solution seems to be that of Rosenmuller, viz., that the 1,000 cubits was measured outward at right angles to the wall of the city, while the 2,000 denotes the outside measurement parallel to the wall." — *Bush*. (6) among . . Levites, *i. e.* of the 48 Levitical cities. six . . refuge,ⁱ Hebron, Shechem, Kedesh, Bezer, Ramoth-gilead, and Golan. appoint, *etc.*, see vs. 9 ff. (7) forty . . cities, *i. e.*, 38 in Canaan proper, and 10 on the E. of Jordan, since the Levites numbered about 50,000 souls, each Levitical city would start with a population of about 1,000. (8) from . . many, *etc.*,^k thus nine fr. territory of Judah and Simeon, three fr. Naphtali, and four fr. each of the others.

Cities for refuge.— Consider their guardianship. They were placed under the care of the Levites. I. Men who were officially associated with the maintenance of the honor of the Divine law, who would by no means clear the

guilty nor suffer the innocent to be sacrificed to personal hate or fury. II. Men who by their circumstances, no less than by their office, were not likely to be affected by the wealth or poverty of either the accuser or the accused.

Cities of refuge.—In Samoa, the manslayer, or the deliberate murderer, flies to the house of the chief of the village, or to the house of the chief of another village to which he is related by the father's or the mother's side. In nine cases out of ten, he is perfectly safe, if he only remains there. In such instances, the chief delights in the opportunity of showing his importance. In Samoa, a chief's house is literally his fortification, except in times of open rebellion and actual wars.—*Turner*.

9-14. (9, 10) when . . Jordan, the three on E. of Jordan, Moses himself selected.^a (11) appoint, conveniently situated; equi-distant. to . . you, thus the old promise was fulfilled.^b which . . unawares, unintentionally. (12) avenger,^c Heb. *goel*, fr. *gaal*, to redeem; or bring back. One who is near of kin.^d (13) shall . . refuge, it was assumed that the teachers of religion would administer justice and consolation. (14) give, etc.,^e accessible to all.

Cities of refuge.—I. Consider their use. 1. It was not to screen the guilty from punishment; 2. It was to secure for the guilty a respite before death: for all a fair trial; 3. It was to procure the administration of justice not unmingled with mercy, and repress private revenge. II. Consider their number and situation. Both these features so adjusted as to place each city within convenient distance of the manslayer wherever he might be within the boundary of the land of Canaan. Learn:—How much greater hope have we who have fled for refuge to Christ. The manslayer of old had strict justice: we have abounding mercy.

Ancient sanctuaries.—This was a merciful provision to protect those who, by accident and without intention, had occasioned the death of another, and to prevent the relations of the deceased from hastily avenging themselves while under the excitement of anger and revenge. But however merciful the original institution of sanctuaries might be, it is clear that in more modern times it was much abused, so that places intended to protect the innocent became the resort and refuge of the guilty.

15-21. (15) both, etc.,^f equal justice to be administered to all. (16) with . . iron, tool. the . . death,^g see Ex. xxi. 12, 14. (17) smite . . stone, dif. modes of killing specified, that there may be no quibbling or evasion of justice. die, this is the point. (18) or . . wood, as a club or mallet. (19) when . . him, i. e. if outside the city of refuge. (20) But if, R. V., "And if." hatred, intentional homicide. by . . wait,^h premeditation. (21) the . . him, the manslayer was to be delivered up to death.ⁱ

Cities of refuge.—I. They were of Divine appointment. This fact would of itself be calculated to affect all the parties interested in them: judge, witnesses, criminal. II. Being so appointed they would serve as a test of faith. Of all the Levitical cities only six: of these six the nearest. The manslayer might not flee to any city he pleased. It must be a Levitical city, and one of the six. Learn:—1. God has appointed a way of salvation for us; 2. We are not to prefer any other way. Christ the Divine and only Saviour.

Need of cities of refuge.—"Human life," to use the words of Dean Milman, "in all rude and barbarous tribes, is of cheap account; blood is shed on the least provocation; open or secret assassination is a common occurrence. The Hebrew penal law enforced the highest respect for the life of man. Murder ranked with high treason (i. e. idolatry, blasphemy), striking a father, adultery, and unnatural lust, as a capital crime: the law demanded blood for blood (Ex. xxi. 12; Lev. xxiv. 17, 21, 22). But it transferred the exaction of the penalty from private revenge, and committed it to the judicial authority. To effect this, it had to struggle with an inveterate though barbarous usage, which still prevails among the Arabian tribes. By a point of honor, as rigorous as that of modern duelling, the nearest of kin is bound to revenge the death of his relation; he is his Goël or blood avenger. He makes no inquiry; he allows no pause; whether the deceased has been slain on provocation, by accident, or of deliberate malice, death can only be atoned by the blood of the homicide. To mitigate the evils of a usage too firmly established to be rooted out. Moses appointed certain cities of refuge conveniently situated. If the homicide could escape to one of these, he was safe till a judi-

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the cities of
refugea De. iv. 41-43; xix.
8 ff.

b Ex. xxi. 13.

c De. iv. 42; Jos.
xx. 3, 5, 6.d Le. xxv. 25; who
was the redeemer
of property (Ru.
ii. 20; iii. 9-12),
and who also
avenged the blood
of his slain kins-
man (De. xix. 6,
12; Jos. xx. 3).e De. xix. 2; Jos.
xx. 2.their use as
a shelter for
the man-
slayer

f Nu. xv. 16.

g Ge. ix. 5, 6; 1 K.
ii. 29-34.h 2 S. iii. 27, xx.
10.

i De. xix. 11, 12.

"For the suspicion
would rest upon
any one who had
used an instru-
ment that endan-
gered life, and
therefore was not
generally used in
striking, that he
had intended to
take life away."—
Knobel.

vs. 16. See *Serm.*
by Increase Ma-
ther.

vs. 16. "Iron was
not at this date
used for arms."—
Spk. Com.

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the man-
slayer to be
tried

a De xix. 4, 5; Ex.
xxi. 13; Jos. xx. 3,
5.

b Jos. xx. 4.

c Jos. xx. 6.

if innocent of
intentional
manslaying
to remain in
the city till
death of high
priest

d 1 K. ii. 42-46.

e He. vii. 22-24.

f Nu. xxvii. 11.

"A spirit of re-
venge is one of
those evil passions
to which our na-
ture is most prone,
and with respect
to which we should
therefore most
anxiously guard
against the in-
fluences of ex-
ample and of
habit."—Mrs.
Child.

two
witnesses
required

g De. xvii. 6; xix.
15; Ma. xviii. 16; 2
Co. xiii. 1; He. x.
28.

h Ez. xviii. 20.
i He. vi. 17-20.

k Ge. ix. 6; Le.
xviii. 25; 2 K. xxiv.
2-4; Ps. cvi. 36;
Job xvi. 18; Ge.
iv. 9-11; He. xii.
22-24.

l De. xxi. 23; Ex.
xxix. 45, 46; Ps.
cxliv. 21.

cial investigation took place. If the crime was deliberate murder, he was surrendered to the Goel; if justifiable or accidental homicide, he was bound to reside within the sanctuary for a certain period; should he leave it and expose himself to the revenge of his pursuers, he did so at his own peril, and might be put to death."

22—25. (22, 23) **neither . . harm,**^a unintentional homicide, named by us manslaughter, as dis. fr murder. (24) **congregation,** court composed of city elders.^b (25) **abide,**^c in a sort of quasi-imprisonment for life. **high priest,** God's representative. When he died all processess of vengeance lapsed.

Ancient sanctuaries.—The precinct of St. Martin's-le Grand was a sanctuary. The Savoy was another sanctuary; and it was the custom of its inhabitants to tar and feather those who ventured to follow their debtors thither. These sanctuaries, which by relaxation and abuse, had become strongholds of violence and crime, and which had well earned the name of "hotbeds of villainy," are now only known among us as customs of days gone by, or brought to our remembrance by a few lingering usages, faintly shadowing forth their distant origin.

26—29. (26) **slayer,** neglectful of his duty and privilege. (27) **find . . refuge,**^d having thus cast off human and Divine protection. (28) **return,** etc.,^e absolved fr. the consequences of his deed. (29) **unto . . generations,**^f fr. age to age.

Conditions of safety.—I. The manslayer was safe only in this city; we are safe only if we are found in Him. II. The manslayer was safe in the city while the priest lived, and then was restored to freedom. Our High Priest forever lives, and through Him we have the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

Security in Christ.—The son of a chieftain of the Macgregors was killed in a scuffle at an inn on the moors of Glenorchy, by a young gentleman named Lamont. The manslayer mounted his horse and fled, and though sharply pursued, in the darkness of the night succeeded in reaching a house. It happened to be the house of Macgregor himself. "Save my life!" cried Lamont to the chieftain, "men are after me to take it away." "Whoever you are," replied Macgregor, "while you are under my roof you are safe." Very soon the pursuers arrived, and thundered at the gate. "Has a stranger just entered your house?" "He has; and what may be your business with him?" "The man has killed your son! Give him up to our vengeance!" The terrible news filled the house with lamentation; but the chief with streaming tears said, "No; you cannot have the youth, for he has Macgregor's word for his safety, and as God lives, while he is in my house he shall stay secure." This story has been told for centuries to illustrate Highland honor. What shall we say of the older story, that illustrates Divine love? To Jew and Gentile, high and low, rich and poor, friend and enemy, the grace of Christ is free.

30—34. (30) **witnesses,**^g not by word of avenger alone. **one . . die,** the manslayer was to have a fair trial and a just sentence. A human life is too sacred to be put in jeopardy by one man's testimony. (31) **satisfaction,**^h bribe, hush-money, or public recompense, that would involve a miscarriage of justice. **he . . death,** the city of refuge not to secure the possible safety of the guilty, but the fair trial of the accused. (32) **satisfaction,**ⁱ bond or bail, even in case of unintentional homicide. (33) **pollute,**^k by in any way winking at sin, or perverting justice. (34) **defile,** etc.,^l by injustice of any kind, by clearing the guilty, by exacting penalty of the innocent.

Cities of refuge.—Perhaps there is nothing which indicates the advanced moral condition of the Hebrew people over their contemporaries so much as this provision for cities of refuge. It was a crude age, an age in which the weak were subject to the strong, the poor to the rich, the peaceful to the violent. And in this age of revenge, the cities of refuge displayed a remarkable zeal for justice and fairness. Every man received a fair hearing, and accuser and accused alike were protected by calm and considerate judges.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SIXTH.

1-4. (1) and . . Moses,^a "who was their common oracle to inquire of in all doubtful cases." (2) Zelophehad, *see* Nu. xxvii. 1-7. (3) and . . married,^b and at the time heiresses in their own right. (4) when . . be, *see* Le. xxv. 10. Then their property would be lost to the tribe to wh., before marriage, they belonged because the law did not cover such a case as this.

Rights of women.—English history presents many instances of women exercising prerogatives which they are now denied. In an action at law it has been determined, that an unmarried woman, having a freehold, might vote for members of Parliament, and there is one instance on record, that of Lady Packington, who returned two members of Parliament. A recent authority has decided that a woman may be an overseer of the poor. Lady Broughton was keeper of the Gatehouse prison; and in a much later period, a woman was appointed governor to the House of Correction at Chelmsford by order of the court. In the reign of George the Second the minister of Clerkenwell was chosen by a majority of women. The office of champion has frequently been held by a woman, and was so at the coronation of George the First. The office of High Constable of England has been borne by a woman; and that of Clerk of the Crown in the court of King's Bench has been granted to a female.

5-9. (5) the . . well, inasmuch as the daughters of Zelophehad besought an inheritance that their father's name might not be lost, it was very natural that Moses should command marriage only among their own families. (6) let . . best,^c within the limits of her own tribe. (7) so, *etc.*,^d otherwise the tribal boundaries and territories would be constantly liable to change. (8, 9) and . . every, *etc.*, the preceding law extended to heiresses throughout Israel. The inheritance was to descend to the next of kin to the woman in the case of heiresses and not in the line of the man.

On the marriage of heiresses.—I. They were free to marry only in their tribe. This natural, and not too great an interference with personal liberty. The rights of the state must be regarded. II. This tended to preserve a pure tribal descent. Very important this in Jewish history, and in the history of the Messiah. III. We also most approve marriages within the descent limitations of race, class, *etc.*

Humble heiress.—A French soldier, of the name of Hensis, who was a blacksmith by trade, married at Lemburgh, in Poland, a young woman, who cautiously concealed from him her name and family. She accompanied him to France, where they lived happily, but in poverty, for some years; when she received a letter, which, she said, required that she should leave her husband for a few days. She had, by the death of a relation, become heiress to a large fortune, consisting of several estates; two castles, two market towns, and seven villages, with their dependencies; as well as to the title of baroness of the empire. Uncontaminated by such a change of fortune, the lady returned to her husband and young family, to share with them the blessings of ease and plenty.

10-13. (10) even as, *etc.*, they were as ready to yield to law as to claim justice. (11) were . . sons,^e or sons of their kinsmen. May have been their first cousin, but that interpretation is not necessary, *bec.* "sons" may be used in the sense of "descendants." (12) and . . father, thus was a precedent established, and a law enacted by wh. quarrels and lawsuits were prevented (13) these . . plains of Moab,^f as dis. fr. those given at Mt. Sinai, or "commandments" may have reference to precepts of worship, while "judgments" to precepts of civil ordinances.

Conclusion.—We are all upon a journey. It is God's to lead; it is man's to follow. We are going to a land of which Canaan was but a poor emblem,—we advance toward a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God! If the road is sometimes dreary, the Guide is ever safe. Our journey hath an end—its name is Heaven.

"One army of the living God,

To His command we bow :

Part of His host have crossed the flood.

And part are crossing now."

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the property
of heiresses

^a Nu. xxvi. 29; Jos. xvii. 3.

^b Nu. xxiv. 55; xxxiii. 54.

"I cannot call riches better than the baggage of virtue; the Roman word is better, 'impedimenta,' for as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue. It cannot be spared nor left behind, but it hindereth the march."—*Bacon.*

the marriage
of heiresses

^c Ge. xxiv. 2-4; 1 Co. vii. 39; 2 Co. vi. 14.

^d 1 K. xxi. 8.

"Mothers who force their daughters into interested marriages are worse than the Ammonites, who sacrificed to Moloch—the latter undergoing a speedy death; the former suffering years of torture, but too frequently leading to the same result."—*Lord Rochester.*

marriage of
daughters of
Zelophehad

^e 1 Ch. xxiii. 22.

^f Ps. ciii. 7.

Under the legal dispensation there was a reservation of mercy, on the plea of satisfaction being done to justice; under a de-spised Gospel there is no provision of mercy, but only a fearful looking-for of judgment.

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THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

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Introduction.

I. **Title**, DEUTERONOMY, or the Second Law (fr. Gk. *deuteros* and *nomos*), bec. it contains a second statement of the laws wh. Moses had formerly promulgated to the Israelites (*Horne*). It is called by the Jews *Aleh Hadebarim* (i. e. These are the words), fr. the opening words. Called by some Rabbins *Misneh Torah* (i. e. the repetition of the Law), by others *Sepher Tukhhuth* (i. e. the Book of Reproofs), on acc. of the numerous reproofs of the Israelites by Moses. II. **Author**. The traditional view is that Moses was the author. The book itself does not claim this; and the contents of the book make it very difficult to retain this view. The great majority of Biblical scholars now regard the book as a later re-editing of the Mosaic legislation, adapting it to the new conditions which had arisen. It might still be referred to as a "book of Moses," according to literary usage both ancient and modern. It was evidently written in the country west of the Jordan, as whenever the *author* himself (in the Rev. Ver.) uses the expression "beyond Jordan," it signifies the land of Moab. "If, the book be taken at its word, there can be no doubt that it professes to be an account of what Moses did and said on a certain day in the land of Moab, before his death, written by another person, who lived to the west of the Jordan." This view respecting the authorship of Deuteronomy by no means carries with it any relinquishing of its Divine authority and inspiration. The devout Biblical scholars who accept this view "hold that chosen men, the wisest, best, most truthful of their respective generations, those who travailed most in thought, received exceptional impressions of the Divine nature. They saw God, and their whole being bore the impress henceforth of this illumination. In every word and act the light they had received found expression for itself. They did not receive this revelation in mere propositions about God, which had to be carefully repeated with minute verbal accuracy. They saw, and their natures were in their degree uplifted, changed, and harmonized with the Divine."

"In Josiah's eighteenth year Hilkiah, the high priest, told Shaphan, the scribe, that he had found 'the Book of the Law' in the Temple. That this was Deuteronomy, if not altogether, yet practically, as we have it now, there can be but little doubt; and it immediately became the text-book of religion for all that remained of Israel; the Deuteronomic view of religion as giving its centre in love to God, the tender, thoughtful evangelical spirit which distinguishes the whole outlook of its author, laid hold upon all the higher minds that came after it. To Jeremiah and to St. Paul alike, it, *par excellence*, represented the law of God. Produced, or at any rate first prized, at a time when Israel had fallen very low, when evil was triumphant, good persecuted, it recommended and exemplified a cheerful courage, born of faith in the destiny of Israel and the truth of God. That, more than anything else, helped to bear the burden of the Church over the tumultuous centuries which separated those two great servants of God, and when Christ appeared it was seen that this book, more than any in the Old Testament save perhaps the Psalms, had anticipated His cardinal teachings regarding the attitude of man to God and of man to man. The conflicts and needs of the seventh century B. C., are so clearly reflected in it, gave inspiration the opportunity it needed to reveal the secret of God's Kingdom. Out of defeat and disaster this revelation came, and through defeat and backsliding it proved its Divine origin by keeping steadfast and calm specially waited for the coming of the Messiah." — *Expositor's Bible*.

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CHAPTER THE FIRST.

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1-8. (1) **These . . . words**, *vss.* 1 and 2 constitute an introduction or title. **Moses spake**, there are four orations in Deuteronomy besides the Book of the Covenant, the Song of Moses, and the Last Words of Moses. **on this side Jordan**, *R. V.*, "beyond Jordan. **Paran**,^a prob. Mt. Paran.^b **Tophel**, (*time*); now *Tūfleh*,^c *E* of the Arabah. **Laban**, or *Libnah*,^d wh. is the fem. form of Laban. **Hazereth**,^e (*villages, or enclosures*), perh. *Ain el-Hudhera*. **Dizahab**, (*of gold*), prob. *Dahab*, cape on W. coast of gulf of Akabah. (2) **eleven**, yet for 40 yrs. they had been in the wilderness. "So near, and yet so far." (3) **And . . . saying**, *vss.* 3, 4, and 5 are a preface to first oration. (6) **Lord . . . God**, "Jehovah our Elohim," the watchword throughout; divine authority. **this . . . mount**, mountains especially sacred and representative of fixed relations. (7) **Lebanon . . . Euphrates**, extreme limits given to excite enthusiasm.

A summons to advance.—I. The church's danger—to abide at the mount, to settle down into a state of apathy or simple receptivity. II. The church's destiny—to possess the land. III. The church's duty—to obey her Lord, and go forward at once to this great work. 1. He gives no alternative. 2. The command is express. 3. The world sorely needs our work. 4. Every motive of gratitude and compassion should urge us to it.—*J. Orr.*

Mount Sinai.—Dr. Robinson discovered one plain and the summit of one mountain which exactly answered the conditions required for the valley of the assemblage and the Sinai of Moses. "As we advanced," he says, "the valley still opened wider and wider, shut in on each side by lofty granite ridges, with ragged, shattered peaks a thousand feet high, while the face of Horeb rose directly before us. Both my companions and myself involuntarily exclaimed, 'Here is room enough for a large encampment!'" Reaching the top of the ascent, a fine large plain lay before us, enclosed by rugged and venerable mountains of dark granite, naked, splintered peaks and ridges, and terminated at the distance of more than a mile by stern and awful summits, rising perpendicularly, in frowning majesty, from twelve to fifteen hundred feet in height. It was a scene of solemn grandeur wholly unexpected, and such as we had never seen, and the associations which at that moment rushed upon our minds were almost overwhelming."

9-13. (9) **bear . . . alone**, Moses' mind carried back to sense of insufficiency (*Num.* xi. 14). (10) **God . . . multiplied**, fulfilled his word.^f (11) **thousand times**, loving,^g pious exclamation. (12, 13) **How . . . you**, this was the substance of what he had said to their fathers at the time to wh. he referred.

The wilderness of Sinai.—The peninsula of Sinai, or at any rate the greater part of it, is one of the most mountainous and intricate regions on the face of the earth. Sand is a feature seldom met with; plains are rather the exception than the rule; its roads are often steep and rugged, and wind for the most part through an intricate labyrinth of narrow rock-bound valleys. It is a desert certainly in the fullest sense of the word, but a desert of rocks, gravel, and boulders, of rugged peaks and ridges, and dry bleak valleys and plateaux, the whole forming a scene of stern desolation which fully merits its description as the "great and terrible wilderness."—*Palmer.*

14-18. (14) **answered . . . said**, were pleased with what Jethro had suggested to Moses and Moses to them (*Ex.* xviii.), and agreed thereto. (15) **wise . . . known**, discreet and capable, and recognized as such. (16) **judge righteously**,^h high standard of Jethro's code (*Ex.* xviii. 21). (7) **judgment** . . . God's, true ground of judicial responsibility back of man in the Supreme Being. (18) **that time**, the time when they accepted Moses' suggestions concerning judges and possibly elders.

Moses' charge to the judges.—I. It included patience, "Hear, etc." II. Justice, judge righteously. III. Impartiality, not respect persons. IV. Courage, "Ye shall not fear the face of man." V. Responsibility, "The judgment is God's." VI. Consideration, the cause that is too hard for you, etc. What better directory for judges and magistrates can be found than this brief charge?

Moses relates the story of God's promise

^a *Ge.* xxi. 14, 21; *Nu.* xiii. 3, 17, 26;

^b *De.* xxxiii. 2. Acc. to *Willon* at the N. E. corner of Desert of Paran, now called the Mts. of Azázimeh.—*Negeb.* 124.

^c *Rob. Bib. Res.* ii. 370.

^d *Nu.* xxxiii. 20.

^e *Nu.* xi. 35; xli. 16; xxxiii. 17, 18; but perh. this is not the same Hazereth.

Cling to the promises. In earthly things, if I go and ask a friend to do so and so, and am asked the reason, my reply is "He promised." In heavenly things "go and do likewise."

he reminds them of the election of their officers

^f *Ge.* xv. 5, xxi. 17.

^g *Ps.* cxv. 14, 15;

Nu. xxii. 12.

^h *Ex.* xviii. 17-21; 1 *K.* iii. 7-9; *Ac.* vi. 1-4.

"He that would govern others, first should be the master of himself, richly endued with depth of understanding, height of knowledge."—*Massinger.*

his charge to the judges

ⁱ *Nu.* xi. 16; *Ex.* xviii. 25, 26; *De.* xvi. 18; 1 *S.* xvii. 18.

^k *Ex.* xxiii. 2-9.

^l *De.* xvi. 19; *Ja.* i. 1; *Pr.* xxiv. 23; *Jo.* vii. 24; 2 *Ch.* xix. 6; *Ps.* lxxii. 1; *Ec.* v. 8; 1 *S.* xvi. 7.

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he recounts
the story of
the spies

α De. viii. 15; Jer.
ii. 6.

δ Ma. xi. 12; Jos. i.
9.

c Nu. xlii. 1-3.

"The orator's purpose in this chap. is to bring bef. the people emphatically their own responsibility and behavior. It is therefore important to remind them that the sending of the spies, wh. led immediately to their murmuring and rebellion, was their own suggestion."—*Spk. Com.*

he reminds
them of their
murmuring

d Ps. cvi. 24, 25.

e De. ix. 1, 2.

f Ex. xiv. 14.

g Ne. iv. 20; Ro.
vii. 31; Ps. xli. 10,
11.

h Ex. xli. 4; De.
xxxii. 11, 12; Is.
xli. 3, 4; Hos. xi.
3; He. xii. 5-7; Is.
lxlii. 9.

i Nu. xxxii. 19.

There is a very bright side to this subject. While unbelief will shut us out of heaven, nothing else will! Nothing can shut us out of heaven but doubting God.

"A feeble saint shall win the day,

Though death and hell obstruct the way!"
—*Pulpit Com.*

Symbol of Justice (vs. 17). — These instructions were admirably embodied in the figure which the old Egyptians gave to Justice. She was symbolized by a human form without hands, to indicate that judges should accept no bribes; and not without hands only, but sightless, to indicate that the judge is to know neither father nor mother, nor wife nor child, nor brother nor sister, nor slave nor sovereign, nor friend nor foe, when he occupies the seat of justice. He is not to be the client, but only to hear the cause: and, uninfluenced by fear or favor, to decide the case upon its merits. — *Guthrie.*

19—25. (19) through . . wilderness,^a from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea. mountain . . Amorites, in that direction, southwest of the Dead Sea. discouraged,^b by real or imagined dangers. (22) ye . . said,^c the plan of sending spies orig. with the people. (23) pleased . . well, even if suggestion originated in unbelief, this was wise.

An appeal to memory. — I. Their memory, like ours, a storehouse or register of old facts. II. Their memory, like ours, the vindicator of Providence and the recorder of personal folly and sin. III. Their memory, like ours, bore testimony to admissions of God's goodness and mercy. IV. Their memory, like ours, supplies lessons for the future, that the follies and sins of the past may not be repeated.

Memory to do good. — Thomas Fuller, so celebrated for his great memory, had once occasion to attend on a Committee of Sequestration sitting at Waltham, in Essex. He got into conversation with them, and was much commended for his powers of memory. "'Tis true, gentlemen," observed Mr. Fuller, "that fame has given me the report of being a memorist; and if you please, I will give you a specimen of it." The gentlemen gladly acceded to the proposal; and laying aside their business, requested Mr. F. to begin. "Gentlemen, said he, "you want a specimen of memory, and you shall have a good one. Your worships have thought fit to sequester a poor but honest parson, who is my near neighbor, and commit him to prison. The unfortunate man has a large family of children; and as his circumstances are but indifferent, if you will have the goodness to release him out of prison, I pledge myself never to forget the kindness while I live." It is said that the jest had such an influence on the committee that they immediately restored the poor clergyman.

26—31. (26) rebelled . . commandment, began to assert their own wisdom as against the wisdom of God, being perhaps influenced very greatly by fear. (27) murmured^d . . tents, settled obstinacy. Lord . . hated, wicked charge, "most astounding commentary upon events of Exodus." (28) brethren . . discouraged,^e truthful but cowardly admission. (29) I said, Moses did his utmost to rally. (30) Lord . . fight, trusting the Lord they would be divinely aided in overcoming^f; God always fights for His people.^g (31) bare . . son,^h with fatherly solicitude, with protecting care. came . . place,ⁱ to borders of Canaan years before.

God dealing with us as with sons. — There are several things to which these words call our thoughts. I. Our history. There is a history appertaining to each of us; a story of our life. This history has not been written by any pen; but it is inscribed on the mind of the eternal God. II. God in our history. God is in our history, in a certain sense, far more than we ourselves are in it. III. The support which that history shows God to have given us. He upholds us through all things. IV. The fatherly character of that support: "as a man doth bear his son." If God bears us in this manner, then we ought — 1. To be quiet from the fear of evil; 2. To be careful for nothing; 3. To implicitly and cheerfully obey Him. — *Martin.*

Strong encouragement. — When stars, first created, start forth upon their vast circuits, not knowing their way, if they were conscious and sentient, they might feel hopeless of maintaining their revolutions and orbits, and despair in the face of coming ages. But, without hands or arms, the sun holds them. Without cords or bands, the solar king drives them, unharnessed, on their mighty rounds without a single misstep, and will bring them, in the end, to their bound, without a wanderer. Now, if the sun can do this, the sun, which is but a thing itself, driven and held, shall not He who created the heavens, and gave the sun his power, be able to hold us by the attraction of His heart, the strength of His hands, and the omnipotence of His affectionate will? — *Beecher.*

32-37. (32) in . . thing,^a i. e. the command to go up and possess the land. (33) who, etc.,^b thus furnishing continual evidence of His care to them, and His will concerning them. (34-36) heard . . words, God notes words as a revelation of man's spirit. wroth . . sware, intense displeasure (Ps. xcvi. 11). (37) angry . . me,^c Moses unites his own rejection with the rejection of the people; cause, unbelief (Num. xx. 12).

Excluded by reason of unbelief. — I. What it was that they did not believe. 1. They did not believe God's word of promise; 2. They did not believe God's arm of power. II. Wherein consisted the greatness of their sin? 1. In that they had the example of the patriarchs who dwelt in the land; 2. In that they had had many tokens of the blessing and care of God; 3. In that they had visible proofs of His presence to guide and help. III. What was the nature and extent of their punishment? 1. All their previous toil and danger was of no avail; 2. They were disappointed of the great object of their life; 3. They did not dwell by their children's side in the promised land.

The Lord thy God bore thee. — "I," said God, "who was a father, became nurse, and My little one I Myself carried in My arms, lest it should be hurt in the wilderness, and lest it should be frightened by the heat or darkness; in the day I was a cloud, by night a pillar of fire." — *Jerome.*

It is the realization in one's own heart of this presence by day and night that makes the true child of God courageous. While God is Father and Nurse, man has not much to fear. There is a story told of St. Basil that well illustrates this. The emperor sent to him to subscribe to the Arian heresy. The messenger at first used good language, and promised great performat if he would turn Arian, to which Basil replied, "Alas! their speeches are fit to catch little children who seek such things, but we that are nourished and taught by the holy scriptures are readier to suffer a thousand deaths than suffer one syllable of the scriptures to be altered." The messenger told him he was mad. He replied, "I wish I were forever thus mad." It matters not whether it be Apostle, Father, or Reformer. All are alike. Paul, Basil, Luther, each had the same presence — each had the same courage.

38-41. (38) Joshua . . go, a man of a new generation (Num. xxvii. 18, 19). (39) moreover, continuation from vs. 36. (40) journey . . wilderness, to die there (Num. xiv. 32). (41) we . . fight, change from cowardice to presumption or insolence, not from unbelief to faith (Num. xix. 40).

Encourage him. — The text — I. Supposes that difficulties shall be encountered. In the Christian life there are many obstacles. II. Gives a command concerning the surmounting of difficulties: "encourage him." We should encourage our fellow-Christians to — 1. Meet their trials with patience; 2. Steadily fight till they conquer them; 3. Profit by them. — *Macdonald.*

They shall go in thither. — A beautiful example of the children bringing honor to the parent. The fathers by their sin brought disgrace upon their name. They die in the desert. The children enter the promised land. A very striking illustration of this is found in the reward of the oaken crown among the ancient Romans. The civic crown was the foundation of many privileges. He who had once obtained it had a right to wear it always. When he appeared at the public spectacles, the senators rose up to do him honor. He was placed near their bench; and his father, and his grandfather by the father's side, were entitled to the same privilege. — *Preacher's Com.*

42-46. (42) not up,^d God is opposed to all false-heartedness, all pretension, and cannot go with people of such spirit. (43) I spake, Moses continued his faithfulness, but the people their presumption and foolishness. (44) Amorites . . bees,^e hornets and bees easily overcome^f those who do not properly guard themselves (Num. xiv. 44, 45). (45) returned^g . . wept, came back sorrowful for their suffering rather than for sin. (46) abode . . Kadesh,^h where Miriam died and was buried (Num. xx. 1).

The battle is the Lord's (vs. 42). — From this text we learn — I. That for success in the enterprises of life we must be assured of the presence and blessing of God. II. That we should engage in those enterprises only in which we have hope of God's help. III. That to enter upon great undertakings without the Divine presence is presumption.

Success dependent on courage. — Conquest wavers with the wavering heart. Napoleon lost a battle through a bilious fit. Strongest, coolest, bravest, have seasons when they need encouragement. Success in undertakings is not

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and how they were excluded by unbelief

^a Ps. cvi. 24; Jude 3; Heb. iii. 17-19.

^b Ex. xiii. 21; Ne. ix. 19; Ps. lxxviii. 14; Nu. x. 33.

^c Nu. xx. 12; xxvii. 13, 14; De. iii. 26; iv. 21; xxxiv. 4; Ps. cvi. 32.

"The goodness of God to man and the ingratitude of man to God form a very striking and affecting contrast. No one can seriously review his own history or that of the church of God for any given period without being impressed with these two thoughts. How man tries God! How God bears with man!" — *Hamilton.*

the children spared

"When a man's pride is subdued it is like the sides of Mt. Etna. It was terrible during the eruption, but when that is over and the lava is turned into soil, there are vineyards and olive trees which grow up to the top." — *Beecher.*

"Pride and weakness are Siamese twins, knit together by an indissoluble hyphen." — *Lowell.*

defeat through sin

^d Ex. xxxiii. 15, 16. ^e Ps. cxviii. 12; ^f *Iliad* xvi. 259 ff.

^g See many illus. in *Kitto*.

^h *Zec.* vii. 11, 13; *Pr.* i. 24-31.

ⁱ *Ju.* xi. 17; *Ps.* xxix. 8.

"In one thing men of all ages are alike — they have believed obstinately in themselves." — *Jacobi.*

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"In the midst of a tumultuous sea the modes of the compass remain immovable, because they govern themselves, not according to the winds, but according to the influence of the heavens. So the faith of the faithful remaineth firm amongst the rude agitations of the world, because it governeth itself, not according to the instability of the affairs of this world, but according to the promises of God." — *Pulpit Illustr.*

their relations with Esau

a "vs. 1 seems to ref. in gen. terms to the long years of wandering, the details of wh. were not to Moses' present purpose. — *Spk. Com.*

b Nu. xxx. 18-20.

c Ge. xxxvi. 8; Jos. xxiv. 4.

d De. viii. 2-4; Ps. 1. 6.

e Ne. ix. 21; Lu. xxii. 35.

"Delays, whether in the business of God or our own, are hateful and prejudicial; many lose the land of promise by lingering." — *Nicholls.*

they pass over Zered

f 1 K. ix. 26; 2 Ch. viii. 17; 2 K. xiv. 22, xvi. 6.

Elath, called by Gks. and Roms. *Elana*, or *Ælana*, hence the E. gulf of Red Sea was called the Elanitic Gulf; now called Gulf of Akabah.

g Ju. xi. 18; Nu. xxi. 4.

h Ge. xix. 30-38.

i Ge. xxxvi. 20, 21.

k De. i. 34, 35; Nu. xiv. 32-35; Ez. xx. 15; Ps. lxxviii. 33; cvi. 28.

infrequently the result of very unlikely and small beginnings. The following incident from the battle between Marcellus, the Roman, and Hannibal, the Carthaginian, cited from Plutarch, well illustrates the point: "Both armies then engaged, and Hannibal, seeing no advantage gained by either, ordered his elephants to be brought forward into the first line, and to be pushed against the Romans. The shock caused great confusion at first in the Roman front; but Flavius, a tribune, snatching an ensign staff from one of the companies, advanced, and with the point of it wounded the foremost elephant. The beast upon this turned back, and ran upon the second, the second upon the next that followed, and so on till they were all put in great disorder. Marcellus observing this, ordered his horse to fall furiously upon the enemy, and, taking advantage of the confusion already made, to rout them entirely. Accordingly, they charged with extraordinary vigor, and drove the Carthaginians to their entrenchments. The slaughter was dreadful; and the fall of the killed, and the plunging of the wounded elephants, contributed greatly to it. It is said that more than 8,000 Carthaginians fell in this battle; of the Romans not above 3,000 were slain." All this success, in a measure, was owing to a man wounding an elephant with an ensign staff. — *Preacher's Com.*

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-7. (1) turned^a . . Red Sea, back southwards in direction of Gulf of Akabah. compassed . . Seir, in land of Edom. (4) pass . . coast, pass through border. they . . afraid,^b naturally would be anxious and concerned as to intention of Israelites. (5) Esau . . possession,^c Esau won his inheritance earlier than Jacob (Gen. xxxiii. 16). (6) money, or money's worth: obtain what you need, not by force, but in the way of fair dealing. (7) for, God's providence an argument for honesty and peaceableness. walking,^d both the path taken and the necessities of the people and their conduct. these . . nothing,^e hence no need now to trust to violent measures, like lawless, God-forsaken men.

God's continued mercies to us. — That we may see that God's care is not exclusively confined to Israel, we will show — I. What mercies have been vouchsafed to us during the whole period of our sojourning in this wilderness. In relation to — 1. Temporal concerns: the necessities and luxuries of life; 2. The concerns of the soul. II. Under what circumstances they have been continued to us. If we look at Israel they will serve to show us — 1. How great our provocations towards God have been; 2. How entirely we have been under the influence of unbelief. — *Simeon.*

Meddle not. — "How many unholy hearts would be restrained by the practice of these rules of wisdom and love! A generous, self-forgetting warmth of kindness puts down the first evil; denying ourselves the pleasure of justifying our cause, or triumphing over our opponent, instead of standing upon punctilious reforms or waiting for an acknowledgment from the offender." —

Bridge. Water. — "The value attached to water in the East is here brought strikingly before us; also the justice which characterized the policy of the Jewish lawgiver. The Edomites were in possession of the wells, and the fluid of life must be paid for, if money would be accepted." — *Temp. Com.*

8-15. (8) Elath, or Eloth,^f (trees, terebinths, a grove, perh. palm-grove), prob. the present *Eylet*. Ezion-gaber,^g Nu. xxxiii. 35. (9) Moabites, who with Ammonites were kin to Israel through Lot.^h (11, 12) Parenthetical and explanatory comment of much significance as related to older races. Emim, Gen. xiv. 5; Anakim, Num. xiii. 22; Horim,ⁱ Gen. xiv. 6 (Emim, Anakim, etc., are plurals, and should not have the final 's'). (13) Zered, or Zared, Nu. xxi. 12. (14) space, etc., in fulfilment of Nu. xiv. 23. (15) until, etc.,^k God is faithful in fulfilling threats as well as promises.

Rabbinical traditions concerning manna. — As an illustration of the way in which the Jewish Rabbinical writers overlaid the teaching of Scripture by these traditions, we give an extract from Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature* on the Talmud: "What the manna was which fell in the wilderness has often been disputed, and still is disputable; it was sufficient for the Rabbins to have found in the Bible that the taste of it was 'as a wafer made with honey,' to have raised their fancy to its highest pitch. They declare it was 'like oil to children, honey to old men, and cakes to middle age.' It had every kind of

taste except that of cucumbers, melons, garlic, and onions, and leeks, for these were those Egyptian roots which the Israelites so much regretted to have lost. This manna had, however, the quality to accommodate itself to the palate of those who did not murmur in the wilderness, and to these it became fish, flesh, or fowl. The Rabbins never advance an absurdity without quoting a text in Scripture, and to substantiate this fact they quote De. ii. 7, where it is said, 'Through this great wilderness these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee, and thou hast lacked nothing!' St. Austin repeats this explanation of the Rabbins, that the faithful found in this manna the taste of their favorite food. However, the Israelites could not have found all these benefits as the Rabbins tell us; for in Nu. xi. 6 they exclaim, 'There is nothing at all besides this manna before our eyes!' They had just said that they remembered the melons, cucumbers, etc., which they had eaten up so freely in Egypt. One of the hyperboles of the Rabbins is that the manna fell in such mountains that the kings of the east and the west beheld them; which they found on a passage in the 23rd Psalm: 'Thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of mine enemies!' These may serve as specimens of the forced interpretations on which their grotesque fables are founded."

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"The succession of tribes or nations indicated in the chapter is a very remarkable feature; showing that not only individuals pass away like a shadow, but nations also. There is not a nation at this moment inhabited by the people that dwelt in it fifteen, or sixteen hundred years ago."—*Preacher's Com.*

Presumption and unbelief resemble two sunken rocks; faith alone is the safe channel between them.

16-23. (16) when . . . dead, the period of thirty-eight years had done its work. (18) Ar,^a Num. xxi. 15, 28. (20-23) Further explanatory comment relating to ancient races. Zamzummims (*noisy people*), perh. same as Zuzim. Lord . . . before them, i. e., bef. the Ammonites. Avims^b (*inhabitants of ruins*). Hazerim (*villages*). Azzah^c (*the strong*), i. e. Gaza. Capthorims, descendants of Mizraim.^d Capthor (*chaplet, knop*), prob. in Upper Egypt.^e

their relations with Lot

^a Is. xv. 1.

^b Jos. xiii. 3.

^c 1 K. iv. 24; Je. xxv. 20; xlvii. 1, marg.

^d Ge. x. 13; 1 Ch. i. 11.

^e There is still a place called *Knaft* or *Keft*, the anc. Coptos, a few ms. N. of Thebes. See *Kalisch* on Gen. 267, 268.

"God can do without His generals, captains, and leaders of hosts; God can do without every preacher He has; but He cannot do without His holiness, His purity, His infinite righteousness."—*People's Bib.*

Men reap blessing from the grave of their ancestors (vs. 19).—I. Here we have a people blessed not for the sake of their own virtues, but for the sake of their ancestors, to whom the land had been given. II. Here we are reminded of the fact that by our relation to God our own descendants may be blessed.

National progress.—No one who is a careful observer of what has been and is passing around him, will for a moment question that very great progress has been made by our country during the present century, in all the various branches of human discovery and acquirements; but the precise amount, or the comparative value of that progress, cannot possibly be measured by the advances made in former periods, and which themselves are equally without a standard or measure of comparison. If, however, this difficulty could be surmounted is it not probable that we should find—regard being had to the superior facilities afforded to each succeeding age through the labors of its precursors—that the efforts of the human mind, and the success attending those efforts, have been much the same at all periods; and that consequently, if we have profited as well of our opportunities as our fathers did of those bequeathed to them, we must have made greater and more rapid strides than any who have gone before us, in the walks of science and all other branches of intellectual progress, whereby we shall have prepared the way for a still more rapid advance on the part of those who will succeed us.—*Porter.*

24-29. (24) Arnon, Num. xxi. 13 ff. (25) This day, a fulfilment of Moses' prophetic song.^f (26) Kedemoth (*antiquities*), so called from the city of that name.^g (27) pass through,^h Num. xxi. 21, 22.

they pass over the Arnon

^f Ex. xv. 14, 15.

^g Jos. xiii. 18; xxi. 37; 1 Ch. vi. 79.

^h Ju. xi. 19.

The fame of Israel as a conquering people (vs. 24, 25).—I. How at this time that fame was increased, viz., by the conquest of the mightiest of the nations east of Jordan. II. The moral effects of this conquest. 1. Israel prepared for future conquest; 2. Canaan awed before she had received a blow.

How news is spread.—Plutarch notes that the country people were very busy inquiring in their neighbors' affairs. The inhabitants of cities thronged the court and other public places, as very great newsmongers; so much so, says Cæsar, that they even stopped travelers on this account, who deceived them, and thus brought error into their counsels. Juvenal notices the keenness of the Roman women for deluges, earthquakes, etc., as now, for wonders, and private matters. Merchants and purveyors of corn, as now stock-jobbers, used to invent false news for interested purposes. It was not uncommon to put the bearers of bad news to death. In the middle ages, pilgrims and persons attending fairs were grand sources of conveying intelligence.

"Those who despise fame seldom deserve it. We are apt to undervalue the purchase we cannot reach, to conceal our poverty the better."—*J. Collier.*

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"He who would acquire fame must not show himself afraid of censure. The dread of censure is the death of genius."—*Stimms.*

"Who despises fame will soon renounce the virtues that deserve it."—*Mallet.*

"Fondness of fame is avarice of air."—*Young.*

the victory at Jahaz

a Jos. xi. 20; Ex. iv. 21.

b De. xx. 16; xxix. 7, 8; Ju. xi. 21.

"As the same sun melts one substance and hardens another, so the gospel subdues one heart and indirectly hardens another."

"The passions, like heavy bodies down steep hills, when once in motion, move themselves and know no ground, but the bottom."—*Fuller.*

the conquest of Sihon

c De. iii. 12; iv. 48; Jos. xii. 2; xlii. 9; Ju. xi. 26; 1 Ch. v. 8.

d De. iii. 16; Ps. xlii. 3.

"Physical courage, which despises all danger, will make a man brave in one way; and moral courage, which despises all opinion, will make a man brave in another. The former would seem most necessary for the camp, the latter for council; but to constitute a great man, both are necessary."—*Colton.*

"The hardening of heart, here attributed to God, means simply that the providences, instead of softening Sihon's nature,

Blacksmiths' shops, hermitages, etc., were other resorts for this purpose, in common with the mill and market. Great families used to pay persons in London for letters of news. In London, as St. Paul's church was the great place of advertising, so it was also for news. In *Nicholls' Progresses*, a gentleman says "that his lackey had not walked twenty paces in Pawles before he heard that sundry friends of his master had taken leave at court, and were all shipt away." Servants were sent there on purpose to fetch news. Of the introduction of newspapers by the *Gazetta* of Venice everybody has read. Herbert calls the *Siege of Rhodes*, by Caxton, "the antientest Gazette in our language;" but to prevent the mischief of false alarms, through the Spanish Armada, the first newspaper, styled the *English Mercury*, then, as afterwards, in the shape of a pamphlet, appeared in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.—*Fosbroke.*

30-33. (30) hardened . . spirit, judicial hardening, or attributing to God what comes to pass in His punishment of sin. (Num. xxi. 23). (31) begin . . possess, divine command to enter upon conquest; all orders taken from Jehovah. (32) Jahaz, Num. xxi. 23. (33) smote, etc., Num. xxi. 24.

The conquest of Sihon.—I. Undertaken by Divine command. II. Brought about by pride, idolatry, etc. III. Quite unlooked for by Sihon, who confidently marched out to meet Israel. IV. Accomplished as the result of one decisive battle.

The downfall of pride.—A kite having risen to a very great height, moved in the air as stately as a prince, and looked down with much contempt on all below. "What a superior being I am now!" said the kite; "who has ever ascended so high as I have? What a poor groveling set of beings are all those beneath me! I despise them." And then he shook his head in derision, and then he wagged his tail; and again he steered along with so much state as if the air were all his own, and as if everything must make way before him; when suddenly the string broke, and down fell the kite with greater haste than he ascended, and was greatly hurt in the fall. Pride often meets with a downfall. Let us beware how we look with contempt on those below us, lest, while we are carrying ourselves loftily, our circumstances may be changed, and we be placed as low in the world as we well can be. We that have rich friends to-day may have poor ones to-morrow; for such changes happen to many.—*Cobbin.*

34-37. (34) cities, Nu. xxi. 25. (35) took . . ourselves, by right of conquest. (36) Aroer, (ruins) on north bank of Wady Mojib. our God, "our God" and "your God," emphatic designation throughout oration. (37) only, Nu. xxi. 24.

The secret of Israel's success in war (vs. 37).—I. The points of attack were indicated by their Divine leader. II. They avoided the places that the Lord had forbidden, however tempting or easy. III. They did not fight for the sake of conquest, but by Divine direction, to make sure their approaches to Canaan and to guard their rear.

The folly of war defenses.—Suppose a gentleman, living in a suburban house, with his garden separated only by a fruit-wall from his next door neighbor's, and he had called me to consult with him on the furnishing of his drawing-room. I begin looking about me; I find the walls rather bare; I think such and such a paper might be desirable—perhaps a little fresco here and there on the ceiling—a damask curtain or so at the windows. "Ah," says my employer, "damask curtains, indeed! that's all very fine, but you know I can't afford that kind of thing just now!" "Yet the world credits you with a splendid income!" "Ah, yes," says my friend, "but do you know, at present I am obliged to spend it nearly all in steel-traps?" "Steel-traps! for whom?" "Why, for that fellow on the other side the wall you know; we're very good friends, capital friends; but we are obliged to keep our traps set on both sides of the wall; we could not possibly keep on friendly terms without them and our spring guns. The worst of it is, we are both clever fellows enough; and there's never a day passes that we don't find out a new trap, or a new gun-barrel, or something; we spend about fifteen millions a year each in our traps, take it all together; and I don't see how we're to do with less!" A highly comic state of life for two private gentlemen! but for two nations, it seems to me, not wholly comic! Bedlam would be comic, perhaps, if there were only one madman in it; and your Christmas pantomime

is comic when there is only one clown in it; but when the whole world turns clowns, and paints itself red with its own heart's blood instead of vermilion, it is something else than comic, I think.—*Ruskin*.

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had through his own self-will an entirely opposite effect. The heart gets hardened through the corruption of the will."

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-7. (1-3) **Bashan**, Nu. xxi. 33-35. (4) **Argob**,^a (*stony*). (5) **cities** . . bars, i. e. 60 in num. (6, 7) **utterly**, De. ii. 33-35.

the conquest of Bashan

Divine encouragement in the face of great dangers (vs. 2).—I. The source of the danger. The power of Bashan and its fenced cities marshaled against Israel. Natural defenses, fortifications, etc., of Argob. Army under the leadership of the redoubtable Og. II. The ground of the encouragement. 1. The promise of God; 2. Former victories. Those victories had been secured through obedience to the will of God. Victory now assured on the condition of obedience.

a 1 K. iv. 13; called in later times *Trachonitis*, the rough; identified with the mod. *Léjah*. See Porter, *Journ. Sac. Lit.* July, 1854.

The giant cities of Bashan.—The Rev. J. L. Porter spent a considerable time in exploring the cities of Bashan. At Burak he lodged in a city of several hundred houses, all deserted, but all in good repair, though built two or three thousand years ago. The walls of these houses were five feet thick, formed of large blocks of hewn stone put together without lime or cement of any kind. The roofs were formed of long blocks of the same black basalt, measuring twelve feet in length, eighteen inches in breadth, and six inches in thickness. The doors were stone slabs, hung upon pivots formed of projecting parts of the slabs, working in sockets in the lintel and threshold; the windows were guarded with stone shutters—everything was of stone, as if the builders had designed each edifice to last forever. All betoken the workmanship of a race endowed with powers far exceeding those of ordinary men; and give credibility to the supposition that we have in them the dwellings of the giant race that occupied that district before it was invaded by the Israelites. "We could not help," says Mr. Graham, "being impressed with the belief that had we never known anything of the early portion of Scripture history before visiting this country, we should have been forced to the conclusion that its original inhabitants, the people who had constructed those cities, were not only a powerful and mighty nation, but individuals of greater strength than ourselves.—*People's Bib.*

"The streets are perfect, the walls perfect, and what seems most astonishing, the stone doors are still hanging on their hinges, so little impression has been made during these many centuries on the hard and durable stone of wh. they were built."—*C. G. Graham*.

8-12. (8) **Hermion**^b (*lofty, or prominent peak*), now called *Jebel esh-Sheikh*, the chief mt.; or *Jebel eth-Thelj*, the snowy mt. (9) *vs.* 9-11. Explanatory comments. **Sidonians**, who had great traffic with Egypt, hence Moses learned their name for this mt. **Sirion**^c (*breast-plate*). **Shenir**^d (*coat of mail, or cataract*). (10) **Salchah**^e (*a pilgrimage*), now *Sulkhad*, ab. 14 ms. S. E. of Busrah. (11) **giants**, R. V., "*Rephaim*." ^f **bedstead**, or sarcophagus. **Rabbath**^g (*a great city, metropolis*). **nine** . . cubits, 13½ ft. long. **after** . . man, 18 in. (12) **gave**, Num. xxxii. 33.

summary of conquest E. of Jordan

b Jos. xli. 1; xi. 17.

Iron bedsteads.—Our own not unfrequent use of iron bedsteads divests the fact of Og's bedstead being so framed of all strangeness. In the warm climate of the East bedsteads of metal seem to have been more in use anciently than at present, for the purpose of excluding the insects that are disposed to harbor in those of wood. Heathen writers notice bedsteads of gold and silver. Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus describe beds and tables of these metals which they observed in Eastern temples. Such beds are in the book of Esther (i. 6) ascribed to the Persians, and accordingly a bed of gold was found by Alexander the Great in the tomb of Cyrus.—*Kitto*. *Og's bedstead*.—Taking the cubit as equal to eighteen inches, the measure of the bedstead would be thirteen feet and a half by six feet. That Og even approximated to this height is incredible; if he reached nine or ten feet his height would exceed that of any one on record. It is probable, however, that he may have had his bed made vastly larger than himself, partly from ostentation, partly that he might leave a memorial that should impress upon posterity a sense of his gigantic size and resistless might: just as Alexander the Great is said (Diod. Sic., xvii. 95) to have, on his march to India, caused couches to be made for his soldiers in their tents, each five cubits long, in order to impress the natives with an overwhelming sense of the greatness of his host.—*Selected*.

"Hermion, on N. E. frontier of Pales, the S. point of range of Lebanon, 10,000 ft. high. Its summit rises fr. 2,000 to 3,000 ft. above the chains of mts. visible throughout nearly all Syria."—*Thomson, Ld. and Bk.* 159, 177, 611.

c Ps. xxix. 6.

d Song iv. 8.

e Jos. xli. 5; xlii. 11; 1 Ch. v. 11.

f Ge. xiv. 5; xv. 20.

g Jos. xlii. 25.

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division of
land E. of
Jordan

a 1 Ch. ii. 21, 32.

Mr. Tristram has traced the anc. levels of the D Sea as marked by terraces, etc., along the sides of the cliffs. They are numerous, and fr. 5 to 1,500 ft. above present level of the water.

"The water is more intensely salt than that of any other sea known. It has a bitter taste, yet it is as transp. as the Mediterranean. Its specific gravity is so great that the human body will not sink, and eggs float when only two-thirds immersed."—Porter.

the charge to
Israel and
Joshua

b De. i. 39; xx. 4.

"Unless a nation is accomplishing God's purposes, it will not be spared to fulfill its own! God will rid the world of plague-spots."—*Pulp. Com.*

"Opposition to God always means loss. No man can fight God, and retire truly and lastingly rich."—*People's Bib.*

"The brave heart, the soul alive with God—that will always conquer. Let us live and move and have our being in God."—*People's Bib.*

Moses'
prayer for
himself

c Ex xv. 11; 28. vii. 23; Ps. lxxi. 19; lxxxvi. 8; lxxxix. 6, 8.

d "Whereas the plains in the E.

13-17. (13) giants, *R. V.*, Rephaim. (14) Bashan-havoth-jair,^a Num. xxxii. 14. unto this day, characteristic expression of the Book of Joshua (Josh. vii. 26; viii. 29; ix. 27). (17) Ashdoth-pisgah (*outpourings, i. e.* ravings of *Pisgah*).

Bathing in the Dead Sea.—The April sun was shining down broad and bright on the clear, rippling waters of the splendid lake, which shone with metallic lustre, closed in between the high cliffs of the Judæan hills to the west, and the grand chain of Moab, like a heaven-high wall, upon the east. Over the distance, and concealing from us the further half of the sea, hung a soft, sunny haze. There was nothing in all this of the Accursed Lake, nothing of gloom and desolation. Even the shore was richly studded with bright, golden chrysanthemums growing to the edge of the rippling waters. There was but one feature of the scene to convey a different impression—it was the skeletons of the trees once washed down from the woody banks of Jordan by the floods into the lake, and then, at last, cast up again by the south wind on the shore, and gradually half buried in the sands. They stood up almost like a blasted grove, with their bare, withered boughs in all fantastic shapes. Whitenened and charred as if they had passed through the fire. It had been my intention, of course, to bathe in the sea, so I was provided for the attempt, with the exception, unfortunately, of sandals; and the stones being of the sharpest, I was unable to follow the long shallow water barefooted far enough out to test its well-known buoyancy for swimming. As few ladies, our dragoman told us (indeed, he absurdly supposed none, had bathed in the Dead Sea, I may as well warn any so disposed, that the water nearly burnt the skin from my face, and occasioned quite excruciating pain for a few moments in the nostrils and eyes, and even on the arms and throat. The taste of it is like salts and quinine mixed together—an odious compound of the saline and the acridly bitter. No great wonder, since its analysis shows a variety of pleasing chlorides and bromides and muriates and sulphates of all manner of nice things; magnesia and ammonia among those more familiar to the gustatory nerves. The Dead Sea is 1,300 feet lower than the Mediterranean, and the evaporation from it (without any outlet) fully makes up for the supply poured in by the Jordan.—*Fraser's Mag.*

18-22. (18) I commanded, summary of what is given in Num. xxxii. 20-32. Moses acting in the name of the Lord. (21) eyes . . seen, special instruction to Joshua on the ground that he had seen and appreciated what God had done; he, as future leader, must be specially courageous. (22) Lord . . fight, Ex. xiv. 14,^b reiteration of most important thing to be remembered, viz., that they were not to go up alone.

The duties arising out of patriotic relations (vss. 18-20).—I. The welfare of all should be the concern of each. II. One party in the state not to retire from active life until the just rights of other parties have been secured. III. These principles may be applied in our times to the union of political parties and religious communities against common foes—as Popery, ignorance, intemperance, and all sin.

The providence of God on behalf of His people.—Humanly speaking, Israel could never have conquered Og had he remained in the cities. They could not have invested the country, or endured long sieges. It would require no small amount of skill to entice these people from behind walls; and it is more improbable that such a people should, of their own free will, risk a battle in the open plain. There must have been some almost miraculous interference in favor of the Israelites. And from a casual notice in another place (Josh. xxiv. 12), we find that God sent a special scourge among these Rephaim in the shape of swarms of hornets, which we may suppose harassed them so much in their stone houses that they were driven out of their towns, and preferred the alternative of meeting the Israelites to perishing from the stings of these creatures.—*Cyril Graham.*

23-25. (23) besought . . saying, wonderful prayer^c for personal favor but not answered as Moses wished. (25) good land, the land of God's promise. goodly mountain,^d elevated section of territory as compared with tiresome lowlands, or it may have been Hermon from some points of view seeming to be in Lebanon range.

The petition of Moses to God (on vss. 23-28).—I. The prayer of Moses: "I pray thee," etc. (vs. 25). II. The answer of God to his prayer: "the Lord was angry

with me." III. The mitigating of God's anger: "let it suffice thee," etc. (vs. 26). IV. The promise which God maketh unto Moses, that he should see the land of Canaan, though not possess it. — *Smith*.

Let me go over. — Moses wanted to see the lower Canaan — what if he saw the higher? Moses uttered a little prayer — what if God denied a reply so small as the intercession and took him up without prayer into the region of eternal praise? God denies only that which is little, earthly and mean, or miscalculated, or undesirable. He surprises us by the vastness of his answers. He "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Into that sanctuary of promise our souls would fly as into a refuge inviolable. You prayed for the child's life, and the child died — what if it were but transplanted from cold climes to the summer air of heaven? — *People's Bib.*

26-29. (26) *wrath* . . *sakes*, the Israelites, by their disobedience or refusal to enter Canaan at once, kept Moses, the great leader, back. *suffice thee*,^b *lit.* "enough for thee." (27) *get*, etc.,^c Nu. xxvii. 12. (28) *charge*, etc.,^d Nu. xxvii. 23. (29) *Beth-peor* (temple of Peor.)

The prayer of a good man refused (vs. 26). — I. The prayer of Moses considered as to its nature. It arose from a very natural desire to enter and see the good land. II. Why it was refused. 1. As a punishment for past sin; 2. To teach that human goodness does not atone for human sin; 3. To show that there is something better in reserve for the righteous than earthly good. Moses only saw the earthly, but he entered the heavenly Canaan.

The benefit of prayer. —

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make,
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear,
We kneel, how weak! — we rise how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage are with Thee? — *Trench.*

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

1-4. (1) *now* . . Israel, exhortation based on histor. review. *statutes*,^f written law. *judgments*, truths and doctrines taught by God's dealing with them. (2) *not add*,^g . . *diminish*, tampering with or perverting law, a common sin. (3) *Baal-peor*, Nu. xxv. 1-9. Peor prob. name of mountain where this god was worshiped.^h (4) *cleave*, adhere closely.

A nation is pre-eminent by cherishing a spirit of obedience to God. — We must not trust to the splendor of our fleet and the valor of our soldiers, nor to the extent of our commerce and the greatness of our empire. Infidelity denies God and false science ignores Him, but no nation can succeed without God. Robespierre declares "the world cannot be worked without God; and rather than try to work it without God we had better invent a god." God comes near us to be trusted and loved — reveals His spirituality and power to satisfy our need and restrain idolatry, and exalt a nation to dignity and power, that He may be obeyed and honored. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." When the African prince inquired from our gracious queen the secrets of England's glory, she handed him a copy of the Scriptures, and said, "That is the secret of England's greatness." — *Preacher's Com.*

5-8. (5) *should do so*, be able to do so, have the knowledge enabling you to serve God rightly (6) *keep*, treasure them in mind, and work them out in conduct. *wisdom*, knowledge of Jehovah was national peculiarity and dig-

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are for the most part sterile, on acc. of the scarcity of rain, the mt. regions, wh. are well watered by springs and streams, are very fertile and pleasant." — *Rosenmüller* "God," says Cecil, "denies a Christian nothing, but with a design to give him something better."

his request denied

a Nu. xx. 12; xxvii. 14.

b 2 Cor. xii. 8.

c De. xxxii. 51, 52; xxxiv. 1-4; Ps. cvi. 32.

d De. i. 38; xxxi. 3, 7.

e De. iv. 46; xxxiv. 6 "Here it was, apparently, that the transactions recorded in Nu. xxviii.-xxxiv. took place; and somewhere in it (xxxiv. 6) he was buried" — *Spk. Com.*

he exhorts to obedience

f Ps. xix. 7-9; cxix.

g De. xii. 32; Re. xxii. 18.

h Jos. xxii. 17; Ps. cvi. 28; Ho. ix. 10; Nu. xxxi. 15, 16.

There is no book on which we can rest in a dying moment but the Bible. — *Selden.*

the nation honored by its laws

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a 2 Sa. vii. 23.

Gladstone recently said that this world is distinctively a man-making machine. What some suppose to be the finished product—fortune, fame, success—are only the straw and chaff and refuse. Many a poor fellow has preferred the straw-stack, with its huge bulk, that is fit only to rot, to the real kernel that has in it the germ of another life.

the laws to be taught to youth

b Pr. iv. 23; Ma. xv. 19, 20; 1 Ti. iv. 16.

c Ex. xix., xx.

d Ex. xix. 18; He. xii. 19.

e De. v. 22, 23.

“Our Christianity amounts to nothing if it is not a personal experience. We cannot preach Christ until we have seen Him.”

“A pious education is the best way of providing for a family and the surest foundation for its prosperity.”

idolatry forbidden

f “The corrupt worship of Oriental nations may probably be traced back, in its ultimate analysis, to two roots or principles: the deification of ancestors or natural leaders; and veneration of powers of nature.”—*Spk. Com.*

g “They worshipped among beasts, ox, heifer, sheep, dog, cat, ape: among birds, ibis, hawk, and crane: among reptiles, crocodile, frog and beetle: and all fish of Nile.”—*Jamieson.*

nity. (7) **nigh . . them**, this had been impressed by the whole history of their wandering.^a

The Bible the wisdom of a nation.—Consider—I. That the Bible brings greatness to a nation; because—1. When received and obeyed, it brings God's blessing with it; 2. It elevates the national character. II. That it is the duty of all to have a personal acquaintance with the Scriptures, and to instruct the young in them.—*Hayman.*

Parliamentary enactments.—At the request of the Romish clergy, severe proclamations were issued by King Henry VIII. against all who read, or kept by them, Tyndale's translation of the New Testament; so that a copy of this book found in the possession of any person was sufficient to convict him of heresy, and subject him to the flames. “But the fervent zeal of those Christian days,” says the good old martyrologist, Fox, “seemed much superior to these our days and times, as manifestly may appear by their sitting up all night in reading or hearing; also by their expenses and charges in buying of books in English, of whom some gave a load of hay for a few chapters of St. James, or of St. Paul, in English.” In 1543, an Act of Parliament was obtained by the adversaries of translations, condemning Tyndale's Bible, and the prefaces and notes of all other editions.

9—13. (9) **keep . . soul**,^b cherish right thoughts and holy feelings. **teach . . sons**, a command Israel failed to obey. (10) **day . . Horeb**,^c a day of solemn interest and momentous instruction. (11) **midst**^d . . **heaven**, high ascending flames. (12) **similitude**, no form or figure seen, but voice heard by the people.^e (13) **covenant**, see Gen. vi. 18.

The duty of educating the young in the Scriptures.—These words contain—I. A warning against neglecting or forgetting the statutes of the Lord. The greatest blessing of Israel was the gift of the law of God. And so long as the people accepted His law, just so long did He watch over them for good. II. The means by which we are to prevent such neglect or forgetfulness of God's word: “teach them thy sons,” etc.—*Seymour.*

“*Lest thou forget.*”—He whose memory is rich has a song for every day; he who recollects the past in all its deliverances, in all its sudden brightnesses, in all its revelations and appearances, cannot be terrified or chased by the spirit of fear: he lives a quiet life, deep as the peace of God. Can Moses suggest any way of keeping the memory of God's providences quick and fresh? He lays down the true way of accomplishing this purpose—“Teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons”—in other words, speak about them, dwell upon them, magnify them, be grateful for them; put down the day, the date, the punctual time, when the great deliverances occurred, and when the splendid revelations were granted; and go over the history line by line and page by page, and thus keep the recollection verdant, quick as life, bright as light. What a reproach to those Christians who are dumb! How much they lose who never speak about God!—*People's Bib.*

14—19. (16) **lest . . corrupt**, by degrading the idea of God, whom now they knew as One and Spiritual. Wrong thoughts of God lead to wrong life.^f **male or female**, idols were of both sexes; e. g. in Egypt, *Osiris* and *Isis*; in *Canaan*, *Baal* and *Astarte*. (17) **likeness**, illustrated in religion of Egypt.^g (19) **host . . heaven**, sun and moon worship may be higher, but nevertheless idolatry; fire worship of Persians, nearest to being pure; no symbol or representation should take place of God.

The argument against idolatry (vs. 15).—I. There was not the slightest warrant for it in the mode of giving the law. There was nothing seen after the likeness of which an idol could be made. Yet there was no better opportunity of revealing Himself in some visible form to the people with the whole of whom God was at that time in direct communication. II. The consequences of idolatry would include not only dishonor to God, but personal injury, vs. 16. Man cannot rise higher than the object of his supreme adoration. The character of idolatrous nations bears witness to this. See Paul's Ep. to the Romans.

Story of William Malden.—When King Henry VIII. had allowed the Bible to be set forth to be read in the churches, several poor men in the town of Chelmsford, in Essex, where the father of William Malden lived, and where he was born, bought the New Testament, and on Sundays sat reading it in the lower end of the church. Many flocked about them to hear them read;

and he, among the rest, being about fifteen years old, came every Sunday to hear the glad and sweet tidings of the Gospel. But his father, observing it once, angrily fetched him away, and would have him say the Latin matins with him, which much grieved him. And as he returned, at other times, to hear the Scriptures read, his father would still fetch him away. This put him upon the thought of learning to read, that he might search the New Testament himself; which, when he had by diligence effected, he, and his father's apprentice, bought a New Testament, joining their little stocks together: and to conceal it, laid it under the bed-straw, and read it at convenient times. One night, as William Malden sat with his mother, they conversed respecting the act of bowing down to the crucifix. This he told her was plain idolatry, and against the commandment of God, which is, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor bow down to them, nor serve them." The mother, enraged to hear him speak thus, went and informed his father, who, inflamed with anger at hearing that his son denied that worship was due to the cross, immediately went to his son's room, and, pulling him out of bed by his hair, beat him most unmercifully. The lad bore all with patience, considering that it was for Christ's sake, as he said, when he related the anecdote in Queen Elizabeth's reign.

20—24. (20) **iron furnace**,^a one used for smelting iron, round, 30 ft. deep, requiring highest intensity of heat. **inheritance**, who generation after generation might inherit His favor.^b (21) **giveth . . inheritance**, permanent dwelling-place. (24) **consuming fire**, swift and overwhelming in His punishment of sin and rebellion. **jealous**, ever ready to vindicate His Divine honor; not our sense of the word, cherishing suspicion, or apprehensive of rivalry.

Warnings against idolatry. — I. Idolatry shows base ingratitude to God. God had done wonderful things for Israel. They had resolved not to forget Him, yet how ungrateful and prone to go astray! II. Idolatry violates God's commands. "Which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee." God's law demands our love, dethrones our lusts, and requires constant and unswerving obedience. To forget is to ignore God, and to live as if He did not exist. III. Idolatry rouses God's anger. "The Lord thy God is a consuming fire," etc. Anger is not the natural feeling of God towards man. "God is love." What then causes the wrath of God? It is God's righteous opposition to sin." — *Preacher's Com.*

Serving God with diligence. — We must not do the work of the Lord negligently. He must have, as it were, our only service. We must not serve Him as if we served Him not. Though the best servant of this Lord be but an unprofitable, yet the least must not be an idle, servant. We must not offer to this Lord "that which costs nothing." Our only Lord must have our best, our hearts, our all. This great Lord hath much more business than all the time and strength of His servants can bring about. Our Lord requires the service of thoughts, of words, of works, of body and spirit. A vast deal of diligence is requisite about the honoring of God, the attending of our own heart and ways, the helping and edifying of others. — *Jenkin.*

25—28. (25) **remained . . land**, *lit.* "shall have slumbered;" dangerous condition. (26) **heaven . . earth**, most solemn asseveration and appeal God sometimes answered by cloud or voice. **soon . . perish**, be removed as in Babylonian captivity,^c have no place or standing as a nation. **utterly . . destroyed**, as Jewish nation finally was. (28) **shall serve**, be slaves perhaps in heathen temples.

The conditions of secure possession. — We have in this passage — I. The possession described, *vs.* 25, where we have a picture — 1. Of family peace and increase, 2. Of long occupancy. Note the feeling of security likely to grow up out of this state of things. II. The possible degeneracy indicated, *vs.* 25, and which included — 1. Social decline in morals; 2. Public departure from God in worship; 3. Individual wickedness. III. The inevitable punishment that would follow this decline in morals and religion, *vs.* 26-28. 1. It was assured by a solemn declaration; 2. It was defined as the breaking-up of national life; 3. It was described as personal slavery to other peoples and their gods; 4. It actually came to pass.

Origin of evil. — "I overheard a discourse," says one, "something like altercation, between a deacon, his son, and servants. Some one had informed

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"The great thing is to keep a clean heart towards God, never to invite the Most High into a complete and furnished heart, the very elegance of which involves a subtle compliment to the heart itself, but to ask God to come into a broken heart. — *People's Com.*

God is a jealous God

^a Ex. i. 11-14; ^b v. 7-9, 18, 19; 1 K. viii. 51.

^b 1 Pe. ii. 9.

"Happy are they which, hearing the Word of God, retain it in their living; for they, being renewed with the glad tidings of life, are purified by the Spirit of Christ, sanctified, and so made the temples of the Holy Ghost. — *Bishop Bale.*

the results of disobedience foretold

^c 1 K. viii. 10; Jo. xii. 28.

^d De. xxx. 18, 19; 2 K. xvii. 17-19.

"Allow the mind a false conception of God, and what follows? Necessarily a false conception of all life, all duty, all sacrifice. Given a profound and true conception of God, and what follows? Elevation of the

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whole character, an ennobling of the whole circuit and range of the mind, out of which will come the testimony of good temper, beautiful feeling, responsive sympathy, eternal charity."—*People's Bib.*

promise of mercy on repentance

a Is. xi. 10, 11.

b Je. xxix. 13, 14; Ho. x. 2; Is. xxix. 13.

c "Derived from Lat. *tribulum*, the threshing instrument or roller, whereby the Rom. husbandmen separated the corn fr. husks."—*Trench, Study of Wds.*

"Trumpeters love to sound when there is an echo; and God loves to bestow His mercies where He may hear of them again."—*Spurgeon*.

Jehovah the only true God

d Ex. xix. 9, 10; Ne. ix. 13.

e 1 S. ii 2; Is. xlv. 5, 18, 22.

A poor Arabian of the desert was one day asked how he came to be assured that there was a God. "In the same way," he replied, "that I am able to tell by the print impressed on the sand whether it was a man or beast that passed that way."

The saint lives not by seeing, but by believing.

him that the cattle had broken into the corn-field, and were making great ravages. His servants were ordered to make haste, and to turn them out, and repair the breach. "How came they in there?" says one; "Which way did they get in?" cries another; "It is impossible, the fences are good," says a third. "Don't stand here talking to no purpose," cries the deacon, with increased earnestness, "they are in the field destroying the corn. I see them with my own eyes. Out with them speedily and put up the fence." As I approached him he began to be more calm. "Your pardon, sir, these fellows have quite vexed me. They make one think of our pastor's sermon on the origin of sin, spending his time needlessly inquiring how it came into the world, while he ought to be exhorting us to drive it out." "Your observation is just," said I, "and your directions to your servants contain sound orthodox doctrine—a good practical improvement to the discourse we have heard to-day."

29-34. (29) seek . . find, rich promise showing great mercy of God; in countries, wherever scattered,^a with heart . . soul,^b whole being and in earnest. (30) obedient . . voice, fuller statement pointing to positive active character. tribulation,^c suffering. (32) ask now, eloquent appeal. (34) hath God, rising tide of most fervid address.

Mercy promised to repentant Israel.—I. State in which that mercy would be needed. 1. In a far country; 2. When in tribulation and captivity. II. Condition on which that mercy should be granted, *vs.* 29. 1. Earnestly seeking the Lord; 2. Having faith in the unchanging goodness and power of God. III. Form which that mercy so sought, would take, *vs.* 31.

The influence of pardon.—A private was court-martialed for sleeping at his post. He was convicted and sentenced to death, and the day fixed for his execution. But the case reaching the ears of the President, he resolved to save him: he signed a pardon and sent it to the camp. The day came. "Suppose," thought the President, "my pardon has not reached him." The telegraph was called into requisition; but no answer came. Then, ordering his carriage, he rode ten miles, and saw that the soldier was saved. When the Third Vermont charged upon the rifle-pits, the enemy poured a volley upon them. The first man who fell, with six bullets in his body, was William Scott of Company K. His comrades caught him up; and as his life-blood ebbed away, he raised to heaven amid the din of war, the cries of the dying, and the shouts of the enemy, a prayer for the President.—*Moore*.

35-40. (35) thee . . showed, special favor to Israelites. mightest . . know, the true God and live unto Him in the higher functions of existence. (36) Out . . heaven,^d from heaven that they might arise to heaven in the spirit of their souls. (37) loved . . fathers, therefore he loved the children; language suggestive of unity of interest. (39) know . . consider, have no false notions concerning God. none . . else,^e no rival.

Jehovah is God alone.—Observe—I. How this truth was revealed in ancient times to the Jews. 1. By the successive overthrow of the gods of the greatest heathen nation in the world. Plagues of Egypt in relation to idolatry; 2. By the utter discomfiture of their worshipers; 3. By the miraculous incidents of their wilderness life. II. The conduct in relation to Jehovah that should grow out of the belief of this truth. 1. Gratitude; 2. Trust; 3. Obedience.

Nature's testimony to the existence of God.—Basil called the world a school wherein reasonable souls are taught the knowledge of God. In a musical instrument, when we observe divers strings meet in a harmony, we conclude that some skillful musician tuned them. When we see thousands of men in a field, marshaled under several colors, all yielding exact obedience, we infer that there is a general, whose commands they are all subject to. In a watch, when we take notice of great and small wheels, all so fitted as to concur to an orderly motion, we acknowledge the skill of an artificer. When we come into a printing house, and see a great number of different letters so ordered as to make a book, the consideration hereof maketh it evident that there is a composer, by whose art they were brought into such a frame. When we behold a fair building, we conclude it had an architect: a stately ship, well rigged, and safely conducted to the port, that it hath a pilot. So here. The visible world is such an instrument, army, watch, book, building, ship, as undeniably argueth a God, who was, and is, the tuner, general, and artificer, the composer, architect, and pilot of it.—*Arrowsmith*.

"Life is not like idle ore ;
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom,
To shape and use." — *Tennyson*.

41-43. (41) Then, this may be time link between the first and second orations. this side.^a R. V., "beyond Jordan," toward sun rising before crossing Jordan; three cities each side river. (43) Bezer, site unknown.^b wilderness, smooth downs of Moab, as comp. with high lands of Bashan. Ramoth, or R. Mizpeh.^c Golan, or Gaulon, exact site uncertain.^d

The avenger of blood. — This most ancient plan of punishment, in case of murder, was the one in use among the Jews before the time of Moses; for the avenger of blood is spoken of, in the law which he gave, as a character well known. Under the direction of God, he did not do away with the old custom altogether; for although in its whole nature it was an evil, the feelings of the people were, nevertheless, so thoroughly wedded to its usage, that, without a miraculous control upon their minds, it was not to be expected they would consent to relinquish entirely the right of private vengeance which it allowed. Some indulgence, therefore, was granted in this case, it seems, like that which was permitted in the case of divorce, "on account of the hardness of their hearts" (Matt. xix. 8). At the same time a beautiful and wise arrangement was made, to correct the most serious disadvantages with which it had been before accompanied, which, in fact, while it left some form of the ancient custom, gave it a new nature altogether. Cities of refuge were appointed, three on each side of Jordan, with straight and good roads leading to them from every direction, to any of which the murderer might fly; and if he got into it before the avenger overtook him, he was safe from his rage until he had a fair trial. If it was found that he was indeed guilty of wilful murder, he was delivered up to the avenger to be destroyed, and not even the altar was allowed to protect him; but if it was found that the murder had not been intentional he was allowed to remain in the city of refuge, where none might come to do him evil; and on the death of the high priest he might return in security to his own home. — *Cox*.

44-49. (44) this . . law, vs. 44-49, an introduction or preface to next oration; law, the recapitulation of history setting forth the substance and circumstances of Divine commandment. (46) on this side Jordan, R. V., "beyond Jordan." Beth-peor, ch. iii. 29; iv. 3; Num. xxv. 1-9. Sihon, see Num. xxi. 24.^e (48) Arnon . . Hermon, ch. iii. 9. Sion is not Zion, the mount of Jerus. (49) all the plain, etc., R. V., "all the Arabah beyond Jordan eastward, even unto the Sea of the Arabah, under the slopes of Pisgah." springs of Pisgah, roots or foot of mountains E. of Jordan, iii. 17.

The springs of Pisgah. — Pisgah was the ridge, of which Nebo was probably the highest point, whence the most magnificent views of the promised land were to be obtained. The springs, or pourings forth of Pisgah, fertilizing the land, may suggest a discourse on the joys and various advantages that flow from heavenly prospects. How much the present life is benefited and beautified by thoughts and purposes that flow from views of the heavenly life. Every true Pisgah in our life, i. e. every point of exalted meditation, should be a fountain-head of holy thought and action.

The invisible joys of the Christian. — St. Augustine relates of a certain Gentile, who showed him his idol gods, saying, "Here is my god; where is thine?" then pointing up at the sun, he said, "Lo, here is my god; where is thine?" So, showing him divers creatures, still upbraided him with, "Here are my gods, where are thine?" But St. Augustine answered him, "I showed him not my God, not because I had not one to show him, but because he had not eyes to see Him." Thus the joys of a Christian, though they cannot be seen with bodily eyes, though the wicked cannot so much as discern them, yet is there nothing so delightful, so comfortable as they are: witness that peace of conscience, that joy in the Holy Ghost, which is so unspeakable, such as eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive them as they are. — *Spencer*.

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"Suppose, Christian, the furnace to be seven times hotter, it is but to make you seven times better; fiery trials make golden Christians." — *Dyer*.

names and situation of cities of refuge

^a Nu. xxxv. 14; Josh. xx. 7, 8; xxi. 36.

^b "By some identified with *Bostra*: or (1 Macc. v. 36) *Bozor*." — *Spk. Com.*

^c Josh. xiii. 26.

^d "It subseq. gave name *Gaulonitis* to a district of some extent E. of Sea of Galilee, and N. of the Hieromax." — *Spk. Com.*

"Revenge is an act of passion; vengeance of justice; injuries are revenged, crimes are avenged." — *Johnson*.

summary of the law

^e Ps. cxxxvi. 19, 22.

"There is more joy in the penitential mournings of a believer than in all the mirth of a wicked man. I appeal to you that have had melted hearts, whether you have not found a secret content and sweetness in your mourning? So far from wishing to be rid of your meltings, you rather fear the removal of them." — *Crisp*.

"Little joys refresh us constantly, like house-bread, and never bring disgust; and great ones, like sugar-bread, briefly, and then bring it." — *Richter*.

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CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

the covenant
in Horeb

a Ex. xxxiii. 11; De.
xxxiv. 10.

"Oh! for our own
sakes, for our
country's sake,
for our children's
sakes, let us con-
tend earnestly for
the maintenance
of the worship of
God in simplicity
and in truth!"

It is a saying of
Anselm, "If hell
were on one side
and sin on the
other, I would
rather leap into
hell than willingly
sin against my
God."

the ten com-
mandments
repeated

the first

b 1 Co. viii. 5.

the second

c Is. xl. 18-25;
xli. 5-7.

d Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7;
Je. xxxii. 18; Da.
ix. 4.

"Perhaps it is not
to be wondered at
that in the Roman
Catholic cate-
chisms the second
commandment is
left out."—*Pulpit
Com.*

"Faith is the
soul's outward, not
inward, look. The
object on which
faith fixes its eyes
is, not the heart's
ever varying
frames, but the
never-varying
Christ.—*Baillie.*

the third

"Reverence and
righteousness

1—5. (1) called . . Israel, now a younger Israel, a new generation, need-
ing to be impressed. statutes . . ordinances, institutions, requirements
with their historical setting. (3) not . . fathers, not only with our fathers,
but with and for us to observe. (4) face to face,^a coming very near, so that
presence should be realized. (5) stood between, because you were afraid;
in Ex. xix., because Jehovah had forbidden, perhaps mercifully.

Moses the interpreter of the word of the Lord (vs. 5.)—I. It was at a special
time that the people needed an interpreter. II The people were not in a
condition to calmly listen and understand for themselves. III. There may
yet be special times and states when the human interpreter may be needed
(to aid the memory and faith in sickness, for example). IV. But no counte-
nance can be found in this text for the arrogant assumptions of the Papal
priesthood, as the sole authorized expounders of the Word of God.

Usefulness of God's commandments.— "Reconciliation to God is like entering
the gate of a beautiful avenue, which conducts to a splendid mansion. But
that avenue is long, and in some places it skirts the edge of dangerous cliffs,
and, therefore, to save the traveler from falling over where he would be
dashed to pieces, it is fenced all the way by a quick-set hedge. That hedge is the
commandments. They are planted there that we may do ourselves no harm.
But, like a fence of the fragrant briar, they regale the pilgrim who keeps the
path, and they only hurt him when he tries to break through. Temperance,
justice, truthfulness; purity of speech and behavior; obedience to parents;
mutual affection; sanctification of the Sabbath; the reverent worship of God;
all these are righteous requirements, and in keeping them there is a great
reward. Happy he who only knows the precept in the perfume which it
sheds, and who, never having kicked against the pricks, has never proved the
sharpness of its thorns."—*Hamilton.*

6, 7. (6) brought . . bondage, the greatest event in their history, like
emancipation of blacks in United States. (7) before me, in My presence;
other gods would come before Jehovah, and hide Him from their view.^b

Acknowledging God.— When the Spanish Armada was overthrown by the
storm, England caused a medal to be struck, with the inscription, "*Afflavit
Deus, et dissipantur*:" "God blew on them, and they were scattered." On
all her coin is stamped, "*Dei Gratia.*" The United States has, since the war
of the Rebellion, put on her coin the legend, "In God we trust."

8—10. (8) graven image, Ex. xx. 4, Lev. xxvi. 1. Molten images appear to
have been finished by graving. likeness,^c imitation of natural objects, if made
symbols, would soon be worshiped for their own sakes. (9) bow down, in
homage. serve, render obedience. visiting,^d not charging the iniquity, but
letting its consequence flow beyond person, or nation, committing it, as in
case of drunkard.

The second commandment, and its influence upon the Jews.—Some go so
far as to say that it forbade the Jew to make any carved work at all. Cer-
tainly, judging by national results, it would almost seem as if Israel had so
understood it. The Jews are a people famous for many things, for intellectual
and administrative ability, and for a marvelous power of sustaining them-
selves in the midst of the most difficult circumstances. But whilst there have
been Jewish warriors and poets, statesmen and financiers, musicians and
singers of world-wide reputation, where are their artists and architects? The
very temple of Solomon was a Phœnician structure. You may count easily
a half-dozen distinguished musical Jewish composers—Mozart, Beethoven,
Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, and Rossini—but where is the distinguished Jew-
ish sculptor or painter? Still, whilst all this is very suggestive as to the for-
mative influence of the commandment, it seems most reasonable to decide
that the sentence, "Thou shalt not make," is qualified by the sentence,
"Thou shalt not bow down nor worship." The Jews were really only forbid-
den to make carved images as symbols of Deity, as objects of adoration.—*W.
Senior.*

11. in vain, either any profane or idle utterance of name of God; or
swearing falsely by name of God. Those who tell untruths are very ready to

swear about them. Jews supposed they kept this com. by changing pronunc. of God's name.

The profane use of the name of God. — I. Consider what the profane use of this name suggests. 1. An irreverent heart; no deep regard for the honor of God; 2. A lying heart; a heart conscious of its own habitual rectitude would not invoke the name of the Most High in confirmation of its utterances. II. Consider why this use of the Holy Name was forbidden. 1. To induce a profound respect for the name and nature of God; 2. To secure the habit of simple and truthful speech.

Profanity subjects the soul to Satan. — In ancient feudal times, when a man paid a small "peppercorn rent" to the landlord, it was in token of submission. It was no onerous burden. But when the "landholder" fell to fighting with some neighboring chief or baron, or when he was summoned by the king to join the royal army into France, the "peppercorn submission" brought its corresponding penalty and danger. The payee was bound to follow in the baron's train, to make any sacrifices required by the landholder, and encounter any dangers, even death, in his service. Such are "profane expressions." They are tokens of submission to Satan, and the prince of darkness does not scruple to make the utterers testify their allegiance whenever it suits him. Oaths are light things. Blasphemies are rents too readily paid to the "prince of this world;" but they bring in their train heavy responsibilities from which there is no escape, except by sincere repentance. — *Bib. III.*

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these from the first were the twin pillars upon which the law rested."

"The name of God stands for Himself and for that which He has revealed of Himself, not for our thoughts about Him. It is not surprising that this great name was invested with a superstitious sanctity. Even the Jews used it rarely. There is a tradition that it was heard but once a year, when it was uttered by the high priest on the great day of atonement." — *Dale.*

12-15. (12) sabbath, here assumed to be an existing institution.^a sanctify it, this chiefly done by abstaining fr. ordinary work. (14) may rest, one social blessing of Sab. is that it puts all classes on equality of privilege (15) servant, this not a ground for institution of Sabbath, but persuasive reason for keeping it.

the fourth

The Sabbath adapted to the necessities of man. — Notice:— I. The manner in which the Sabbath conduces to the healthy, and consequently most advantageous, exercise of our bodily and mental faculties. II. The opportunity it affords for family meeting and instruction. III. The necessary opportunity it gives to the seriously inclined of directing their attention to the most important of all concerns; and the reminder it is to the irreligious of a sense of their duty towards God. IV. Its important connection with the due observance of public worship. — *Kingdon.*

a Ex. xx. 11.

Man needs the rest of the Sabbath in addition to the rest of night. — "In the same line of witness is the testimony of medical and scientific experts that the rest of the night does not restore the powers of mind and body to the same vitality they had twenty-four hours before, and that the natural forces run steadily lower and lower from Monday morning until Saturday night, until these powers can be lifted back to their normal vitality and place only by the relaxation and rest of the seventh day. It is a curious scientific fact that Proudhon, the great socialistic philosopher of France, attempted to work out mathematically the relative ratio of work to rest, which should secure the greatest efficiency and the largest product. Biased by no religious claim, but rather avowedly hostile to such influence, he found that six days of work and one day of rest was the only right proportion, and when France put the tenth day in the place of the seventh, she found that the working-man took two holidays instead of one, and thereby entailed a loss upon the industrial production of the empire." — *Selected.* *Sabbath kept under difficulties.* — The *Mayflower*, a name now immortal, had crossed the ocean. The spot which was to furnish a home and a burial place was now to be selected. Amidst ice and snow the shallop was sent out, with some half-a-dozen pilgrims, to find a suitable place where to land. Five days they wandered about, searching in vain for a suitable landing-place. A storm came on, the snow and the rain fell, the sea swelled, the rudder broke, the mast and the sail fell overboard. In this storm and cold, without a tent, a house, or the shelter of a rock, the Christian Sabbath approached. What should be done? As the evening before the Sabbath drew on, they pushed over the surf, entered a fair sound, sheltered themselves under the lee of a rise of land, kindled a fire, and on that little island they spent the day in the solemn worship of their Maker. On the next day their feet touched the rock, now sacred as the place of the landing of the pilgrims. Nothing more strikingly marks the character of this people than this act. Theirs was the religion of principle, and this religion made them what they were." — *A. Barnes.*

"O what a blessing is Sunday, interposed between the waves of worldly business like the Divine path of the Israelites through Jordan. There is nothing in which I would advise you to be more strictly conscientious than in keeping the Sabbath-day holy. I can truly declare that to me the Sabbath has been invaluable." — *Wilberforce.*

"The streams of religion run deeper or shallower," says Calcott, "as the banks of the Sabbath are kept up or neglected." A preacher in Holland called the Sabbath "God's dyke, shutting out an ocean of evils."

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the fifth

a Ex. xx. 12.

b Pr. i. 8, 9; Ep. vi. 1-3.

"It was the saving salt of the ancient civilizations that the parents in a household were surrounded with an atmosphere of reverence, which made transgressions against them as rare as they were considered horrible."—*Harper.*

the sixth

c Ge. ix. 5, 6; 1 Jo. fil. 10-12, 15.

d Ma. v. 21-26; Re. xxi, 8.

"Killing is not mere blood-shedding. Anger without cause is murder. Oppression of the weak is murder. Depriving a man of the means of getting a livelihood, to gratify revenge, is murder."—*Parker.*

the seventh

e Ma. v. 27, 28; Jo. viii. 1-11; Ja. ii. 11; Heb. xiii. 4.

f Ga. v. 19; Co. iii. 5.

"A pure mind in a chaste body is the mother of wisdom, and deliberation, sober counsels and ingenious actions, open deportment and sweet carriage, sincere principles and unprejudicate understanding, love of God and self-denial, peace and confidence, holy prayers and spiritual comfort."—*Jer. Taylor.*

16. Honor, give honor to, including spirit of reverence and acts of obedience. go well, not found in Ex.,^a this is amplification of the promise, not addition to it. Continued life only one element of general well-being. Family virtue is the foundation of all virtue.^b Danger of its leading to worship of ancestors; we kept fr. this by regarding all parents as imperfect images of the one Father God.

Dr. Johnson and his father.—The great Dr. Johnson was a very learned man. He lived in Uttoxeter. His father was a bookseller, not in a very grand way, because he used to sell his books in the market-place. One day he asked his son Samuel to come down and help him in the sale of his books in the market-place. Little Samuel was rather a dandy, a conceited fellow; and he thought it beneath his dignity to sell books in the market-place. "He demean himself to stand in the market-place to sell books, indeed, for his father! He was too great a gentleman for that!" Fifty years passed away, and Dr. Johnson had become now an old man. It haunted him; he could not forget, though more than fifty years had passed, what he had done to his father in refusing to sell books in the market-place. He was very sad and unhappy about it. So, one day, the doctor took off his hat, and went and stood in the same market-place, on the very spot where he said he would not stand to sell books for his father. And all the boys laughed at him; but there he stood with his bald head, not feeling the rain, or caring for the boys' laughter, that he might do a sort of act of penance, to ease his conscience! He did not "honor his father" when a boy, and he remembered it fifty years after, and it was a pain to him. — *Vaughan.*

17. kill, including deliberate murder, and slaying unawares; also suicide. This law distinctly given to Noah.^c Christ showed its comprehensive bearing even on feelings of hate.^d

Murder forbidden.—Observe, this commandment is—I. Universal in application: to each person is said, "Thou shalt not kill." There is no exception to this rule. II. Emphatic in its wording: "shalt not." Note the brevity of the whole commandment; by which additional force is given to it. III. Concerning the greatest of crimes. The awful nature of murder is sufficiently shown by—1. The abhorrence in which it is held both by God and man; 2. The terrible reproaches of conscience with which the murderer is tormented. — *Clarke.*

Horror of murder.—

O horror! horror! horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!

Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building. — *Shakespeare.*

18. adultery,^e term designedly comprehensive; worst form of sensuality includes and represents all lesser forms. This form creates great family and social disturbance. Apostles gather many forms of sin under this head of sensuality.^f Sin sadly prevalent in Oriental countries, where heat and idleness seem to nourish bodily passions.

Restraints of the law of God.—No doubt the law restrains us; but all chains are not fetters, nor are all walls the gloomy precincts of a jail. It is a blessed chain by which the ship, now buried in the trough, and now rising on the top of the sea, rides at anchor, and outlives the storm. The condemned would give worlds to break his chain, but the sailor trembles lest his should snap; and when the gray morning breaks on the wild lee-shore, all strewn with wrecks and corpses, he blesses God for the good iron that stood the strain. The pale captive eyes his high prison wall to curse the man that built it, and envies the little bird that, perched upon its summit, sings merrily, and flies away on wings of freedom; but were you traveling some Alpine pass, where the narrow road, cut out of the face of the rock, hung over a frightful gorge, it is with other eyes you would look on the wall that restrains your restive steed from backing into the gulf below. Such are the restraints God's law imposes—no other. It is a fence from evil—nothing else. I challenge the world to put its finger on any one of these Ten Commandments, which is not meant and calculated to keep us from harming ourselves or hurting others. — *Guthrie.*

19. steal,^a this command the basis on which alone property can be accumulated, and society arranged and preserved. Respect for that wh. belongs to another lies at the root of government. Law includes all we possess, reputation, time, talents, virtue, character, etc.; every man has right to claim fr. government the protection of all he *is*, and all he *has*.

Praying better than stealing. — Some poor families lived near a large wood-wharf. In one of the cabins was a man who, when he was sober, took pretty good care of his family; but the public-house would get his earnings, and then they suffered. In consequence of a drunken frolic he fell sick. The cold crept into his cabin, and but one stick was left in his cellar. One night he called his eldest boy, John, to the bedside, and whispered something in his ear. "Can't do it, father," said John aloud. "Can't — why not?" asked his father, angrily. "Because I learned at Sabbath-school 'Thou shalt not steal,'" answered John. "And did you not learn 'Mind your parents,' too?" "Yes, father," answered the boy. "Well, then, mind and do what I tell you." The boy did not know how to argue with his father, for his father wanted him to go in the night and steal some sticks from the wood-wharf; so John said to his father: "I can pray to night for some wood; it's better than stealing, I know." And when he crept up into the loft, where his straw bed was, he did go to God in prayer. He prayed the Lord's Prayer, only he put something in about the wood, for he knew God could give wood as well as "daily bread." The next noon, when he came home from school, what do you think he caught sight of, the first thing after turning the corner? A load of wood before the door, *his* door. Yes, there it was. His mother told him the overseers of the poor sent it; but he did not know who *they* were. He believed it was God; and so it was. — *Bib. Ill.*

20. false witness,^b including sins of slandering, backbiting, and gossiping; also our readiness to put evil construction on conduct of others. Enjoins truthfulness and simplicity in all our communications one with another.

Gossiping. — Women are often accused of gossiping, but we are not aware that it has ever been the subject of legal penalties, except at St. Helena, where, among the ordinances promulgated in 1789, we find the following: "Whereas, several idle, gossiping women make it their business to go from house to house, about this island, inventing and spreading false and scandalous reports of the good people thereof, and thereby sow discord and debate among neighbors, and often between men and their wives, to the great grief and trouble of all good and quiet people, and to the utter extinguishing of all friendship, amity, and good neighborhood; for the punishment and suppression whereof, and to the intent that all strife may be ended, charity revived, and friendship continued, we do order, that if any women, from henceforth, shall be convicted of tale-bearing, mischief-making, scolding, or any other notorious vices, they shall be punished by ducking or whipping, or such other punishment as their crimes or transgressions shall deserve, or the governor and council shall think fit." — *Percy Anec.*

21. desire, this command, differs fr. others in evidently concerning feelings of heart,^c rather than actions of body. It is the most manifestly spiritual of all the ten. Form here differs fr. that in Ex. xx. 17, order of words house and wife is reversed; two differing words, desire, covet, are used in this *vs.*, not in Ex. and word field is added here, prob. with partition of Canaan among the tribes in Mos.'s thoughts.

Covetousness. — I. What is here forbidden? Looking upon, with desire to possess, things that are not exposed for public sale. II. Why is this forbidden? 1. Because, out of the covetous heart may proceed the wicked device to obtain what is coveted; 2. Because covetousness is opposed to contentedness.

Covetousness never satisfied. — A ship may be overladen with silver, even unto sinking, and yet compass and bulk enough to hold ten times more. So a covetous man, though he have enough to sink him, yet never hath he enough to satisfy him; like that miserable caitiff mentioned by Theocritus, first wishing that he had a thousand sheep in his flock, and then when he has them, he would have cattle without number. A man may as easily fill a chest with grace, as the heart with gold. — *Spencer.*

22-27. (22) added no more, with the same voice, or in same mode as the ten laws. These great commands, stand alone, given in special manner by God,

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the eighth
a 1 Thess. iv. 6;
Jo. xii. 4-6.

"A man may rob God as well as his neighbor. He who wastes his employer's time is a thief. He who withholds just praise is a thief (social, literary). He who detracts from the just honor of his fellow man is a thief. He who vows and does not pay is a thief." — *Parker.*
"Do not be over fond of anything, or consider that for your interest which makes you break your word, quit your modesty, or inclines you to any practice which will not bear the light, or look the wrong in the face." — *Antoninus.*

the ninth

b Ex. xxiii. 1; Ps. l. 19, 20; 1 K. xxi. 12, 13; Ma. v. 32-37.

"There are a set of malicious, prating, prudent gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time; and will rob a young fellow of his good name before he has years to know the value of it." — *Sheridan.*

the tenth

c Cherishing wrong inward feeling is the true source of outward evil action.

"He that visits the sick in hopes of a legacy, let him he never so friendly in all other cases, I look upon him in this to be no better than a raven, that watches a weak sheep only to peck out its eyes." — *Seneca.*

Israel
desired a
mediator

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a De. ix. 9-12; Ex. xxiv. 12; xxxi. 18.

b He. xii. 19.

c Ex. xx. 18, 19.

"Before this oracle, like Dagon, all the false pretenders, Delphos, Hammon, fail. Long since despised, and silent, they afford honor and triumph to the Eternal Word — E. Waller.

God's desire for Israel

d De. xxxii. 29; Ma. xxiii. 37; Lu. xix. 42; Ps. lxxxii. 13-16; Is. xlviii. 18.

e Jos. i. 7; xxiii. 6; Pr. iv. 27.

"The central thing in religion is the character of God. Contrary to the prevailing feeling, which makes many say that they know nothing of God, but are sure of their duty to man, history teaches that, in the end, man's thought of God is the decisive thing." *Harper.*

purpose and scope of the commandments

f Ps. cxi. 10; Ec. xii. 13; Ps. xxv. 14.

g "These words form beginning of the Shema (Hear) in the Jewish services, and belong to the daily morning and evening office." — *Spk. Com.* h 2 K. xxiii. 25; Mk. xii. 28, 30.

and pillars of Jewish moral system. *tables, etc.*, given to Mos. at close of 40 days in Mount.^a (24) *talk . . liveth*, fear of people was unreasonable on their own showing. They should have entered fully into, and not shrunk back from, their privilege of converse with God.^b (27) Mos. already appointed by God as representative and mediator for Him: he was now fully recognized as representative and mediator for Israel.^c

The light of revelation. — A solitary traveler lands upon some unknown coast at morning twilight. Mists veil the landscape, and obscure the sky. Adjacent things assume unreal shapes, and distant ones are still more shrouded with vagueness and uncertainty. Upwards he walks along the beach, whose paths are washed by each returning tide, obliterating every step of man. He looks around in this uncertainty for something to direct him. With strained eyes he sees, or thinks he sees, the adjacent town; yet all may be but fancy or illusion. That which he takes to be the neighboring spire may only be some tall and upright tree; and that which seems the body of the church, may prove a mound or hillock. Yet, on he goes — believing, hoping, seeking — when, lo! the sun rises! mists disperse, uncertainty rolls westward her thick clouds of obscurity, and all the landscape brightens beneath his view, in the full blaze of day. Thus it is with the man who fondly seeks in nature's twilight to find out God, or understand Him to perfection. And so irradiating is the light of revelation when it dawns upon the soul. — *Ragg.*

28-33. (28) *all . . spoken*, in pledging themselves to obey what was enjoined on them. (29) *heart*, disposition, state of feeling, purpose of will. Their pledge might prove only impulse under terror, God desires it should express a settled steadfast principle. God ever seeks "patient continuance in well-doing." Obs. form of appeal.^d (30) *tents, etc.*, they had been called out into the open plain, under the mount for special audience with God. (32) *turn . . left*,^e fig. fr. by-roads on a journey, indic. failure by omission or commission.

God's commendation of Israel. — The proposal which the text commends was agreeable to God, because it bespoke — I. Just feelings of God's terrible majesty, and their own littleness. It was a beginning for Israel of right acquaintance with him. II. A new-formed conviction of the strictness, dignity and purity of the Divine law. III. Their sense of the necessity of a mediator, of some one to go between them and the dread majesty of heaven. — *Henderson.*

The ten commandments. — Said a lawyer of eminence, who was led to renounce his infidelity by the study of the Decalogue: "I have been looking into the nature of that law: I have been trying to see whether I can add anything to it, or take anything from it, so as to make it better. Sir, I cannot; it is perfect." And then, having shown this to be so, he concluded: "I have been thinking where did Moses get that law? I have read history. The Egyptians and the adjacent nations were idolators: so were the Greeks and Romans: and the wisest and best Greeks and Romans never gave a code of morals like this. Where did he get it? He could not have soared so far above his age as to have devised it himself. It came down from heaven. I am convinced of the truth of the religion of the Bible. — *Bib. Ill.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1-5. (1) *commandments*, sing. num.: = *thorah* of ch. iv. 44. (2) *fear, etc.*, a deeply relig. end designed by God's revelation in law. Mos. now exhibits the great truths and doctrines embodied and illus. in it. All true religion rests on reverent filial fear.^f (3) *increase*, population develop rapidly. (4) *hear, etc.*, this vs. forms the creed of Jews. In Heb. lang. is terse and forcible — "Jehovah our Elohim, Jeh. alone."^g It is the assertion that the Lord God of Israel is absolutely God. (5) Intended to include every faculty; *heart*, as seat of understanding and affections; *soul*, as centre of will and personality; *might*, representing outgoings and energies of the vital powers.^h

Eloheinu. — The words of vs. 4, are perhaps better rendered, "Jehovah, who is our God, is the one Being." This was one of the sentences written on the phylacteries of the Jews. I. The supremacy of the Lord. "The one Being," incomparable, unrivaled; the Alpha and Omega; the uncreated; the independent; from everlasting; all other life derived from and dependent upon

Him. II. His relationship: "our God." God is related to all His works as Creator; but the righteous can claim a higher relationship — Friend, Guide, Father. Jehovah is "our God." III. His command. By Moses, God said, "Hear, O Israel." God would have us think much on this twofold theme, viz., what He is, and what He is to us, in order to — 1. Check presumption; 2. Stimulate faith; 3. Increase devotedness; 4. Dissipate fears; 5. Impart comfort; 6. Fire love. — *Griffin*.

One God. — Mr. Arthur, in his *Mission to the Mysore*, relates an interview he had with "a fine old man," who, in conversation about religion, said, "Some time ago, one of our people went to your house; you took him into your room, and said a great deal of sense to him, and gave him a book. He brought it home. It was the first book that had ever been in our town, and we were all delighted. We assembled, and read it together. It was certainly a very wise book, but had one fault that much surprised us all." Of course I requested to know what the fault was. "Oh, I must not tell you; for you would be angry." A Hindu will trust to anything about an Englishman sooner than his temper. Having repeatedly assured the good man that he need not fear, he at length said, but not without a look askance to see if my countenance grew stormy, "The fault was this: it would not allow of any God but one! Now, what do you say to that?" He evidently regarded this, the first truth of all truths, as a grave blemish in a book otherwise distinguished by its wisdom.

6-12. (6) in thine heart, not only as cherished in memory, but also as the object of interest and affection.^a (7) teach, Heb. whet or sharpen; as tool is prepared for work, so should our children be for life.^b (8) bind, etc., intended by Moses figuratively, obeyed by people literally.^c frontlets,^d *tephelim* (see below). (9) posts, Jews wrote Deut. vi. 4-9; xi. 13-21, on square piece of parchment, rolled it up inside a cylinder of wood, and affixed it to right hand post of every door in the house.

The danger of prosperity (vss. 10-12). — Consider — I. The natural ingratitude of man. This will be found uniformly operating in relation to — 1. All his temporal concerns; 2. Even the concerns of his soul. II. The too general effect of prosperity upon him. It — 1. Inflates those with pride whom it should humble; 2. Lulls into security those whom it should quicken. — *Simeon*.

Signs and frontlets (vs. 8). — The Jews translated this command literally, and considered the wearing of *tephelim* or frontlets a permanent obligation. Four pieces of parchment inscribed, the first with Ex. xiii. 2-10, the second with Ex. xiii. 11-16, the third with De. vi. 1-8, and the fourth with De. xi. 18-21, were enclosed in a square case of tough skin, on the side of which was placed the Hebrew letter *shin*, and bound round the forehead with a ribbon. When designed for the arms, these four texts were written on one slip of parchment. The ancient Egyptians had their intels and doorposts and gates inscribed with sentences indicating a favorable omen. Moses turns this custom to account by requiring the words of the living God to be thus placed in constant sight. In the Jews' burying-place, at Glasgow, I noticed the outside walls and gates were lettered all over with passages from the Hebrew Bible.

13-15. (13) swear, this not inconsistent with our Lord's injunction,^e as this refers to legal swearing. (14) go after, to this they would be tempted by the license and sinful indulgence permitted in idol worship, which is attractive to fallen human nature. (15) jealous,^f in requiring purity and holiness, and in maintaining His sole claim to man's worship and love. anger, may be right feeling or wrong. Right if occasion for it is adequate, and he who feels it is righteous.^g

Moses' charge to Israel (vs. 13). — In this passage we remark — I. A solemn charge given. 1. Hear the word of the Lord; 2. Observe the word of the Lord — doctrine, precept, promise; 3. Obey the word of the Lord. II. Important benefits proposed. 1. Safety; 2. Prosperity; 3. Peaceful possession of Canaan. — *Zeta*.

Belief in a God. — Many men men believe in the existence of a God; but they do not love that belief. They know there is a God; but they greatly wish there were none. Some would be very pleased, yea, would set the bells a-ringing, if they believed there were no God. Why, if there were no God, then you might live just as you liked; if there were no God, then you might run riot, and have no fear of future consequences. It would be to you the

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Love is before reason and after reason. Live in reason, and life will be cold. Rise into the very passion of love, and the wilderness shall be a garden, and death but a messenger sent to bring the soul into some inner place in God's infinite sanctuary. — *Exp. Bib.*

"Keep love within thy heart, and keep thy heart in heaven."

a Ps. xxxvii. 31; xl. 8; cxix. 11, 98; Pr. iii. 3; 2 Co. iii. 3.

b Ge. xviii. 19; De. xl. 19; Ps. lxxviii. 4-6; Pr. i. 8, 9; Ep. vi. 4.

c In E. wearing of amulets was and is very common; some "consisting of words written on folds of papyrus, tightly rolled up, and sewn in linen, have been found in Thebes." — *Wilkinson*.

d Ex. xiii. 9, 16; Nu. xv. 37-40; Ma. xxiii. 2, 5.

"Thorough, straightforward, transparent, cheerful piety is the greatest power in the world."

God to be honored, feared, and served

e Ma. v. 34; comp. Is. lxxv. 16; Je. v. 2, 7; xii. 16.

f Ex. xx. 5; De. iv. 24.

g 2 Chr. xxxvi. 15, 16; Am. iii. 1, 2.

"What is the eternity of God? Existence without beginning or end. Who can comprehend it? Run your

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thoughts back as far as the utmost stretch of the imagination, even millions of ages before creatures were made God existed, and was old as He is now, or as He will be, when millions of ages more are passed away. From everlasting to everlasting, He is God." — *J. Campbell.*

the past a warning

a Ex. xvii. 2, 7.

b Ps. cxix. 4.

"I slept, and dreamed that life was beauty; I woke, — and found that life was duty."

"We begin with duty; we continue with duty; we add nothing to God's Word: we obey it by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and at last we shall be startled and gladdened by finding that all our life long we have by the grace of God been building up into heaven." — *Harper.*

inquiring youth to find the right answer

c Ps. cv. 23-28.

d Ps. i. 1-3.

e "There shall be mercy for us." — LXX.
"God shall be merciful to us." — *Vulg.*

"Mos. fr. first has made whole right of law depend on right state of heart, in one word on faith; so there can be no real inconsistency bet. this vs. and the principle of justifying by faith." — *Spt. Com. Rom. x. 5.*

greatest joy that could be, if you heard that the eternal God had ceased to be. But the Christian never wishes any such thing as that. The thought that there is a God is the sunshine of his existence. — *Spurgeon.* *The voice of nature.* — One evening, when Bonaparte was on his voyage from Egypt, a group of officers were conversing together on the quarter-deck, respecting the existence of God. Many of them believed not in His being. It was a calm, cloudless, brilliant night. The heavens, the work of God's fingers, canopied them gloriously; the moon and the stars, which God had ordained, beamed down upon them with serene lustre. As they were flippantly giving utterance to the arguments of atheism, Napoleon paced to and fro upon the deck, taking no part in the conversation, and apparently absorbed in his own thoughts. Suddenly he stopped before them, and said, in those tones of authority which ever overawed, "Gentlemen, your arguments are very fine; but who made all those worlds beaming so gloriously above us? Can you tell me that?" No one answered. Napoleon resumed his silent walk, and the officers selected another topic for conversation.

16-19. (16) tempted . . Massah, Massah, also Meribah^a; they raised the unbelieving question, "Is the Lord among us or not?" (17) diligently, with care and constancy.^b (19) cast . . enemies, leaving enemies in the land, they suffered greatly from their presence; a "thorn in their sides."

Tempting God. — I. Satan tempts man to commit sin. II. Man by sinning tempts God to punish him. Men, by their follies, tempt or try the patience of God.

The light of religion. — It is highly worthy of observation, that the inspired writings received by Christians are distinguishable from all other books pretending to inspiration, from the scriptures of the Brahmins, and even from the Koran, in their strong and frequent recommendations of truth. I do not not here mean veracity, which cannot but be enforced in every code which appeals to the religious principle of man; but knowledge. This is not only extolled as the crown and honor of a man, but to seek after it is again and again commanded us as one of our most sacred duties. Yea, the very perfection and final bliss of the glorified spirit is represented by the Apostle as a plain aspect, of intuitive beholding of truth in its eternal and immutable source. Not that knowledge can of itself do all! The light of religion is not that of the moon, light without heat; but neither is its warmth that of the stove, warmth without light. Religion is the sun whose warmth swells, and stirs, and actuates the life of nature, but who, at the same time beholds all the growth of life with a master eye, makes all objects glorious on which he looks, and by that glory visible to all others. — *Coleridge.*

20-25. (20) son asketh, in connection with *teaching*, vs. 7. (21) bondmen, *i. e.* slaves, held to compulsory labor. mighty hand,^c exercise of great power. (24) for our good, first reason for serving God is, *it is right*; we may be encouraged so to do by knowing that blessings follow.^d (25) righteousness,^e see Ge. xv. 6. Faith, obedience constitute righteousness.

The moral significance of God's laws. — The fact contained in the text — I. Is well attested in — 1. The nature of the commands. Take the physical laws, the laws of conscience, the laws of the Decalogue, the great statutes of the New Testament; 2. The experience of God's subjects: they have ever been the happiest. II. Reveals the Divine character. God's laws show Him as a God of — 1. Unbounded love; 2. Complete wisdom; 3. Absolute independence. III. Explains the condition of all human happiness. — *Thomas.*

The Bible in the family. — The mother of a family was married to an infidel, who made a jest at religion in the presence of his own children; yet she succeeded in bringing them all up in the fear of the Lord. "I one day asked her how she preserved them from the influence of a father whose sentiments were so openly opposed to her own. This was her answer. "Because to the authority of a father I did not oppose the authority of a mother, but that of God. From their earliest years my children have always seen the Bible upon my table. This holy book has constituted the whole of their religious instruction. I was silent, that I might allow it to speak. Did they propose a question; did they commit any fault; did they perform any good action; I opened the Bible, and the Bible answered, reproved, or encouraged them. The constant reading of the Scriptures has alone wrought the prodigy which surprises you." — *A. Monod.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1-6. (1) For names of nations see Gen. xv. 19. (2) Moses warns against a false principle of toleration. **destroy**,* two reasons for this command. 1. Iniquity of these nations was full. 2. Israel was only just forming into a nation, and learning duties, so, like the young, it would be easily swayed to evil; God put temptation out of the way. (3) **make marriages**, their chief snare, as we see later in cases of Samson and Solomon.^b (5) **break . . . images**, statues or pillars, and idols. **groves**, clusters of trees where idols were worshiped, sometimes idols themselves are meant. (6) **thou . . . holy**,^d "special people for himself."

Israel's relation to God. — I. Israel to be holy to the Lord, i. e. holy in character and worship. II. Chosen for a special purpose. 1. To manifest to the world the happiness of a people whose God is the Lord; 2. To exhibit the greatness of national prosperity in connection with the worship of the true God.

The ban. — It is quite clear that the Cherem, or ban, by which a person or thing, or even a whole people and their property, were devoted to a god, was not a specially Mosaic ordinance, for it is a custom known to many half-civilized and some highly civilized nations. In Livy's account of early Rome we read that Tarquinius, after defeating the Sabines, burned the spoils of the enemy in a huge heap, in accordance with a vow to Vulcan, made before advancing into the Sabine country. The same custom is alluded to in Vergil, *Æn.* viii. 562, and Cæsar, *B. G.* vi. 17, tells us a similar thing of the Gauls. The Mexican custom of sacrificing all prisoners of war to the god of war was of the same kind. But the most complete example of the ban in the Hebrew sense, occurring among a foreign people, is to be found in the Moabite stone which Mesha, king of Moab, erected in the ninth century B. C., i. e. in the days of Ahab. "And Chemosh said to me, Go, take Nebo against Israel. And I went by night and fought against it from the break of morn until noon, and took it and killed them all, seven thousand men and boys, and women and girls and maid-servants, for I had devoted it to 'Ashtor-Chemosh;' and I took thence the vessels" (so Renan) "of Yahweh, and I dragged them before Chemosh." Now the ban was not abolished in Israel; but it was moralized, and turned into a potent and terrible weapon for the preservation and advancement of true religion. — *Harper.*

7-11. (7) **fewest**,* rhetorical expression; monarchies of the East were immense, and their populations enormous. God's choices do not depend on size or appearance.^f (8) **loved you**, final cause of all blessing for the creature is Divine love.^g **keep . . . oath**, be faithful to his part of the covenant. (10) **repayeth**, punished by destroying them. **slack**, unready, delaying, or hesitating. "According to His fear, so is His wrath."

Reasons of the Divine choice. — If we have sometimes wondered why the Jews rather than any other people were chosen of God to manifest His glory, we shall not find the reason in anything very peculiar in the people at the first. I. They were not selected for number. II. The choice resolves itself back to the free grace and mercy of God. 1. His love; 2. His faithfulness. [Probably the Jews, bad as they were, were better fitted than any other of the ancient nations to be the repository of Divine truth and the cradle of Christianity. — *G. M. A.*]

The wonder of grace. — God would build for Himself a palace in heaven of living stones. Where did He get them? Did He go to the quarries of Paros? Hath He brought forth the richest and the purest marble from the quarries of perfection? No, ye saints: look to "the hole of the pit whence ye were digged, and to the rock whence ye were hewn!" Ye were full of sin: so far from being stones that were white with purity, ye were black with defilement, seemingly utterly unfit to be stones in the spiritual temple, which should be the dwelling-place of the Most High. Goldsmiths make exquisite forms from precious material; they fashion the bracelet and the ring from gold: God maketh his precious things out of base material; and from the black pebbles of the defiling brooks He hath taken up stones, which He hath set in the golden ring of His immutable love, to make them gems to sparkle on His finger forever. He hath not selected the best, but apparently the worst of men to be the monuments of His grace; and, when He would have a choir in heaven, He

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Canaanites to be utterly destroyed

^a Deut. xx. 16, 17; Josh. viii. 24; x. 28, 40; xi. 11, 12; Ex. xxiii. 32; xxxiv. 12.

^b Neh. xiii. 26.

^c "Referring to the wooden trunk, used as a representative of Ashtaroth." — *Spk. Com.*, Deut. xii. 23; 2 Ki. xxiii. 12-14.

^d 1 Pet. ii. 9.

^e "Pull down the nests, and the rooks will disappear," was the maxim of Knox.

^f "No peace with sin" is our loyal motto.

^g "Choice to office and to honor depended on attainment of character. Holiness is a far higher acquisition than wisdom or strength."

"Everything that is done by the most peaceful and patient servant of God has in it the quality of destruction, only it is spiritual violence, moral conquest, the victory of the soul." — *Parker.*

why God chose Israel

^e De. x. 22; xxvi. 5.

^f 1 Sa. xvi. 7.

^g 1 Jo. iv. 10, 19.

Gotthold, inspecting the operations of a goldsmith who was setting a diamond, saw him place a dark leaf in the capsule which it was intended to fill. On inquiring for what purpose this was done, he was told that it improved the brightness and sparkling of the jewel

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sent Mercy to earth to find out the dumb, and teach them to sing.—*Spurgeon*. The spirit, therefore, that inspired the “ban” must always be living and powerful in the church. Whatever is dangerous to the special Christian life must cease to exist for Christians. It should be laid at the feet of their Divine Head, that He may seclude it from His people and render it innocuous. Many things that are harmless or even useful at a lower level of life must be refused a place by the Christian. Gratifications that cannot but seem good to others must be refused by him; for he seeks to be in the forefront of the battle against evil, to be the pioneer to a more whole-hearted spiritual life.—*Exp. Bib.*

blessings
on the
obedient

12—16. (13) **bless . . multiply**, in every conceivable way, in family and possessions. **flocks**, *lit.* ewes of the sheep,^a of productive energy. (15) **sickness . . diseases**, morality and sanitation go together; they would escape the terrible diseases known to Egypt.^b

The rewards of obedience. — I. By obedience in things moral as to conduct, and things religious as to worship, the will and nature of God were to be published to a world that was wholly given up to idolatry. II. The advantages of this obedience were to be seen in the material wealth of the people. Thus would God be honored in His people.

Obey God with delight. — “I wish I could mind God as my little dog minds me,” said a little boy, looking thoughtfully on his shaggy friend; “he always looks so pleased to mind, and I don’t.” What a painful truth did this child speak! Shall the poor little dog thus readily obey his master, and we rebel against God, who is our Creator, our Preserver, our Father, our Saviour, and the bountiful Giver of everything we love?—*Christian Treas.*

Signs of prosperity. —

“Where spades grow bright, and idle words grow dull;
Where jails are empty, and where barns are full;
Where church paths are with frequent feet outworn;
Law court yards weedy, silent and forlorn;
Where doctors foot it, and where farmers ride;
Where age abounds and youth is multiplied;
Where these signs are, they clearly indicate
A happy people and well-governed State.”

a “First word, Ashteroth, is plural form of Ashtoreth, the well-known name of the goddess of Sidonians (1 Ki. xi. 5). This goddess (otherwise Astarte or Venus) represents the fruitfulness of Nature.” —*Spk. Com.*

b “*Pliny* calls Egypt ‘the mother of worst diseases.’ *Wagner* calls it, ‘a focus of contagious sicknesses.’” —*Spk. Com.*

encourage-
ments to
persevere

17—21. (17) **more . . I**, more in numbers and more powerful. (18) **remember**, a free nation should be greater than a slave. (19) **temptations, trials.** (20) **send . . hornet**,^c the Lord can fight with bees and hornets better than men can fight with their weapons; Palestine sometimes greatly infested.

The source of national safety (vs. 21). — The Lord is among you. I. A source of strength in weakness. II. Of guidance in perplexity. III. Of comfort in distress. IV. The remembrance of this fact and its results in the past was to be source of solace and encouragement to Israel at all times.

The hornet. — In the *Times* newspaper of January 28, 1859, it is stated that in the course of the previous summer, two gentlemen belonging to an Indian railway company, viz., Messrs. Armstrong and Boddington, were surveying a place called Bunder Coode, for the purpose of throwing a bridge across the Nerbudda, the channel of which has white marble rocks rising perpendicularly on either side from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet high. Suspended in the recesses of these marble rocks are numerous large hornets’ nests, the inmates of which are ready to descend upon any unlucky wight who may venture to disturb their repose. As the boats of these European surveyors were passing up the river, a cloud of these insects overwhelmed them; the boatman, as well as the two gentlemen, jumped overboard; but Mr. Boddington, who swam, and had succeeded in clinging to a marble block, was again attacked, and being unable any longer to resist the assaults of the countless hordes of his infuriated winged foes, he threw himself into the depths of the water never to rise again. Mr. Armstrong and the boatman, although very severely stung, were reported as “out of danger.” These insects, therefore, may make successful assaults even upon man, and there are not wanting instances of human life being destroyed by them.

c Ps. cv. 5, 23, 28.

d Josh. xxiv. 12.

“Perseverance is a Roman virtue, that wins each god-like act, and plucks success even from the spear-proof crest of rugged danger.” —*Harvard.*

“If we would only rub off from our eyes the drowsiness of unbelief, we might see the tokens of God’s presence on every side—the foot-prints of His feet as He leads our way.” —*Pulp. Com.*

“Yet I argue not against heaven’s hand or will, nor bate a jot of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer right onward.” —*Milton.*

Canaan to be
conquered
by degrees

e Ex. xxiii. 29, 30

22—26. (22) **put out**,^e *lit.* pluck off. **beasts**, wild beasts wh. are only kept within limits by hand of man. They would soon repossess a fruitful but

uninhabited country; therefore a progressive conquest and settlement was better. (24) **name**, not fr. historic record, but fr. place among living nations.^a (25) **desire**, as Achan.^b (26) **abomination**, in Scr. idols called *abom.* of *heathen*.^c

Israel's inheritance (vs. 22). — I. Who are the true Israel. II. A view of the heavenly Canaan which they are brought to the possession of. III. What nations oppose them in their way to the heavenly Zion. IV. The mighty conqueror described. V. The manner of the conquest (little by little) considered. VI. The reason of this gradual conquest assigned. VII. The application of the whole. — *Erskine*.

Thou shalt utterly detest it. — Do not allow the mind merely to disapprove of evil, merely to condemn certain social customs and arrangements, to keep in a kind of hovering relation towards things upon which God has put His veto; but seeing one of them, "thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it," — the soul shall rise against it as if God Himself had been pained by some sudden and tremendous offense. How is this spirit to be created within us? It is the miracle of Christ; it is the miracle of the Holy Ghost. — *Parker*.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

1-6. (2) **remember**, so that God's intentions in these wanderings may be fully realized, and they may ever show a true humility, and self-distrusting reliance.^d (3) **manna**, see Ex. xvi. 14, 15. **bread only**,^e collective word for all means of earthly sustenance; as *obedience* is better than *sacrifice*, so it is more necessary than *food*. Man depends not on food, the means, but on God, the giver. **word**, *lit.* "every outgoing of the mouth of the Lord." For means of subsistence during wandering. Nu. xx. 1. (4) **raiment** . . **old**, not affirming a constant miracle, but the constancy and sufficiency of provisions made for them by God. They had flocks for wool, and doubtless trafficked with caravans and neighb. tribes. **foot** . . **swell**,^f from exposure and weariness.

Life a journey. — I. Life is a journey. 1. Intricate: difficulties at every turn; 2. Eventful: all is shifting; 3. Unretraceable: on we go, pausing not a moment; 4. Perilous: poisonous streams, noxious herbs, venomous serpents; 5. Solemn: leading the body to the grave, and the spirit either to heaven or hell. II. Life's journey has a guide: "the Lord thy God," who — 1. Thoroughly understands the way; 2. Has resources equal to all possible emergencies. III. Life's journey can never be forgotten. 1. *Some* memory of it is a matter of necessity; 2. A *right* memory of it is a matter of obligation. — *Thomas*.

Man doth not live by bread only. — Nowhere among the masses of the most cultured nations is this deeply simple truth accepted by the vast majority of men. The rich or well-to-do cling to riches, the means of material enjoyment, as if their life did consist in the abundance of things they possess. That is largely the condition of those who have bread in abundance. With those who do not have it the case is perhaps even worse. A German Socialist mother said publicly some years ago, "He has never given me a mouthful of bread, or means to gain it: what have I to do with your God?" Their only hope for the future is that they may eat and be full; and of this they have made a political and religious ideal which is attracting the European working classes with most portentous power. In all countries men are passionately asserting that man *can* live by bread alone, and that he will. No one who knows what the higher life in Christ is, needs to be told that the very bread of life is in the Bible. Neglect it, or, what is perhaps worse, study it only from the scientific and intellectual point of view, and life will slowly ebb away from you, and your religion will bring you none of the joy of living. Bring your thoughts, your hopes, your fears, and your aspirations into daily contact with it, and you will feel a vigor in your spiritual nature which will make you "lords over circumstance." — *Exp. Bib.*

7-10. (7) **brooks**, offering pleasant prospect after Egypt, watered only by Nile and the arid desert. Deut. has more praise of Canaan than the earlier books. (9) **stones** . . **iron**, not of a crumbling quality; or referring possibly to the industry of mining;^g this carried on more extensively by nations dispossessed than afterwards by Jews. **brass**, should be *copper*, wh. is a simple, while brass is a mixed, metal. Gen. iv. 22

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a Josh. x. 24, 25, 42.

b Josh. vii. 1, 21.

c 2 K. xxiii. 15; Isa. xlii. 19; Ma. xxiv. 15.

The saint is often inwardly most pious, when he is not outwardly prosperous.

"The firmest thing in this lower world is a believing soul." — *Leighton*.

duty of remembering the past

d De. xiii. 3; 2 Chr. xxxii. 31.

e Ma. iv. 4; Lu. iv. 4.

f Heb. word expresses fermentation and swelling of dough.

"God so amply provided for them all the necessities of life, that they were never obliged to wear tattered garments, nor were their feet injured for lack of shoes or sandals." — *Spk. Com.* Ne. ix. 21. "Memory is a fit handmaid for faith. When faith has its seven years of famine, memory, like Joseph in Egypt, opens her granaries." — *Spurgeon*.

Sometimes God's withdrawals evoke from the heart conscious of His absence the most poignant and eager prayers. He says, "I will go away that they may miss me." — *Parker*.

Heaven is "a prepared place for a prepared people."

the good land described

g Job xxviii. 1-11.

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"O the splendor of this brilliant conclusion to a gloomy history. With patience we will endure the present gloom, for the morning cometh. Over the hills faith sees the daybreak, in whose light we shall enter into a wealthy place."—*Spurgeon*.

the perils of prosperity

a Lu. xviii. 11-13; see I Cor. iv. 7.

b Ez. ii. 6; Lu. x. 19; xl. 12; Rev. ix. 3, 10.

c De xxxii. 13; Ps. cxiv. 8; Job xxviii. 9, marg.

d Dan. iv. 30, 32.

"What of the difficulties of the way if the end is to be bright and beautiful heaven? What of the battle and storm here, if according to our steadfastness and loyalty is to be the splendor of the Divine recognition in the land of glory?"—*Parker*.

all true prosperity from God

e Hos. ii. 8.

God and wealth are ever to be thought of together. "The silver and the gold are mine." There is but one absolute Proprietor. This, then, is the fundamental principle upon which Christians are to proceed.—*Parker*.

"Prosperity doth bewitch men, seeming clear; but seas do laugh, show white, when rocks are near."—*Webster*.

National thankfulness.—I. Consider the necessity for such a precept as this. The tendency of men to attribute to human wisdom and strength the existence of good things which are Divine gifts. II. Consider the advantages of obedience. 1. It is always an advantage to personal character to do the right thing; 2. The cultivation of a thankful mind begets trust and hope.

Wild honey.—Ranwolff, speaking of his passage through the Arabian desert, says:—"The honey in these parts is very good, and of a whitish color, whereof they take in their caravans and navigations great leathern bottles full along with them. This they bring you in small cups, and put a little butter to it, and so you eat it with biscuits." Honey produced from the palm or date was also common in India, and was largely used for food. Josephus states that it was copiously produced about Jericho, but was inferior to the common honey. On the contrary, Dr. Shaw, when in Palestine, regarded it as having a more luscious sweetness, and says that by persons of better fashion, it was used on marriages, and other memorable occasions. The term wild honey is thought by some to be more applicable to that derived from trees, as being in a more natural state than the ordinary bee honey.

11—17. (12) goodly houses, after long dwellings in tents, they were in danger of *house pride* when settled. (14) *lifted up*, fig. fr. bodily attitude of proud man, as Pharisee in Temple.* (15) Rhetorical summary of evils of desert. *fiery serpents*, see Nu. xxi. 6. *scorpions*, Heb. 'akrâb, class Arachnida, order Pulmonaria.^b *drought*, lit. a dry land. *flint*, hard stone.^c (17) *power*,^d proud assumption.

The perils of prosperity.—I. Prosperity leads to self-indulgence. "When thou hast eaten and art full." Wealth leads to surfeiting. In abundance men indulge sinful appetites. II. Prosperity tends to forgetfulness of God. "She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal." (Hos. ii. 8). III. Prosperity begets pride of heart. "Then thine heart be lifted up." Adversity may depress, but prosperity elevates to presumption. IV. Prosperity genders self-glorification. "My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth."—*Preacher's Com.*

To do thee good at thy latter end.—The object of God is to do us good at our latter end. God means us to be men, he means to purify us and sanctify us. This is the will of God, even your sanctification, and to get that will accomplished he has to take away the first-born and the last-born, the dear old father and mother, the dearest friend, the kindest presence, health, fortune, position. He has to get us down to the root, branch and stem and all, right down; but he says: "The root shall remain and become good and strong and young again, and out of this-root shall come beauty and fruitfulness such as shall please the heavenly Husbandman."—*Parker*.

18—20. (18) *power, etc.*,* too often lost sight of. Prosperity puts us in more peril than adversity. *establish*, fulfill and confirm it, and continue the grace pledged in it.

The philosophy of worldly success.—I. How worldly success is to be obtained. By strict obedience to God's laws; by this only. *Work* is what He demands; and work is the only condition under which the prize may be won. II. The nature of the profit we are to look for. Not mere worldly profit. No life so dreary, so deadly as that of the *mere* millionaire. The joys of the true man's life he cannot taste; into the holy fellowships of spiritual being he cannot enter. There is a vast wealth of God-like faculty in him, "rusting" from want of use. And power unused soon gets acrid, and mordant, and gnaws and wears within. III. Why we should remember the Lord God. Because—1. It will bring us out at once into the glad sunlight, and will make even our toil lightsome; 2. It will spare us all wearing and crushing anxieties; 3. It will save us the shame and anguish of finding ourselves bankrupt at last and forever.—*Brown*.

The danger of prosperity.—Strolling along the banks of a pond, Gotthold observed a pike basking in the sun, and so pleased with the sweet, soothing rays as to forget itself and the danger to which it was exposed. Thereupon a boy approached, and with a snare formed of a horsehair and fastened to the end of a rod, which he skillfully cast over his head, pulled it in an instant out of the water. "Ah me!" said Gotthold, with a deep sigh, "how evidently do I here behold shadowed forth the danger of my poor soul! When

the beams of temporal prosperity play upon us to our heart's content, so grateful are they to corrupt flesh and blood that, immersed in sordid pleasure, luxury, and security, we lose all sense of spiritual danger, and all thought of eternity. In this state many are, in fact, suddenly snatched away, to the eternal ruin of their souls."—*Scriven*.

B. c. 1151.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1-6. (1) **Hear . . Israel**, beginning of new strain of Moses' eloquent and solemn appeal. **this day, soon. cities . . fenced**, surrounded with walls. (2) **great . . tall**,^c Num. xiii. 22-33. (3) **as . . fire**,^a as swiftly and completely as fire destroys. **drive . . destroy**, be with God in overthrowing, annihilating. (4) **my righteousness**, subtle pride of Israel, self-conceit. (6) **stiff-necked**,^c figure borrowed perhaps from conduct of camel, which sometimes hardens its neck and will not yield to will of driver.

Mercy, not merit.—The text suggests that mercy and not merit is the cause of all the blessings of our being. This is true of—I. Our secular possessions. If we say that these are the results of our own efforts, the reply is that both the materials of labor, and the power to labor, which have brought us these comforts, are to be ascribed to God's mercy. II. Our religious advantages. III. Our Christian experience. IV. Our spiritual usefulness. V. Our heavenly inheritance. We shall never attain it through merit; but by mercy.—*Thomas*.

The Anakim.—"It appears that this region was occupied at a very early period by the Anakim, who were of the Rephaim nations. Their chief city, Hebron, was one of the oldest cities of history, having been built seven years before Zoan, in Egypt, Nu. xiii. 22, the chief city of the Delta. The Anakim branch of the Rephaim were the original occupiers of Southern Judea. They were the first that took possession of its mountains, building cities, and swaying no feeble sceptre over a large region around. They were evidently not only an ancient, but a warlike and formidable tribe. It was not of herds of savage wanderers or herdsmen that Moses made mention. De. ix. 1, 2.—*Bonar*.

7-11. (17) **from . . day, etc.**, their rebellion had been sadly frequent, almost continuous. (8) **in Horeb**, in very sight of mountain of the law, Ex. xxxii. 3-10. (9) **eat . . drink**, compare Elijah's fast and our Lord's temptation.

Remembrance of past sin.—I. This useful to awaken a sense of Divine mercy. II. To check the growth of pride, self-confidence, boasting. III. To guard the life from follies and sins of the past. IV. Should not be indulged in apart from remembrance of mercy, lest it produce despair.

God's almightiness.—"Moses insists upon Israel having a right theology—not a science, not merely formulated opinion, but a distinct, living grasp of the thought that God is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. He will not have an arm lifted but in God's almightiness; he will have no atheistic generalship; he will not speak of himself as the leader of Israel: God first; God midst; God last. Nothing stirs a man like a grand theology,—that is a living, perpetual grip of the eternal. Be right with God, and then you are within the range and flow of the music of creation; moving with the stars, and yet grander than all the host of heaven, the soul falls into all the mystery and benediction of perfect peace. It is well to understand the difficulty that through its magnitude we may see somewhat of the greatness of God. Moses will not run down the Anakim as if any child could beat them back with a straw; he indicates their stature; he revives the memory of their prowess; he speaks of them as men who are in no wise to be contemned in the matter of strength and soldiership; within human limits they are tremendous foes, worthy of any foeman's steel; then, having so pictured them, without one touch of exaggeration, he says, Now understand that the Lord thy God is He who commands this army, and when he smites, the nations reel and stagger like drunken men; have faith in God; have confidence in the covenant of Heaven; abide under the shadow of the Almighty."—*People's Bib.*

12-17. (14) **let . . alone**, God represented as being fierce to destroy but prevented by intercession of Moses; good men stand in the way to prevent

the reason of Canaan's overthrow

a Josh. xi. 21, 22; xv. 13, 14.

b Heb. xii. 20.

c Ex. xxxiii. 3; xxxiv. 9.

"Never covet easy paths. The Lord keep you and me from that sin, beloved."—*Evans*.

"We are afraid of being desperate Christians. Oh, let us be desperate! The church needs extremity—a great tug out of the world."—*Lady Powerscourt*.

past sins to be penitently remembered

"You shall see a man rich in pocket and poor in soul. He goes to his church, and owns himself, to his passing condescensions by the way, a miserable sinner; he returns homeward, and proves himself to be so, albeit the proof never strikes him, by spurning the Sabbath-beggar at his threshold."—*J. E. Parker*.

If you would avoid any sin to which you are naturally prone, strengthen the grace that is opposed to it.

"Keep such hold of your bad old self as will frighten you from repeating it."

on account of which they were near destruction

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a "In righteous indignation, fr. zeal to vindicate the unsullied honor of God, and by the suggestion of His Spirit, to intimate that the covenant had been broken, and the people excluded fr. Divine favor."—*Jamieson, Crit. Com.*

"St. James, they say, had knees as hard as camels' knees, with continual kneeling."

he relates the story of his intercession

b Ex. xxxii. 20; xvii. 5-7.

"The priest himself required an intercessor; therefore the Aaronic priesthood could not have been perfect."—*Wordsworth.*

The father of a perverse son prayed the Lord to save him in any way. The son fell seriously sick, and, when nearly past the power of speech, sprang up, exclaiming in agony of spirit, "My father's prayers, like mountains, surround me." He was healed and converted, and thereafter led a new life.

he recounts divers rebellions

c "The burning which gave to the place this name occurred on the outer edge of the camp. This is therefore the name of a spot in or near the station of Kibroth, and so is not named in list of encampments given (Nu. xxxiii. 16)." — *Spk. Com.*
d Josh vii. 7-9

the utter destruction of the wicked. **thee . . nation**, wonderful self-denial of Moses. (17) **brake them**, cast them down,^a symbolic act.

Heroic self-denial.—An accident occurred in a coalpit in which several lives were lost; but a man and a boy, catching hold of a chain hanging by the side of the pit, were saved from impending death. As soon as possible, a man was sent down with a rope to render assistance. He came first, in his descent, to a boy named Daniel Harding. On his reaching him, the noble-minded lad instantly cried out, "Don't mind me, I can still hold on a little; but Joseph Brown, who is a little lower down, is nearly exhausted: save him first." Joseph Brown was saved first; and the noble boy was then drawn up to light and life. *Saying and doing.*—A person who had been at public worship, having returned home, perhaps somewhat sooner than usual, was asked by another of the family, who had not been there, "Is all done?" "No," replied he, "all is said, but all is not done." *The death of self.*—A saint cares not how ill it goes with him, so it go well with Jesus Christ: he saith, as Mephibosheth to David, "Yea, let Him take all, inasmuch as my Lord the King is come again in peace unto His house." So it may go well with God's name, Moses cares not though his be blotted out of the book of life.—*Venning.*

18-21. (18) **fell down**, act of humility and sorrow (Ex. xxxii. 11-13); also intercession. **forty days**, repetition of protracted experience of waiting upon God, to avert consequences and to know the divine will (Ex. xxxiv. 28). (19) **anger . . displeasure**, intense disapprobation. (20) **prayed . . Aaron**, who was left responsible, and proved his unfitness to be a leader. (21) **sin**, as expression and embodiment of their rebellion. **brook**, the smitten rock was near to, or part of Sinai.^b

Israel's intercessor.—I. Consider the spirit he manifested. 1. It was earnest, importunate, sympathizing; 2. It was holy. He admitted the great sin of the people; 3. He was full of godly fear. II. Consider the objects of his intercession. 1. Israel; 2. His brother. Learn—1. The duty of interceding for others; 2. The power of prayer; 3. An unostentatious way of doing good.

Intercession in death.—When Dr. Bacchus (the President of Hamilton College) was upon his death-bed, the doctor called to see him, and, after examining the symptoms, left the room without speaking, but, as he opened the door to go out, was observed to whisper something to the servant. "What did the physician say to you?" asked Dr. Bacchus. "He said, sir, that you cannot live to exceed half an hour." "Is it so?" said the good man. "Then take me out of my bed, and place me upon my knees: let me spend that time in calling upon God for the salvation of the world." His request was complied with; and his last moments were spent in breathing forth his prayers for the salvation of his fellow-sinners: he died upon his knees.—*Howes.* *Christ's intercession.*—Suppose a king's son should get out of a besieged prison, and leave his wife and children behind, whom he loves as his own soul: would the prince, when arrived at his father's palace, please and delight himself with the splendor of the court, and forget his family in distress? No; but, having their cries and groans always in his ears, he would come post to his father, and entreat him, as ever he loved him, that he would send all the forces of his kingdom and raise the siege, and save his dear relations from perishing. Nor will Christ, though gone up from the world and ascended into His glory, forget His children for a moment that are left behind Him.—*Gurnall.*

22-29. (22) **Taberah**,^c *burning*, Nu. xi. 1, 3, 5. **Massah**, = Meribah. Ex. xvii. 7. **Kibroth**, *graves of longing*, Nu. xi. 34; xxxiii. 16, 17. (23) **Kadesh-barnea**, Nu. xiii. 3, 26; xxxii. 8. (28) **not able**, comp. Joshua's intercession.^d

Yet they are Thy people.—I. Notwithstanding all their wickedness and folly. II. Therefore it is Thou art so merciful to them. III. Being Thy people they ought ever to show forth Thy praise. IV. Hence they may fully trust Thee all their days. V. If Thy people in personal faith, as well as in covenant relation, they may hope to dwell with Thee forever.

Remember Thy servants.—A wonderful insight into prayer is given in this quotation. Moses pleads for present Israel on account of ancient Israel:—"Remember Thy servants." What was their name? "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Here is a prayer with some leverage; here is a breathing that comes

up from eternity. The plea is not to be argued within the present five minutes. We belong to the ancient time, and to-day reap the harvest which vanished men did sow. Answers are coming from eternity because of God's love of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. The light that struck the little earth but last night left the star whose gospel it brings some ten thousand years ago, — and it only arrived yesternight! Replies may be on their way from the Old Testament saints for aught we know to the contrary.—*J. Parker.*

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1-5. (1) *Hew*, to cut with an axe, to shape. Sinai would furnish suitable slabs. *tables*, tablets or blocks; see ancient writing materials. *ark*,^a prob. Mos. left orders about this with Bezaleel^b before ascending Mt., so that it might be ready for the tablets on his return. (3) *shittim*, acacia tree, Ex. xxv. 5.

The conservation of the law in the ark is highly suggestive.—1. It is suggestive of mystery. 2. It is suggestive of protection. 3. It is suggestive of value. 4. It is suggestive of the use men should make of them. This hidden deposit is symbolical. As the material temple is the symbol of the human soul, in which God most of all prefers to reside, so the word of God is required to be enshrined within. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart."—*Davies.*

Duty leads to glory.—

Not once or twice in our rough island story
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outred den
All voluptuous garden roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island story
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He that, ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.—*Tennyson.*

6-11. *Vss.* 6-9 present a peculiar difficulty. They interrupt continuity of oration. They introduce Aaron's death where it is not expected in connection with Israel's marches. (See Num. xx., xxi. and xxxiii.) Aaron's death occurred nine years later than the incidents Moses is recapitulating. The *R. V.* puts *vss.* 6-9 in parenthesis. (6) *Beeroth* . . *Mosera*, = *Moseroth*, see Nu. xxxiii. 31, 32. *Aaron died*, Nu. xx. 28; xxxiii. 38. *Eleazar*, Ex. vi. 23-25; xxviii. 1. (7) *Gudgodah*, prob. *Wady Ghüdâghidh*; or *Hor Hagidgad*, of Nu. xxxiii. 32, 33; see same ref. for *Jotbath*. (8) *separated*,^c fr. other tribes, and to the Lord's service. 48 cities were given them, but they were to be supported by the other tribes.

The Levites.—Levi is set forth as a spiritual symbol. "Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren." Is he then poor? Read the answer in chapter x. 9: "The Lord is his inheritance, according as the Lord thy God promised him." That was the lot of Levi. Is not that an anticipation of the words which make all other instruction mean—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you?" It was well to have some men who had no land, no golden harvest, no store-houses rich with grain. They were the schoolmasters of the time—the great spiritual philosophers and teachers, not knowing themselves what they typified, still being there, the mystery of life, a symbol of the sublime doctrine that men shall not live by bread alone. Out of these incidental lines of history gathers a great apocalypse of progress. The one tribe will presently absorb the other tribe, and at the last we shall all be kings and priests unto God; and if globes were offered to us, constellations and whole firmaments of glory, instead of nearness to the Divine presence, we should scorn the mean donation.—*Parker.*

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"For his people, and, we may be sure, for himself, Moses recognizes no true worth save in so far as he or they were useful in carrying out Divine purposes of good to the world."
—*Parker.*

the broken
tables
replaced

^a Ex. xxv. 10; 1 K. viii. 9; He. ix. 4.

^b Ex. xxxvii. 1.

"God's will, engraved upon the sensitive and susceptible heart of a Christian, will outlast the Pyramids of Egypt, outlive the stones that came down from Mount Sinai in the hand of Moses and endure forever."
—*Preacher's Com.*
To fall off in any degree from walking in the ways of godliness is a step towards falling into all the ways of wickedness.

the separation of
Levi

^c Nu. xviii. 20, 24; xxxv. 1-4; Ez. xlv. 28.

"The word *Mosera* sig. a bond; and its name was thus verified to Israel. It bec. a bond of union to the priesthood of Aaron, joining it to that of Eleazar; it bec. a bond of union to Israel, uniting the old generation to the new; and connecting the deliverance fr. Egypt with the entrance into Canaan."—*Wordsworth.*

"The general idea of ministration in God's presence and for the Lord is surely the very essence of the ministerial office."

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the duty of Israel

a Mi. vi. 8; Ma. xxii. 35-40.

b 1 K. viii. 27; Ps. cxlviii. 4; Ge. xiv. 19.

"Love is the attraction of gravitation in the moral universe."

"Pascal remarks that in other things we must know in order to love; in religion we must love in order to know."

When, in the path of duty, you find yourself shut up as in a narrow pass, where there is no help before and none behind, yet there is always, in answer to prayer, deliverance from above.

Hints—1. Never fancy that to lower another will exalt yourself; 2. Seek greatness in the path of goodness; 3. Never leave the path of duty. "Never anything can be missed when simplicity and duty tender it."—*Shakespeare*.

consecration of heart

c Je. iv. 4; De. xxx. 6; Ro. ii. 28, 29; Col. ii. 11.

d Ac. x. 34; Ro. ii. 11; Ga. ii. 6; Eph. vi. 9; 1 Pe. i. 17.

The straightest way perhaps which may be sought

Lies through the great highway men call *Tought*."To remind a man of a kindness conferred on him, and to talk of it, is little different from reproach."—*Demosthenes*.

Israel to boast in the Lord

e Ex. xv. 2.

12-15. (12) **now, Israel**, "since all thou hast is thus shown to be of grace, without desert of thine own." **require**,^a *i. e.* understand the deeper meaning of these formal regulations; spiritual claims find expression in them. (14) **heaven of heavens**,^b an exhaustive term; Jehovah is not a local God, His claim and authority cannot be circumscribed. (15) **delight**, comp. De. iv. 37; vii. 7, 8; the sovereignty of Divine grace tends to keep us humble.

Our duty towards God.—Consider—I. That we have a duty to perform towards God. A duty of—1. Holy fear; 2. Perfect obedience; 3. Love; 4. Willing service. II. That this duty is enforced by many important considerations. 1. Obedience to God's commands will be to our own advantage; 2. We have been especially favored by God; gratitude should impel us to serve Him; 3. The consequences of enmity to Him are fearful in the highest degree. — *Lockwood*.

Motives of duty.—There is a difference, and a wide one, between practicing moral duties and being a Christian. Christianity is a religion of motives. It substitutes an eternal motive for an earthly one: it substitutes the love of God for the love of the world or the love of self. There may be, and are, many persons who practice temperance and other virtues which Christianity inculcates, but who never think of doing so because they are so inculcated. It would be as absurd to ascribe a knowledge of mechanics to savages, because they employ the lever, or of the principles of astronomy to brutes, because in walking they preserve the centre of gravity, as it is to call such persons Christians. A Christian is one whose motives are Christian faith and Christian hope, and who is, moreover, able to give a reason of the hope that is in him.—*Whately*.

Duty is eternal.—

Powers depart,
Possessions vanish, and opinions change,
And passions hold a fluctuating seat;
But by the storm of circumstance unshaken,
And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,
Duty exists: immutably survives
For our support, the measures and the forms
Which an abstract intelligence supplies;
Whose kingdom is where time and space are not.

— *Wordsworth*.

16-19. (16) **circumcise**, Gen. xvii. 10, 11. **your heart**, bec. the rite is only of value as it expresses the devotion of the *will* and *heart* in obedience to God.^c Rite showed that our greatest dangers come fr. *fleshy lusts*. (17) **regardeth**,^d not perverting judgment, or subject to prejudice, as their judges. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (19) **stranger**, Ex. xii. 48, 49; xxiii. 9; Lev. xix. 33, 34.

Love the stranger.—The precept has numerous applications—I. To literal strangers. Persons from foreign countries, or from distant parts of our own country, settling in our midst. II. To the unfriended and helpless. To the fatherless and the widow. III. To young men in great cities. Often lost for lack of some one to take a kindly interest in them. IV. To strangers in churches. Coldness here repels many who might otherwise be won to interest in religion, and secured for Christ.—*Pulpit Com.*

Kindness remembered.—Among the Alps, when the day is done, and twilight and darkness are creeping over fold and hamlet in the valleys below, Mont Rosa and Mont Blanc rise up above the darkness, catching from the retreating sun something of his light, flushed with rose color, exquisite beyond all words or pencil or paint, glowing like the gate of heaven. And so past favors and kindnesses lift themselves up in the memory of noble natures; and long after the lower parts of life are darkened by neglect or selfishness or anger, former loves, high up above all clouds, glow with Divine radiance, and seem to forbid the advance of night any farther.—*Beecher*.

20-22. (21) **thy praise**,^e the ground of thy confidence and thy rejoicing; (22) **threescore and ten**, comp. Gen. xlv. 27; Ex. i. 5; Ac. vii. 14. **as the stars**, a rhetorical figure to be accepted with popular and not scientific meaning; yet increase was certainly very large. Gen. xv. 5.

A nation's true glory (vs. 21).—Consider—I. Some of the common things in which nations make their boast, as art, arms, commerce, etc. II. The high-

est object of national glory—God. 1. Who should be recognized as the object of worship; 2. As the source of all true prosperity.

Human greatness.—We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man, without gaining something by him. He is the living light-fountain, which it is good and pleasant to be near; the light which enlightens, which has enlightened, the darkness of the world; and this, not as a kindled lamp only, but rather as a natural luminary, shining by the gift of heaven; a flowing light-fountain, as I say, of native original insight, of manhood and heroic nobleness, in whose radiance all souls feel that it is well with them. — *Carlyle*.

Empty greatness.—A person who had been up in a balloon was asked whether he did not find it very hot when he got so near to the sun. This is a vulgar notion of greatness. People fancy they shall get near the sun if they can but discover or devise some trick to lift them from the ground. Nor would it be difficult to point out sundry analogies between these bladders from the wind-vaults of Æolus, and the means and implements by which men attempt to raise themselves. All, however, that can be effected in this way is happily altogether insignificant. The further we are borne above the plain of common humanity, the colder it grows; we swell out till we are nigh to bursting; and manifold experience teaches us that our human strength, like that of Antæus, becomes weakness as soon as we are severed from the refreshing and renovating breast of our mighty mother. — *Hare*.

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"Nothing can make a man truly great but being truly good, and partaking of God's holiness." — *Matthew Henry*.

"He only is great who has the habits of greatness; who, after performing what none in ten thousand could accomplish, passes on like Samson, and tells 'neither father nor mother of it.'" — *Lavater*.

"If we did but know how little some enjoy of the great things they possess, there would not be much envy in the world." — *Young*.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

1-7. (1) Therefore, because of great increase. (2) know ye, own or acknowledge. not . . children, reminding them that they had been actual witnesses of God's works, and suffered by God's judgments. (6) Dathan and Abiram,* Num. xvi. Korah is not mentioned here bec. he attacked the ecclesiastical arrangements, Dathan resisted Moses' civil plans, and as addressing the general congreg. this more immediately concerned Mos. substance, etc. lit., "every living thing at their feet," not their goods, but their followers. Nu. xvi. 32.

An appeal to experience. — I. A method of appeal that is safe only for him who speaks the truth. II. A difficult argument to answer for those whose experience bears witness to the truth of the appeal. III. Herein lies, in part, the force of the appeal of the gospel. It is thus commended to the human heart and conscience.

The testimony of experience. — From curiosity, a lawyer entered a meeting for the relation of Christian experience, and took notes. But so impressed was he that at the close he arose and said: "My friends, I hold in my hands the testimony of no less than sixty persons, who have spoken here this morning, who all testify with one consent that there is a Divine reality in religion, they having experienced its power in their own hearts. Many of these persons I know. Their word would be received in any court of justice. Lie they would not, I know: and mistaken they cannot all be. I have hitherto been skeptical in relation to these matters. I now tell you that I am fully convinced of the truth, and that I intend to lead a new life. Will you pray for me?" — *Haven*.

appeal to experience

a Ps. cvi. 17.

"The Heb. nation has ever received this hist as true and as Divinely inspired, although it tells so much to their own discredit; and this national reception of such a hist. affords a strong argument for its truth." — *Wordsworth*.

8-12. (10) wateredst . . foot, referring to mechanical arrangements for irrigation of country fr. Nile.^b (11) hills, etc., Canaan is a high table-land, cut through by the valley of Jordan. Hilly countries are usually rainy. Highest rainfall in Eng. is in mountain region of Cumberland. (12) beginning . . end, contrast with flow of Nile, coming at fixed times, and continuing but 100 days.

Obedience to law gives strength (vs. 8). — The text plainly urges obedience in order to strength. Let us examine this. I. The obedient are strong in the presence and blessing of Him who dwells with the obedient. II. The obedient are strong in moral integrity to reprove sin by example and precept. III. The obedient are strong in their conviction of the goodness and wisdom of God. IV. The obedient are strong in the Lord, whose joy is their strength for all holy work and warfare.

Watering with the foot. — The expressions of Moses relative to the husbandman's practice in Egypt are frequently and forcibly illustrated by the custom common in our African gardens and cornfields. Various kinds of beans, peas,

prosperity and obedience

^b "Inhab. of Eg. watered with foot in two ways; viz. by means of tread-wheels working sets of pumps, and by means of artificial channels connected with reservoirs, and opened, turned or closed by the foot." — *Spk. Com*

See also Is. xxii. 20.

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"Scarcely any rain in Egypt. Crops depend on inundation of the Nile, and artificial irrigation." — *Herod. ii. 4; Diod. i. 41; Pliny, Panegyr. c. 30.*

promises to the obedient

a Joel ii. 23; Zec x 1; Ja. v. 7.

b Ge. vii. 11; Am iv. 7.

"The possibility of wrath is bound up in all love that is worthy of the name."

The question is not, how far you have wandered in the wrong path; but are you now willing to return into the right one?

the word of God to be remembered

c "The sense is, keep the cov. faithfully, and so your own and your children's days be multiplied as long as the heaven covers the earth." — *Spk. Com. Ps. lxxxix. 29.*

Viscount Carteret, who was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1724, could repeat fr. memory, the whole of the New Testament from the first chapter of Matthew to the end of Revelation.

future success and safety

d De. ii. 25; Josh ii. 9; Ex. xxiii. 27.

Regret not a golden age that is behind. There is one before, and it beckons you. Its re-

melons, potatoes, cabbages, and other vegetables, are planted in rows or drills; so that, in the event of the season proving dry, the husbandman who has a ream at his command conducts it from drill to drill, stopping its course by turning the earth against it with his foot, and at the same time opening, with his spade or hoe, a new trench to receive it. This mode of watering, by conveying a little stream to the roots of the plants, is very generally practiced, and, as it has been very justly observed, affords one proof among many, in which the unchanging character of Eastern customs increases our respect for the accuracy of the sacred Scriptures. — *Kay.*

13-17. (14) his, = its; old form of Eng., comp. 1 Cor. xv. 38. **first** . . **latter**,^a autumn rain, in Sept. or Oct., came for the sowing; spring rain, in Mar. or Ap. prepared ground for harvest. (17) **shut up**, rain is connected with opening of heavens;^b value of rain from above suggestive of other things from above or from God.

Slaves to self. — Alexander could conquer the legions of Persia, but he could not conquer his passions. Cæsar triumphed in a hundred battles, but he fell a victim to the desire of being a king. Bonaparte vanquished nearly the whole of Europe, but he could not vanquish his own ambition. And in humbler life, nearer home, in our own every-day affairs, most of us are drawn aside from the path of duty and discretion, because we do not resist some temptation or overcome some prejudice. — *Goodrich.* "As they were now to enter into Jehovah's land, His chosen dwelling-place, he sees in the different material conditions of the new country that which should make the union between Jehovah and His people more intimate and more secure, and He presses home upon them the greater shame of ingratitude, if under such circumstances they should forget God and His laws." — *Harper.*

18-21. (18) **sign, etc.**, De. vi. 8; Ex. xiii. 16. (21) **days** . . **earth**, Mos. intimates that the cov. made with them was a *perpetual* one, conditional, however, on their obedience.^c

Family training an element of success. — I. God's words are to be received first of all into the heart. II. God's words are to be kept before our own eyes and the eyes of others. III. God's words are to be the staple of home training. IV. The household is to make public profession of religion as well as the individual. The Jew was to write God's commandments on the doorposts and on the gates of his house. The household was thus to be God's. V. The result of such faithfulness will be complete success. — *Pulpit Com.*

Neglectful parents. — During the first year of my ministry, a mechanic, whom I had visited, and urged to the great duty of family prayer, entered my study, and burst into tears. "You remember that girl, sir?" said he. "She was my only child. She died suddenly this morning. I hope she has gone to God; but, if so, she can tell Him, what now breaks my heart, that she never heard a prayer from her father's lips. Oh that she were with me but for one day again!" — *N. McLeod.* In Iceland, a custom prevails among the people, of spending their long evenings in a manner which must powerfully tend to promote their religious improvement. The whole family assembles at dusk, and around the lamp, every one except the reader having some kind of work to perform. The reader is frequently interrupted, either by the head, or some of the most intelligent members of the family, who make remarks on various parts of the story, and propose questions with a view to exercise the ingenuity of the children and servants. In this form of exercise the Bible is preferred to every other book. At the conclusion of the labor a prayer is offered, and the exercise is concluded with a psalm. Their morning devotions are conducted in a similar manner at the lamp. What great opportunity for religious instruction of youth! — *Selected.*

22-25. (24) **Every place, etc.**, within the prescribed limits of Canaan. **wilderness**, the *Arabah*, on the S., Jos. xviii. 19. **Lebanon**, mountain range on the N. **Euphrates**, great river, boundary on E., Gen. xv. 18; Jos. i. 3, 4. **uttermost sea**, the *Mediterranean* on the W. Full possession gained in time of Solomon. (25) **fear of you**,^d came to pass in time of Joshua, and real reason of Israel's success.

The conditions of national prosperity. — I. The course of national life supposed — 1. Diligent obedience; 2. Affectionate obedience; 3. Persevering obedience. II. The Divine blessing secured — 1. Conquest of enemies; 2. Security of possession; 3. Enlargement of territory.

Prosperity and adversity.—The virtue of prosperity is temperance; the virtue of adversity is fortitude. Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament; adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction and the clearer revelation of God's favor. Yet even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp, you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needleworks and embroideries it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground; judge, therefore, of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue.—*Bacon.*

26—32. (29) Gerizim, mountain close to Shechem, opposite Ebal.^a (30) way . . down, beyond road of the west, other side of main track from Damascus to Jerusalem and Egypt through Palestine; distinguished from track through district east of Jordan. plains . . Moreh, oaks or terebinths of Moreh (Gen. xii. 6); reminder of the appearance to Abram and Jehovah's promise to him.

A home beyond the tide.—I. Our future possessions—1. A gratuity; 2 A heritage; 3. A rest from toil; 4. A land of plenty; 5. A land of promise. II. The mode of obtaining them. 1. Jordan must be crossed: inevitable; 2. Jordan will be divided: triumph.—*Wythe.*

The beauty of heaven.—A heathen girl who had been instructed by the missionaries was once looking out on the starlit night, when she exclaimed, almost in ecstasy, "How beautiful will heaven look when we get there if the outside is so fair!" When Sir William Herschel examined the nearest fixed star, Sirius, with his great telescope, the whole heavens about it were lit up with the splendor of our sky at sunrise. And, when the star fairly entered the field of view, the brightness was so overpowering, the astronomer was forced to protect his eye by a colored glass. It was calculated that this star equaled fourteen suns like ours; and recent discoveries have proved that even this is underrated. If God has given such splendor to a created object, what must be the glory of that uncreated Presence before which angels veil their faces! "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." What must it be to be forever shut out from that abode of bliss, and consigned to blackness of darkness forever!—*S. S. Times.*

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

1—4. (1) in . . land, after settlement in Canaan. (2) utterly destroy, every vestige of idolatry, altars, pillars, groves, graven images. (3) destroy . . names, as names suggest things. (4) not . . so,^b God's name only as deity to be respected and worshiped; His people to be thus distinguished as solely devoted to him.

Religious intolerance.—I. What it was not. It was not the persecution or oppression of those who worshiped the true God according to the light of natural conscience, and in various forms and modes of religious service. II. What it was. The persistent putting down of idolatry—1. As a sin against God; 2. As issuing in injury to man.

Ancient state of England.—Dr. Plaifere, in a sermon preached before the university of Cambridge, about the year 1573, says, "Before the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, no church here existed, but the temple of an idol; no priesthood but that of paganism; no God but the sun, the moon, or some hideous image. In Scotland stood the temple of Mars; in Cornwall, the temple of Mercury; at Bangor, the temple of Minerva; at Malden, the temple of Victoria; at Bath, the temple of Apollo; at Leicester, the temple of Janus; at York, where St. Peter's now stands, the temple of Bellona; in London, on the site of St. Paul's cathedral, the temple of Diana; at Westminster, where the abbey rears its venerable pile, a temple of Apollo." Who can read such a statement of facts, well authenticated as they are, and consider what England now is, without acknowledging the vast obligations under which we are laid to Divine revelation? What but the Bible has produced this mighty moral renovation?

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wards are not for the idle, but for the brave hearts disciplined to toil.

"The cause of all the evils in the world may be traced to that natural but most deadly error of human indolence and corruption—that our business is to preserve, and not to improve. It is the ruin of us all alike—individuals, schools and nations."—*Arnold.*

blessing and cursing are set before Israel

a Jos. viii. 30-35.

"Ger. prob. selected as hill of benediction, because the southernmost of the two hills, the south being the region, according to Heb. ideas, of light, and so of life and blessing."—*Spk. Com.*

"Their choice is brief and yet endless; it can be made in a moment, but in its consequence it will endure."—*Harper.*

idolatry to be utterly overthrown

b 2 K. xvi. 4. xxiii. 13-15; Je. iii. 6.

"The fruits of the earth do not more obviously require labor and cultivation to prepare them for our use and subsistence, than our faculties demand instruction and regulation, in order to qualify us to become upright and valuable members of society, and useful to others, or happy in ourselves."—*Barrett.*

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the place
for sacred
worship

a 1 K. viii. 20; 2
Ch. vii. 12; Ps.
cxxxii. 13-16.

b Le xvii. 1-7.

"When we remember that the policy of the kings of Israel was to deter their subjects from going to Jerusalem by means of the calves of Bethel and of Dan . . . it is not possible that Deut., requiring every Israelite to bring his sacrifice to the place which the Lord should choose, should have been accepted as genuine and inspired if its genuineness and inspiration had not been incontrovertible."—*Wordsworth.*

the nation
to observe
that place

c 1 S. i. 7-18

d De. xii. 19; xlv.
27; xvi. 11-14.

It is a woful thing to have a mislaid conscience in religion; it accounts the grossest idolatry acceptable service, and the most bloody cruelty acceptable and godly zeal: so that you see a zealous man following his conscience, may, like Saul of Tarsus, run madly on towards hell, and the more fierce he is the more desperate.

prohibition
of blood

5—9 (5) place . . choose, different places at different times as God might suggest; Mizpah, Shiloh, Jerusalem,^a put . . name, by manifestation of presence; purity of worship,^b secured by not being too much localized. (8) right . . eyes, what was right in their own eyes had been characteristic of life in the wilderness; that should not be the case in Canaan.

Public worship.—It is required in it—I. That God be present with His people. We meet in His name. His presence is promised. Without that presence sought and obtained, worship is in vain. II. That it be pure and scriptural. III. That it be orderly. IV. That it give expression to the varied wants of the religious nature. The prescribed sacrifices constituted a complex medium for the expression of the complex life and aspirations of the nation. V. That it be associated with remembrance of the poor. One of the first effects of Christ's love in a heart should be to open it up in sympathy and kindness to all in need.—*Pulpit Com.*

King Alfred and Boethius.—The Rev. J. Bosworth, in his Saxon Grammar, amongst other extracts from the oldest Saxon preachers and writers, gives the following conversation between Boethius and King Alfred; "I am sometimes very much disturbed," quoth he, "At what?" I answered, "It is at this which thou sayest, that God gives to every one freedom to do evil as well as good, whichsoever he will; and thou sayest also, that God knoweth everything before it happens." "Then," quoth he, "I may very easily answer this remark. How would it look to you, if there were any powerful king, and he had no freemen in all his kingdom, but that all were slaves?" "Then," said I, "it would not seem to me right, nor reasonable, if servile men only should attend upon him." "Then," quoth he, "what would be more unnatural than if God in all His kingdom, had no free creatures under His power? He gave them the great gift of freedom. Hence they could do evil as well as good, whichsoever they would. He gave this very fixed gift, and a very fixed law with that gift, to every man unto this end:—the freedom is, that man may do what he will; and the law is, that He will render to every man according to his works, either in this world or the future one—good or evil, whichsoever he doeth."

10—12. (11) then . . place, location after achievement, after discipline and training, after right spirit has been attained. choice vows, Heb. *choice of your vows*, prob. meaning, *voluntary* vows. (12) rejoice, joy the accompaniment of all true worship. daughters, males only were commanded to attend the feasts; females might, however, accompany them. no part, etc., De. x. 9.^d

The future inheritance.—1. A rest. "This is the scene of combat, not of rest." At the end of the journey, will be peace, "quietness and assurance forever." 2. An inheritance not gained by hereditary succession, merit, or human friendship; but prepared for "the saints in light"—an inheritance "incorruptible and undefiled, and fadeth not away." 3. A gift. "The Lord your God giveth you"—a pure, munificent, and unparalleled gift in Christ Jesus. 4. A dwelling. "So that ye dwell in safety." Beautiful in situation, "It stands securely high, indissolubly sure." The metropolis of the universe, the abode of saints, the palace of angels, and the residence of the Great King.—*Preacher's Com.*

Places of worship.—It is a wise, a salutary, and a laudable provision of the church's discipline, that she sets apart, and consecrates, by solemn religious rites to God's glory, the places which she intends for His worship; and by outward signs of decency and reverence of majesty and holiness, impresses them with an appropriate character, which, whilst it redounds to the honor of God, operates also with no mean or trivial influence on the minds of His people. Connected with this character, and in some degree generated by it, together with an awful veneration for the great Proprietor, a certain secret sense of a serene and holy pleasure is diffused over the pious and meditative mind, as soon as the feet cross the threshold which separates the house of God from common places. We feel with delight that we are on "holy ground;" and a still small voice within, as we draw near to "worship God in the beauty of holiness," answers in the words of the apostle at the sight of the "excellent glory," "It is good for us to be here."—*Mant.*

13—16. (15) kill . . gates, while in wilderness every animal intended for food was slain as a peace-offering at door of tabernacle; its blood was

sprinkled, and fat burnt on altar by priests. Moses now provides for slaughtering at the houses. **lusteth after**, not used in bad sense. **according to**, in proportion to means and condition; this the true principle for ordering life. **unclean . . eat**, bec, it is no longer consecrated as sacrifice. **roebuck and hart**, animals allowed for food, not for sacrifice, wh. must be taken fr. domestic creatures belonging to man.

The holy place. — Was to be a place chosen of God. — I. As assertive of the Divine right to any and every place. II. As preventive of tribal jealousy and rivalry. III. As corrective of human preferences and pride. Learn that under the gospel — 1. Man may in any and every place acceptably worship God. Jo. iv. 21; 2. Every place where God's sincere and spiritual worship is celebrated is hallowed ground.

Place of the worship of God. — It was formerly, and for hundreds of years, in one place that God would be worshiped (De. xii. 5, v. 13, 14; Ex. xxv. 21, 22). Salvation was then "of the Jews," and where the ark of the covenant and the high priest, and the altar, and all the symbols of salvation were — there would God be worshiped. Thither "the tribes of the Lord went up," and when banished from that place, they worshiped "towards it." So Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple (1 Ki. viii. 35-38, 42). So Daniel, in captivity in Babylon, threw open his window, "and prayed towards Jerusalem" (Da. vi. 10). "I will worship toward Thy holy temple." But our Lord teaches the woman of Samaria that this whole system of local worship was passing away. "The hour was coming" — nay, "was come" — when the mountain of Samaria would be as holy as Mount Zion; the steppes of Russia and the prairies of America as sacred as the land of Canaan; when neither in one place more than in another would God be worshiped, but anywhere and everywhere: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst" (Ma. xviii. 20). That is My Church, My temple, My holy mountain, in the the midst of the hearts of My praying people. "To all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Co. i. 2). — *Close.*

17-19. (17) **tithe**, portion devoted to God, De. xiv. 22-29.^a (18) **rejoice . . before**, gratefully acknowledge God and so be happy in everything. (19) **heed . . Levite**, some danger perhaps of forgetting the class assigned to special service before God and who do not have the ordinary means of getting a living.

The Israelite and the Levite (vs. 19). — I. The Levite existed for Israel, not Israel for the Levite. II. The work of the Levite in Israel's behalf. III. The mercy of God in setting apart an order of men for this work. IV. The duty of Israel in relation to the Levite.

The children of ministers. — The salaries of the clergy of the United States do not average eight hundred dollars a year, and yet, as a class, they are the best educated, the most influential, the most active, refined, and elevated of the nation. With less culture, with less character, with less mental power, there are men all over the land, who earn from one to five thousand dollars a year. But look at the results. Taking them as they come, the biographies of a hundred clergymen who have families show that, of their sons, one hundred and ten became ministers; and, of the remainder of the sons, by far the larger number rose to eminence as professional men, merchants, and scholars. As to the daughters, their names are merged into others; but there is a significant fact, which we do not remember to have seen noticed in that connection, that not only here, but in England, where titles are so highly prized, and the possession of "gentle blood" is a passport to high places, it is very often referred to as a matter of note, as indicating safety and respectability, "His mother was a daughter of a clergyman." We will venture the opinion, that three-fourths of the great men of this nation are not over two degrees removed from clergymen's families, or from families strictly religious. When it can be said of a man or woman, that their father or grandfather was a clergyman, there is a feeling within us of a certain elevation of character, a kind of guaranty of respectability of blood, of purity, and integrity. — *Haven.*

20-23. (20) **eat . . flesh**, further modification of Lev. xvii. 3, 4, or expansion of vs. 15, 16. (23) **not . . blood**,^b further caution as to blood; eating blood may have been a feature of idol worship on some occasions.

B. c. 1451.

"When a man is told that the whole of religion is summed up in the love of God and the love of man, he is ready to cry out like Charoba, in Gebir, at the first sight of the sea, 'Is this the mighty ocean? Is this all?' Yes! all: but how small a part of it do your eyes survey! Only trust yourself to it: launch out upon it; sail abroad over it; you will find it has no end; it will carry you round the world." — *Hare.*

Let each hour, each moment, find thee Doing still the task assigned thee.

— *Caroline A. Mason.*

care of the Levites

a Ne. x. 39.

"You need not teach a man to sin; this is natural, and therefore facile; it comes as water out of a spring. It is an easy thing to be wicked; hell will be taken without storm; but matters of religion must be learnt. To cut the flesh is easy, but to prick a vein and not cut an artery is hard. The trade of sin needs not to be learned, but the art of Divine contentment is not achieved without holy industry." — *T. Watson.*

^b Ge. ix. 4; Le. xlvii. 4, 13.

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"They that cry down moral honesty, cry down that which is a great part of my religion—my duty towards God, and my duty towards man. What care I to see a man run after a sermon if he cozens and cheats as soon as he comes home? On the other side morality must not be without religion; for if so, it may change as I see convenience. Religion must govern it."—*Seldon*.

exhortation to obedience

a Le. xxvii. 30; Nu. v. 9, 10; xviii. 19; 1 S. i. 21, 22, 24.

Pliny tells of a mongrel eagle that has one foot like a goose for the water; and another natural, by which it seeks its prey in the air. It would seem to have the advantage of air and water; but it loses both. The common crow seizes upon it, and makes it an easy prey,—fit emblem of those who seek to serve both God and Satan.

warning against snares

b "This caution is based on the notion generally entertained in the heathen world, that each country had its own tutelary deities whom it would be perilous to neglect."—*Spk. Com.*

c 2 K. xvii. 15; Je xxxii. 35.

The sanctity of blood.—I. The heathen nations were accustomed to make drink offerings of blood. II. God so directed his worshipers about the disposal of the blood that they could not regard it in any other light than as a most sacred thing. On no account was it to be eaten: this would have profaned it. III. The reason assigned was that the life was in the blood. IV. The vicariousness of suffering gave it additional sanctity. For shed blood meant life sacrificed to sustain other life. V. Blood had its religious function, not a physical function; to discharge in the mosaic economy. The God of Israel did not delight in blood, as the gods of the heathen were supposed to do. He singled it out for a religious use. This was undoubtedly to keep it so out of the sphere of physical elements that it could symbolize fully "the blood of Jesus Christ," by which the world is to be saved.—*Pulpit Com.*

Guardianship of the law of God.—A traveler relates that, when passing through an Austrian town, his attention was directed to a forest on a slope near the road, and he was told that death was the penalty of cutting down one of those trees. He was incredulous until he was further informed that they were the protection of the city, breaking the force of the descending avalanche, which, without this natural barrier, would sweep over the quiet home of thousands. When a Russian army was marching there, and began to cut away the defense for fuel, the inhabitants besought them to take their dwellings instead, which was done. Such, he thought, are the sanctions of God's moral law. On the integrity and support of that law depends the safety of the universe. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," is a merciful proclamation. "He that offends in one point is guilty of all," is equally just and benevolent. In this view, to every sinner out of Christ, God must be a "consuming fire." To transgress once is to lay the axe at the root of the tree which represents the security and peace of every loyal soul in the wide dominions of the Almighty.—*Cameron*.

24—28. (25) go well, both physical and moral effect may be contemplated. (26) holy things, things of the nature of offerings.^a (27) blood . . sacrifices, i. e. peace offerings, "the only kind of which the worshiper as well as the priest might partake." (28) observe . . hear, always danger from inattention and especially indifference.

The use of law.—

Law was design'd to keep a state in peace,
To punish robbery, that wrong might cease;
To be impregnable; a constant fort
To which the weak and injured might resort;
But these perverted minds its force employ,
Not to protect mankind, but to annoy;
And long as ammunition can be found,
Its lightning flashes and its thunders sound.—*Crabbe*.

Love in the law.—There is the same love in the law that there is in the Gospel, and between them a harmony as perfect as the music of that heaven where the harps are gold, and the strings are touched by angels' fingers. The hand, indeed, that wrote these commandments is the same that was nailed to the cross; and amid Sinai's loudest thunders, Faith recognizes, though it speaks in other tones, the voice which prayed for mercy on murderers, and promised paradise to a dying thief.—*Guthrie*.

29—32. (30) snared,^b fear of heathen deities often attached itself to their places of worship; superstitious feeling as well as habit of imitation oftentimes a snare, (31) abomination, into which Israel fell.^c

The power of a conquered foe (vs. 30).—I. The caution itself relates—1. To a foe conquered in the open field; 2. To a foe conquered but not exterminated; 3. To a conquered foe with animosity unsubdued. II. The need of this caution. 1. Victors are apt to be thrown off their guard; 2. To be too confident in their own strength. Apply the caution to old sins and habits. Many have conquered intemperance, etc., and have afterwards been ensnared.

A little nick in his conscience.—When Mr. Nathaniel Heywood, a Nonconformist minister, was quitting his living, a poor man came to him, and said, "Ah! Mr. Heywood, we would gladly have you preach still in the church." "Yes," said he, "and I would as gladly preach as you can desire it, if I could do it with a safe conscience." "O! sir," replied the other, "many a man nowadays makes a great gash in his conscience; cannot you make a little nick in yours?"

Applicable to Popish practices. —

What, Dagon up again ! I thought we had hurled him
Down on the threshold never more to rise.
Bring wedge and axe ; and, neighbors, lend your hands,
And rive the idol into winter fagots. — *Athelstane.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-5. (1) if . . arise, special temptations to idolatry.^a prophet, a pre-tender, yet one who had some method of seeming to verify^b his predictions, and so especially misleading. (3) dreamer . . dreams, perhaps dream prophet, certainly not one having dreams or visions of truth. (5) spoken . . turn, specially sinning to lead away from God into wickedness, since so worthy of death. evil away, a judicial procedure,^c followed by punishment of death by stoning.

Walk after the Lord. — "Walk after the Lord your God" — I. In reverent imitation. His example is before you ; follow it. II. With affectionate fear. You must not be familiar with God. He is your Lord and Maker. III. With all obedience. Show your love for Him by obeying His commands. IV. With holy zeal. Suffer no profaning of His name, no desecration of His temple. — *Lister.*

False doctrine. — As he is a traitor to his prince who taketh upon him to coin moneys out of a base metal, yea, although in the stamp he putteth for a show the image of the prince, so he that shall broach any doctrine that cometh not from God, whatsoever he say for it, or what gloss soever he set on it, he is a traitor unto God, yea, in truth, a cursed traitor, though he were an angel from heaven (Ga. i. 8). — *Boston.*

6-11. (6) If . . brother,^d a person of close relationship or distant, who might have special influence. entice . . secretly, the common way of more or less of wrong-doing. (9) surely kill, because high crime, act of treason to Jehovah. hand . . first,^e one whom offender attempts to entice the one most wronged. hand . . people, community was to act to clear themselves of complicity and express public horror of crime.

Guilt and danger of departing from God. — Consider this ordinance as — I. A temporary enactment. Though at first sight it may seem severe, yet it was — 1. Just as it respected the individual ; 2. Merciful with regard to the public. II. A lasting admonition. It declares to us in the strongest terms — 1. The evil of departing from God ; 2. The danger of being accessory to any one's departure from Him ; 3. The need we have of firmness and steadfastness in religion. — *Simeon.*

Fidelity to truth. — Valens, the emperor, a zealous Arian, went on a kind of visitation tour through his dominions, for the purpose of bringing his subjects to confess the same faith as himself ; so he and his prefect came to Cesaræa. The prefect sent for Basil ; and, after a little altercation, he asked him if he was not ashamed to profess a different creed from that of the emperor. Basil intimated that he thought it better to stand alone by the side of truth, than with all the world on the side of falsehood. The prefect lost his patience, and began to talk of other weapons than those of argument. "Are you not afraid to oppose me?" he said to Basil. "Why should I fear?" said Basil ; "what will happen?" The prefect, bloated with rage, and almost choked with passion, gasped out convulsively. "Confiscation, banishment, torture, death!" "Have you nothing else?" asked the undaunted bishop ; "for nothing you have spoken has any effect on me. He that has nothing to lose is not afraid of confiscation. Save these threadbare, tattered garments, and a few books, I have nothing you can take ; and as to banishment ! you cannot banish me, for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, whose stranger and pilgrim I am : and as to torture, the first stroke would kill me ; and to kill me is to send me to glory." "No man ever spoke to me like that before," said the crest-fallen official. "Perhaps you never met with a Christian bishop before," was the reply. A widow, one of Basils flock, threw herself under his protection, and he risked his life to ensure her safety. The emperor, with a body of soldiers, went to the church and demanded the Sacrament at Basil's hands ; and he determined to die rather than dispense the emblems of Christ's death to one who repudiated His

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"How many hush the voice of warning at the point of danger, and founder upon the rock of temptation and are lost forever." — *McCosh.*

the false prophet

a For will of God made known by visions see Nu. xxiv. 16 ; 2 Co. xii. 2 ; 2 S. vii. 4 ; by dreams, 1 K. iii. 5 ; Ma ii. 13.

b 2 Th. ii. 9-12 ; Ma. xxiv. 24. c De. xvii. 7 ; Le. xx. 2.

"The question is not whether a doctrine is beautiful, but whether it is true. When we want to go to a place, we don't ask whether the road leads through a pretty country, but whether it is the right road. — *Hare.*

resistance of temptation

d "The omissions in this enumeration seem to imply that no one was bound to impeach father, mother, or husband." — *Michælis.*

e Zec. xiii. 2, 3.

"They that fear the adder's sting will not come near his hissing." — *Chapman.*

"The sin of false teaching is not less now than it was then, and this law shows the heinousness of it; but it does not show, as the Church of Rome affirms, that the Church of God ought to put heretics to death." — *Wordsworth.*

"None sooner topple over into error than such who have not an honest heart to a nimble head. The richest soil, without culture, is most tainted with such weeds." — *A Divine of the 17th Century.*

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the purity of
the churcha Ju xix. 22; 1 S.
ii. 12; xxv. 17; 2
Co. vi. 15.

b Is. xxv. 2.

Our keeping God's commandments must be willing. It a willing mind be wanting, there wants that flower which should perfume our obedience, and make it a sweet smelling savor to God.

The wrath of man is the rage of man; but the wrath of God is the reason of God.—*Reynolds*.

unholy
mourningc 1 K. xviii. 28;
Je. xvi. 6; xii. 5;
Le. xix. 28; xxi. 5.

d 1 Pe. ii. 9.

Dr. Grosvenor, on the death of his wife, said, "I have met with an irreparable loss; but the cross of a dying Jesus is my support. I fly from one death for refuge to another." Pliny, the younger, in like distress, said that study was his only relief.

unclean food

animals

e Ez. iv. 14; Ac.
x. 13, 14.

f "Oryx *Leucoryx*, called by Arabs *Jazinar*, of white color, black at extremities, bright red on thighs."—*Jamieson*.

g "With white buttocks wreathed horns 2 ft. in length and standing about 3 ft. 7 in. high at shoulders."—*Jamieson*.

h Is. lxxv. 4; lxxvi. 3, 17.

divinity. At last a day of clouds and storms was followed by a calm and tranquil sunset; Basil closed his eyes upon this scene of trouble, to open them upon the unbroken calm that slumbers on the everlasting hills. — *Shaw*.

12-18. (12) **hear . . cities**, cities are to act against cities as such where there is a general or growing sentiment favoring idolatry. (13) **children . . Belial**,^a worthless, profligate persons. (14) **ask diligently**, ascertain the truth. (15) **smite**, punish severely. (16) **burn . . heap**,^b leave nothing; morally pestilential.

Severe discipline. — A child a short time since was taken ill with that dangerous disorder, the croup. It was a child most ardently beloved, and, ordinarily, very obedient; but, in this state of uneasiness and pain, he refused to take the medicine which it was needful, without delay, to administer. The father, finding him resolute, immediately punished his sick and suffering son. Under these circumstances, and fearing that his son might soon die, it must have been a most severe trial to the father; but the consequence was that the child was taught that sickness was no excuse for disobedience; and, while his sickness continued, he promptly took whatever medicine was prescribed, and was patient and submissive. Soon the child was well. Does any one say that this was cruel? It was one of the noblest acts of kindness which could have been performed. If the father had shrunk from duty here, it is by no means improbable that the life of the child would have been the forfeit. — *Abbott*.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1, 2. (1) **children . . Jehovah**, foundation fact making God's laws so binding and authoritative. **cut yourselves**, as did idolators in times of mourning.^c **baldness . . dead**, practice of shaving fore-part of the head, leaving bare space between the eyebrows. Both were wild and unreasoning expressions of grief. False to regard God as one to whom human suffering and woe are acceptable. (2) **holy, peculiar**,^d peculiar in their holiness.

True mourning for deceased friends. — I. Heathen customs. Practice referred to. Physical demonstrations of grief. Indian suttees, etc. Connection between such customs and idolatry. II. Their corrective. Regard for character and word of God. The God of the living. The faithful dead not to be mourned for as absolutely lost, but as living with Him. Mourners for such not to sorrow as they that have no hope.

Thy God. — God bases all the prescriptions of His law on the ground that those that were to obey were his Own chosen, beloved, redeemed and sanctified people. "Ye are," by adopting love, "the children of the Lord, your God." A covenant God; yours because He has given Himself to you; yours because ye have deliberately chosen Him; and with a solemn oath have promised, "We will serve the Lord our God." Well, upon this strong ground, this sure foundation, as affectionate as it is sure, He says, "You shall not imitate the heathen by mourning for the dead as they mourn;" or, transferred from Judaism to Christianity, "You shall not weep for your dead as others weep who have no hope;" having a better, surer, nobler prospect, alike of the state of the soul, and the emergence from the grave of the earthly shrine it has left behind it. — *Cumming*.

3-8. (3) **abominable**,^e bec. forbidden, comp. Lev. xi. No mention of reptiles in this list, prob. bec. permissions in Lev. applied to such as were found in desert. (5) **hart**, ordinary deer. **fallow-deer**, kind of antelope.^f **pygarg**, Heb. *dishon*, a species of antelope.^g **wild ox**, distinguished from *re-em* of Nu. xxiii. 22. **chamois**, prob. Kobsch, a sheep-like goat. (7) **hare**, Lev. xi. 6. (8) **swine**,^h forbidden bec. of their food; foul habits; and as used in idol. ceremonies.

Discrimination in meats. — I. It was a sanitary benefit. II. Partial abstinence was salutary for the soul. III. This discrimination in meats constituted a visible partition from the heathen. IV. This arrangement served for the daily discipline of faith. — *Pulp. Com.*

The chamois. — The Arabic version understood that the *graffe* was meant here, which is very likely to have been the case; for the chamois is not met so far to the southward as Egypt and Palestine. The giraffe, or camelopard (*Camelopardalis giraffa*), is a singular as well as beautiful creature, found

in the central parts of Africa. It belongs to that order of animals which chew the cud. It is furnished with a neck of extraordinary length. By this means it is enabled to crop the young shoots from the trees, which constitute the main part of its fare. The giraffe is generally about eighteen feet from the fore hoofs to the head; its color is a light fawn, varied with three-cornered brown spots. The first run of the giraffe exceeds the speed of the fleetest horse; but as they are not equally capable of sustaining exertion, well-trained horses are often able to overtake them after a long chase. The animal is of a timid and gentle character.—*Kitto*.

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9, 10. (9) fins and scales, excludes shell-fish of all kinds; cetaceous animals; and fish wh. appear to have no scales, such as the eel. Kinds excluded very generally regarded as unwholesome.

An ancient fish dinner.—The Romans were enthusiastic for the mullet. It was then the fish *par excellence*. It was sometimes served up six pounds in weight, and such a fish was worth \$300. It was cooked on the table, for the benefit and pleasure of the guests. In a glass vessel filled with brine made from water, the blood of the mackerel, and salt, the live mullet stripped of all its scales, was enclosed; and as its fine pink color passed through its dying gradations, until paleness and death ensued, the convives looked on admiringly and lauded the spectacle.

fish

In ev'ry way, in every sense, Man is the care of Providence; And whenso'er he goeth wrong, The errors to himself belong.
—S. Butler.

11—15. Such birds must not be eaten as lived on flesh or fish. Cleanness or uncleanness depended very much on the food of the creature. (12) *ossifrage*, the bearded vulture. (13) *glede*, prob. same as rendered vulture in Le. xi. 14. (15) *cuckow*, prob. the sea-gull.

birds

Dialects of birds.—I believe there is a dialect in the song of birds. The song, for example, of a thrush near London, or in any of the home counties, has little resemblance, except in tone and specific character, to that of the same bird in Devonshire, or near Exeter. The same notes, I suppose, will all of them be detected; but they are arranged, for the most part, in a different tune, and are not sung in the same way. They are given with different values, and the singing is pitched in a different key. One great distinction between the two cases is the number of guttural notes, of which the song of a Devonshire thrush is often made up, but which near London are heard only at the end of a bar, or even much less frequently; while those chief notes which mainly constitute the song of the other bird, and make it so impressive, are rarely pronounced by the Devonshire thrush. —*Jesse*.

"The free movements of birds through seemingly boundless space from the earliest ages made a strong impression on men's minds, and gave rise to many mysterious associations with this class of creatures. Hence the flight of birds was made the foundation of divination."

16—20. (16) swan, or goose. (17) *gier-eagle*, Heb. *rachemah*, name given by Arabs to common vulture of W. Asia and Egypt. *cormorant*,^a or plungeon, a sea fowl. (18) *lap-wing*, the hoopoe, a beautiful bird, but of most unclean habits. (12) *creeping*, etc., every creature that both creepeth and flieth.

^a Is. xxxiv. 11; Zep. ii. 13, 14.

Heaven's care of the birds.—

To them nor stores nor granaries belong;
Nought but the woodland and the pleasing song;
Yet, your kind heavenly Father bends His eye
On the least wing that flits along the sky;
To Him they sing when Spring renews the plain;
To Him they cry in Winter's pinching rain;
Nor is their music or their plaint in vain;
He hears the gay and the distressful call,
And with unsparing bounty fills them all.
If ceaseless, then, the fowls of heaven He feeds,
If o'er the fields such laced robes He spreads,
Will He not care for you, ye faithless, say?
Is He unwise? Or, are ye less than they? —*Thomson*.

In an economical point of view birds are very important. Many birds are extremely useful in preventing the multiplication of insects and worms, and compensate in this way for the mischief which they occasionally do in fields and gardens.

21—23. (21) dieth . . itself, danger from disease and decomposition; besides blood would not be removed from the animal. give . . stranger, probably chance or tramp. Stranger who would be his own judge as to the wisdom of eating. To the Israelite there would certainly be defilement. see the . . kid, Ex. xxiii. 19; xxxiv. 26: here again to guard against idol ceremony. (22) *tithe*^b . . increase, emphatic reminder.

food of creatures slain only

^b Ne. x. 37

The nature of purity.—I would have you attend to the full significance and

God's people should not always

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look at what they are in themselves. To do so would drive them to despair. They are permitted and encouraged to look at themselves as Christ shall present them before the throne of God, viz., faultless.

"The path of duty is the way to glory" — *Tennyson*.

difficulties of worship provided against

a De. xxvi. 12.

Man is God's image; but a poor man is Christ's stamp to boot. Both images regard. Let thy aims go before, and keep heaven's gate open for thee; or both may come too late. — *Herbert*.

the seventh year's release

b De. xxxiii. 20.

c "Or render thus — Thou must release the debt for the year, except when there be no poor person concerned, a contingency which may happen, for the Lord shall greatly bless thee." — *Spk. Com.*

"Go not to a covetous old man with any request: too soon in the morning, for his covetousness is up before him, and he before thee, and he is in ill-humor; but stay till the afternoon, till he be satiated upon some borrower." — *Fuller*.

regard for the poor

d Mat. xxvi. 11.

extent of the term "holy." It is not abstinence from outward deeds of profligacy alone; it is not a mere recoil from impurity in thought. It is that quick and sensitive delicacy to which even the very conception of evil is offensive; it is a virtue which has its residence within, which takes guardianship of the heart, as of a citadel or inviolate sanctuary, in which no wrong or worthless imagination is permitted to dwell. It is not purity of action that we contend for; it is exalted purity of heart, the ethereal purity of the third heaven; and, if it is at once settled in the heart, it brings peace, the triumph, and the untroubled serenity of heaven along with it, I had almost said, the pride of a great moral victory over the infirmities of an earthly and accursed nature. There is a health and harmony in the soul; a beauty which, though it effloresces in the countenance and the outward path, is itself so thoroughly internal as to make purity of heart the most distinctive evidence of a work of grace in time, the most distinctive guidance of a character that is ripening and expanding for the glories of eternity. — *Chalmers*.

24-29. (24) way . . long, arrangement made in anticipation of their settlement in Can. Distances would make it difficult to carry produce to sanctuary. (25) turn . . money, commute it for money payment, or sell it, and with proceeds go to the sanctuary and buy material for a thanksgiving feast unto the Lord. (27) Levite, ch. xii. 19. (28, 29) Every third year's tithe was to be devoted to charity at home; this third year was reckoned fr. the Sabbatic year, in wh. was no tithe or celebration of feasts.

The conscientious discharge of religious duty. — I. God will have no excuses for disobedience. II. He makes provision against difficulties in the path of obedience. III. The spirit of the law may be observed even when obedience to the letter is impossible. This accepted as a real and full obedience.

Stranger in gate. — We read in our chronicles of King Oswald, that as he sat at table when a fair silver dish, full of regal delicacies, was set before him, and he ready to fall to, hearing from his almoner that there were great store of poor at his gates, piteously crying out for some relief, he did not fill them with words, as "God help them," "God relieve them!" etc., but commanded his steward presently to take the dish off the table and distribute the meat, then beat the dish all in pieces and cast it among them. — *Holdsworth*.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

1-6. (1) make . . release, this law an extension of that in Ex. xxi. and Lev. xxv.; release of debts is here added. (2) Lord's release, significant name. (3) foreigner,^b outside the privilege. (4) no poor,^c those who can afford to pay should not be excused from obligation. (6) lend . . nations, Israelites, great money lenders of the world.

Lending and usury. — From the numerous allusions in the sacred writings to the subject of lending and of usury, it is easy to perceive that this was a very common practice amongst the ancients of the East. There are thousands at this day who live on the interest of a very small capital, and thousands who make immense fortunes by nothing but lending. So soon as a man has saved a small sum, instead of locking it up in his box, he puts it out to interest, at the rate of twelve per cent. and sometimes twenty. People of great property, on account of their anxiety to derive interest from every farthing, often leave themselves in considerable difficulty. Children are taught, in early life, the importance of this plan: hence striplings may be heard to boast they have such and such sums out at interest. "Ah! you shall lend money to many people!" is one of the blessings pronounced on a youthful pair. When a person acquires a new situation, or when a man is prosperous, it is said, "He will lend to many people;" which means, he will be rich, and have much influence. — *Roberts*.

7-11. (8) open . . hand, do not shut for fear of having to release sometime, but lend to poor as to others (9) thought . . wicked, purpose, inclination to refuse true charity or favor. (10) not grieved, the lending was to be done willingly and cheerfully. (11) never cease, comp. Christ's words.^d In all ages almsgiving is a serious religious duty.

Now that we are under Christ, as our leader, how is the duty of kindness to the poor put and enforced? — 1. That duty which Moses enjoined as the

leader and legislator of Jehovah's people, our Lord Jesus Christ set on the ground of His own sovereign right, and enforced by his own example. 2 Our Lord regards the poor and needy as *His* poor: all, generally, because he died *for* them; some, especially, because He lives *in* them. 3 Our Lord reckons a kindness shown to men for His sake as if it were done to Him. 4 Of so much importance is this kindness to the poor for Christ's sake to be reckoned by us, that we are to watch for and seize opportunities of doing "good unto all men, specially to them that are of the household of faith."—*Pulpit Com.*

A will set aside.—Some years before the death of the late Rev. A. Booth, a particular friend said to him, "I find, sir, that you have lost a valuable member of your church." "Yes," he replied, "and she has left me a legacy;" at the same time adding, "There are those of her own family who stand more in need of it than I do." He then asked his friend, whether, under such circumstances, he thought it would be right in him to receive it; for that he himself thought it would not. The legacy was, nevertheless, transferred to him, in conformity with the will of the deceased. Some time afterwards, Mr. Booth went to the Bank of England, and, without saying anything more upon the subject to his friend, executed a transfer of the legacy to one nearly related to the family of the deceased, for whose benefit he relinquished it.

12-18. (12) *sold unto thee*,^a the last extremity of an insolvent debtor, when his house and land proved insufficient to cancel his debt, was to be sold as a slave with his family. This, however, could last at the longest six years. (13) *empty*, if they did he could have no chance of maintaining his independence. (17) *awl*, see Ex. xxi. 6, so bored ears became a badge of servitude. (18) *double hired*, being without wages, and for fixed time.

Moral slavery.—James II., on his death-bed, thus addressed his son, "There is no slavery like sin, and no liberty like God's service." Was not the dethroned monarch right? What think you of the fetters of bad habits? What think you of the chains of indulged lust? The drunkard who cannot resist the craving for the wine—know you a more thorough captive? The covetous man, who toils night and day for wealth—what is he but a slave? The sensual man, the ambitious man, the worldly man, those who in spite of the remonstrances of conscience, cannot break away from enthrallment—what are they, if not the subjects of a tyranny than which there is none sterner, and none more degrading.—*Melville*.

19-23. (19) *firstling*, see Ex. xiii. 2, 11-13; xxii. 29, 30; De. xii. 17, 18. *no work*, creatures thus dedicated to God must not be used for any earthly purpose. (21) *blemish*,^b only a whole or perfect creature would represent the offering of a man's whole heart and life to God.

The consecrated heart.—Travelers have said that they have discovered gardens of Solomon, which were of old enclosed as private places wherein the king walked in solitude; and they have also found wells of a most deliciously cold water, dexterously covered, so that no person unacquainted with the stone in the wall, which either revolved or slid away with the touch, could have found the entrance to the spring. At the foot of some lofty range of mountains a reservoir received the cooling streams which flowed from melted snows; this reservoir was carefully guarded and shut out from all common entrance, in order that the king alone might enter there, and might refresh himself during the scorching heats. Such is the Christian's heart. It is a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, a garden reserved for Jesus only. O come, great King, and enjoy Thy possession.—*Spurgeon*.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1-8. (1) *Abib*, "a green ear," named from ears of corn which first appeared then; first month of ecclesiastical year, our April. *keep . . pass-over*, observe passover with its sacrifices and offerings; lasted seven days (Ex. xii. 3-20). *by night*, the act of judgment and deliverance was done at night, and Pharaoh's permission extorted in the night. (4) *coasts*, = borders, districts, Ex. x. 4. (5) *thy gates*, *i. e.* privately, at your houses; must be a public service. (6) *going down of sun*, *lit.* between the evenings.

Remember thy bondage in Egypt.—Here we have—I Bondage: in Egypt

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"God, who could make all men rich, if He pleased, tries you by the needs of your poor brethren, and according to your treatment of them will He judge you."—*Wordsworth*.

release from servitude

a Le. xxv. 39, 40; 2 K iv. 1; Ne. v. 1-13; Job xxiv. 9; Ma. xviii. 25.

"A good servant," says Luther, "is a real God-send: but truly, it is a rare bird in the land." "If I had served my God as faithfully as my king, He would not have thus forsaken me."—

firstlings of the flock and herd

b Mal. i. 8.

"You may as soon fill a bag with wisdom, or a chest with virtue, as the heart of man with anything here below. A man may have enough of the world to sink him, but he can never have enough to satisfy him."—*T. Brooks*.

the passover

"Who is it that ever was a scholar, that doth not carry away some verses which in his youth he learned, and even to old age

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serve him for hourly lessons?"—*Sir Philip Sidney.*

It has been observed that in Italy the memory does more than the eye. Scarcely a stone is turned up that has not some historical association, ancient or modern, and may thus be said to have gold under it.

"The memory of past labors is very sweet."—*Cicero.*

the harvest feast

a Ex. xxxiv. 22; Le. xxiii. 10; Ac. ii. 1-4.

b Le. xxiii. 14-16.

"An ancient Jewish annotator has made a beautiful remark upon this verse, viz.—'thy four, O Israel, and my four shall rejoice together.' So the company shall be representative:—son, daughter, manservant, maidservant; priest, stranger, orphan, widow;—this is the typical company sitting down at the symbolical feast."—*People's Bib.*

feast of tabernacles

c Ne. viii. 9-12.

"What is given under pressure is not given; what is given to a subscription list in order to keep up the harmony of the numbers is wasted money;

they ate the "bread of affliction." II. Deliverance from bondage: "the day when thou camest forth." This day was a day of—1. Miraculous working on the part of God; 2. Joy among His people; 3. Defeat and despair to His enemies. III. Remembrance of deliverance insisted upon as a duty. Such an event is worthy of—1. Remembrance; 2. Grateful remembrance; 3. Active remembrance: the recollection of it must be shown by deeds.—*Carter.*

Conditions of worship.—The time is specified, and the reason is given. This is the law rather than a mere accident. The law is: that every month has a memory, every day has a story, every night has a star all its own. The Lord knows what he has done for every month of the year. It would seem as if the calendar were kept in heaven. We may not consult the diary, but God looks at it, and according to the time of day and the time of year he expects the psalm and hymn of earth. Why do we blur the pages of the daily journal so that we cannot tell what happened this day twelvemonth, so that the day shall be but a moral vacancy in the life? Who died this day year? Whose death does this day forever commemorate—what martyr, what apostle, what great leading thinker, what sweet life at home? Were these questions asked at every dawn, what time in the whole year would there be that might not be an "Abib"—a "a time of putting in the sickle," a reaping time, having even in the winter a touch of harvest gladness? We should try to make the time more memorable. This is impossible to some, if heroic and chivalrous deed be required, but it is possible to all who can love and serve and think and patiently endure.—*People's Bib.*

9—12. (9) **seven weeks**,^a therefore called feast of weeks, week of weeks, and also Pentecost. Commemorated giving of law, man's spiritual food, sickle . . . **corn**, beginning of corn harvest, prob. time reckoned fr. 16th Nisan, when the first-fruits of the new harvest were presented at the sanctuary.^b (10) **tribute . . . hand**, "*i. e.* a free will offering proportioned to a man's means and prosperity."—*Handy Com.* (11) **rejoice**, have a happy time.

Harvest-home a national festival.—We learn from the passages (read also xxiv. 19-21) before us, that the harvest-home is a season for—I. National gratitude. To the existence of this gratitude towards a giver, three things are necessary. 1. That the gift should be felt to be valuable; 2. A belief that the favor is benevolently bestowed; 3. A consciousness that the favor is undeserved. II. National rejoicing. The joy of the harvest is proverbial. Indeed, where there is gratitude there must be joy. III. National philanthropy. Observe—1. That where God gives liberally, He demands liberality; 2. That the liberality demanded is to be shown to the poor."—*Thomas.*

The harvest.—

There in a field, 'mid lofty corn, the lusty reapers stand,
Plying their task right joyously, with sickle each in hand.
Some strew in lines, as on they press, the handfuls thick behind,
While at their heels the heavy sheafs their merry comrades bind.
These to the mows a troop of boys next bear in haste away,
Piling upon the golden glebe the triumphs of the day.

Among them, wrapped in silent joy, their sceptred king appears,
Beholding in the swelling heaps, the stores of future years.

A mighty ox, beneath an oak, the busy heralds slay,
With grateful sacrifice to close the labors of the day.

While near the husbandman's repast, the rustic maids prepare,
Sprinkling with flour the broiling cates, whose savor fills the air.—*Homer.*

13—17. (13) **tabernacles**, Ex. xxiii. 16; Le. xxiii. 34; Nu. xxix. 12.^c **corn and wine**, at close of the entire harvest, both of grain and of fruit. (15) **increase**, as of the cattle. **works . . . hands**, as in tilling fields, etc. (16) **empty**, without a present. Gladness and thankfulness find natural and proper expression in gifts.

Freewill offering.—I. The people were to come before the Lord with a gift.—1. As an expression of gratitude; 2. In the measure of their ability. II. The reason of this. 1. In acknowledgment of the fact that all they had was given them of God; 2. To inspire trust in the future help and blessing of God.

Religious festivals.—We find that among the natives of the Gold Coast of Africa, general feasts, at stated times, are kept, which are likewise a part of their religion, and are attended by a great variety of ceremonious observances. The priests compute the time of their approach, and summon the

people to prepare themselves to observe them. National sacrifices, and offerings of the firstfruits of harvest, are invariably made before the kings or people presume to make use of the new crop; and in addition to this general solemnity, every individual makes separate offerings for himself and family upon the day that they first eat of it. About the same time that this ceremony is observed, it is customary for all the males to parade themselves through the villages, and to clear the paths leading to their fetish groves. During the processions they sing aloud the praises of the deities of the country. — *Cruikshank's 18 years on the Gold Coast.*

18-22. (18) **judges**, settled arrangements for social order and the administration of justice. See previous arrangement. **officers**, heralds or bailiffs, to execute the sentence of their superiors. **gates**, place of public resort, and court-house of Eastern cities. (21) **grove**,^b word has several significations. A group of overshadowing trees; a grove adorned with altars dedicated to a particular deity; or a wooden image in a grove. These groves presented strong allurements to idolatry. (22) **image**,^b marg., statue, pillar, Le. xxvi. 1.

Impartial justice. — When Chief Baron of the Exchequer, Sir Matthew Hale was remarkable for his impartiality in the administration of justice. One of the peers, wishing to influence his judgment, called upon him at his chambers, stating that he had a suit in law to be tried before him, and that he was anxious to acquaint him with it, that he might the better understand it when it came to be heard in court. The judge interrupted him, saying he never received any information of causes but in open court, where both parties were to be heard alike. His grace complained to the king of the rudeness he experienced, but the king sustained both the honor and the office of the baron, affirming that he verily believed that he would himself have been used no better had he gone to solicit him in any of his own causes. If such the exact and unswerving rectitude of an earthly ruler, how much more so the justice of Him to whom we shall one day give account!

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-5. (1) **sheep**, considered as including *goats*. **evil-favouredness**, faults described in Le. xxii. 22-24; see also Ex. xii. 5; Le. i. 3. (2) **wrought wickedness**, in manner described vs. 3. **transgressing covenant**, whose special condition was the preservation of the knowledge and worship of the one true God. (4) **inquired**, not acted on hearsay, or under prejudice or excitement. (5) **stone them**,^c this kind of death signif. as not requiring the executioners to *touch* the criminal.

Beautiful churches vs. beautiful Christians. — We make beautiful churches more often than we do beautiful Christians. We carve marbles, and rear fine proportions in stone; we decorate walls and altars; but those are only physical representations, material symbols, while the quality of beauty is in holiness. The beauty of love in all its infinite inflections, the beauty of justice and of truth, — these languish. — *Beecher. The church to be purged.* — When Oliver Cromwell was about to turn the Members of Parliament out of their chamber, he pointed to the mace, and cried, "Take away that bauble!" When He shall come, who will effectually purge the church, He will say much the same of many ecclesiastical ornaments, now held in high repute. Gowns, and altars, and banners, and painted windows, will all go at one sweep with "Take away those baubles." Nor will the rhetorical embellishments and philosophies of modern pulpits be any more tenderly dealt with. "Take away this bauble" will be the signal for turning many a treasured folly into perpetual contempt. — *Spurgeon.*

6, 7. (6) **two witnesses**, which might include the accuser. **one witness**,^d bec. personal malice might lead to death of the innocent. Two witnesses might be found not to agree together. (See story of Susannah in Apocrypha.) (7) **first upon him**, accuser flinging first stone. **put evil away**, by all taking part, *all* repudiated the sin.^e

A witness's part. — He assigned this part to the witnesses, chiefly because there are many whose tongue is so slippery, not to say good for nothing, that they would boldly strangle a man with their words, when they would not dare to touch him with one of their fingers. It was the best remedy, there-

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only that is given which cannot be kept back; only that is accepted which carries with it the blood of the heart." — *People's Bib.*

judges and justice

a Ex. xviii. 13-26.

b "Render, 'Thou shalt not plant for thee any tree as an idol,' *lit.* as an Asherah. *i. e.*, image of Astarte, or Ashtarothe, the Phœnician goddess." "This idol was stem of a tree, stripped of its boughs, set upright in the ground, and rudely carved with emblem s." — *Spl. Com.*

punishment for idolatry

c Ex. viii. 26; 1 K. xii. 18.

"Idolatry has its origin in the human heart. Men love sin and do not want to be reformed for it; therefore they form themselves a god that will not reprove them." — *J. H. Evans.*

Wherever the Spirit of Christ is, there is Christ Himself.

An ignorant or mistaken believer is not an unbeliever.

two witnesses needed

d Nu. xxxv. 30; De. xix. 15; Ma. xviii. 16; Jo. viii. 17; 2 Co. xiii. 1.

e Le. xxiv. 14; Jos. vii. 25, 26.

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"Man yields to custom, as he bows to fate."—*Crabbe*.

final appeal to the priest

a "These verses do not, strictly speaking, provide for a court of appeal."

b Ex. xviii. 23-27.

c Ezra x. 8; Ps. xix. 13.

the choice of a king

d 18. viii. 5, 11, 12.

e 2 S. viii. 4; 1 K. iv. 26; x. 26, 28. See also Ps. xx. 7; Is. xxxi. 1

"The king's becoming graces are justice, verity, temperance, stability, bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness, devotion, patience, courage, fortitude."—*Shakespeare*.

"That king stands surest, who by his virtue rises, more than by birth or blood; that prince is rare who strives in youth to save his age from care."—*Middleton*.

"Luther said he would not live in paradise without the Bible, as with it he could easily live in hell itself."

fore, that could be tried for restraining such levity, to refuse to admit the testimony of any man who was not ready to execute judgment with his own hand. — *Calvin*.

8—13. (8) **hard** . . **thee**,^a cases so difficult inferior judges could not take responsibility of decision. **blood** . . **plea**, apparently criminal and civil cases. (9) **priests** . . **Levites**, supreme council,^b partly civil, partly ecclesiastical, as we would say. (10) **observe** . . **do**, abide by, carry out decision of supreme tribunal. (12) **presumptuously**,^c acting his own will in opposition to decision.

Too hard. — The greatest difficulties lie where we are not looking for them. — *Goethe*. *Controversy*. — Many controversies grow up about religion, as suckers from the root and limbs of a fruit tree, which spend the vital sap that should make it fruitful. — *Flavel*. *Sentence of judgment*. — The main strength and force of a law consists in the penalty annexed to it. — *Blackstone*.

14—20. (14) **king**,^d Moses provides for a possibility. He does not command or approve this. His words prophetic. **Lord** . . **choose**, their own choice would be virtual dethroning of God; the man of God's choice would be His vicegerent. (16) **horses**,^e used in war, so indicating confidence in armies rather than in God. As Egypt was famous for chariots and horses, self-trusting Israelitish kings would seek alliances there. (17) **wives** . . **turn**, multiplication of wives and silver and gold point to oriental luxury with which Moses must have had acquaintance, so that he was able to anticipate the conduct of Solomon. (18) **copy** . . **law**, for special guidance in kingly relation. (19) **he** . . **read**, shall educate and instruct himself.

That his heart be not lifted up. — Observe — 1. It is here intimated that the Scriptures diligently read are a powerful means to keep a person humble, because they show that, though a king, he is subject to a higher Monarch, to whom he must give an account of all his administrations, and receive from Him his sentence agreeably to their quality, which is sufficient to abate the haughtiest person in the world. 2. That the greatest monarch may receive more benefit by the Scriptures than by all the wealth and power of his monarchy. An attentive, prayerful, believing perusal of the Bible will be of advantage. (1) To his person. "He shall prolong his days in his kingdom. We find in the history of the kings of Judah, that generally the best reigns were the longest, except when God shortened them for the punishment of the people, as Josiah's. (2) To his family; his children shall also prosper. Entail religion upon posterity and God will entail a blessing upon it." — *J. Wilson*.

Loss of a good king. —

Yes, we have lost a father!

The greatest blessing Heaven bestows on mortals,
And seldom found amongst these wilds of time,
A good, a worthy king! Hear me, my Tancred,
And I will tell thee in a few plain words,
How he deserved that best, that glorious title,
'Tis naught complex, 'tis clear as truth and virtue,
He loved his people, deem'd them all his children;
The good exalted, and depress'd the bad;
He spurn'd the flattering crew, with scorn rejected
Their smooth advice, that only means themselves,
Their schemes to aggrandize him into baseness,
Well knowing that a people in their right
And industry protected, living safe
Beneath the sacred shelter of the laws,
Encouraged in their genius, arts and labors,
And happy each as he himself deserves,
Are ne'er ungrateful. With unsparing hand
They will for him provide; their filial love
And confidence are his unfailing treasury,
And every honest man his faithful guard. — *Thomson*,

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1-5. (1, 2) Lord . . inheritance,^a the Levites were to trust the Lord completely for their support; as to land nothing bound them to place. (3) due . . people, the people were not to forget them; they were the ministers of the Lord. maw, stomach. (4) first fruits, Num. xviii. 12, 13.

A minister's relationship to his people. — There is no esteem, there is no love, like that which is founded in the sanctity of religion. Between many of you and me that sanctity exists. I stood by your side when you awoke in the dark valley of conviction and owned yourselves lost. I have led you by the hand out of the darkness; by your side I have prayed, and my tears have mingled with yours. I have bathed you in the crystal waters of a holy baptism; and when you sang the song of the ransomed captive, it filled my heart with a joy as great as that which uttered it. Love, beginning in such scenes, and drawn from so sacred a fountain, is not commercial, not fluctuating. Amid severe toils and not a few anxieties, it is the crown of rejoicing to a pastor. — *Beecher.*

6-8. (6) Levites, or non-priestly Levites; only a part of them would be in residence at the sanctuary at any given time. desire . . mind, if he voluntarily chose permanent residence at sanc. (7) minister, Nu. iii. 6, Lev. were assistants to the priests. as . . do, in proper order. (8) patrimony, *lit.* sales by the fathers, the Lev. might possess private property, 1 K. ii. 26, and had right to sell it: the common property of the class could not be alienated.

The Christian virtues of ministers. —

Awful Heaven!

Great ruler of the various hearts of man!

Since Thou hast raised me to conduct Thy Church

Without the base cabal too often practiced,

Beyond my wish, my thought, give me the lights,

The virtues, which that sacred trust requires:

A loving, loved, unterrifying power,

Such as becomes a father; humble wisdom;

Plain, primitive sincerity; kind zeal

For truth and virtue rather than opinions;

And, above all, the charitable soul

Of healing peace and Christian moderation. — *Thomson.*

9-14. (9) abominations, Le. xxviii. 21; xix. 26-31; xx. 6. (10) fire, *i. e.* to Moloch; an image of brass, with head of ox, and members of human body; the arms were heated, and children placed in their embrace, as ceremony of lustration. (10, 11) These names describe various forms in wh. men pretended to foretell, and guard against the evils of the future.^b (10) enchanter, serpent charmer. witch, Ex. vii. 11. (11) necromancer,^c one who interrogates the dead. (13) perfect, Ge. xvii. 1; Job i. 1; upright, sincere, whole-hearted.

Christian perfection (vs. 3). — A solemn injunction. I. Unfold its import. We must be perfect with the Lord our God — 1. In love to His name; 2. In affiance to His care; 2. In zeal for His glory. II. Enforce its authority. Without real integrity before God, we can have — 1. No comfort in our souls; 2. No stability in our ways; 3. No acceptance with our God. — *Simeon.*

Superstition respecting days. — "It is not an indifferent matter to travelers in Japan what day they set out on their journey, for they must choose for their departure a fortunate day; for which purpose they make use of a particular table, which, they, say, has been observed to hold true by a continued experience of many ages, and wherein are set down all the unfortunate days of every month, upon which, if travelers were to set out on any journey, they would not only expose themselves to some considerable misfortune, but likewise be liable to lose all their expenses and labor, and to be disappointed in the chief interest of their journey. However, the most sensible of the Japanese have but little regard for this superstitious table, which is more credited by the common people, the mountain priests, and monks. A copy of this table is printed in all their road and house books." — *Kämpfer's Japan.* "Many of the superstitious prejudices that are to be found among the Hindus prevail equally with the people of Siam. They observe the feasts of the

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priests' and
Levites'
portion

^a Nu. xviii. 20; De. x. 9; Jos. xiii. 14-33; Ez. xlv. 28.

"Most merciful Father! grant me to covet with an ardent mind those things which may please Thee; to search them wisely, to know them truly, and to fulfil them perfectly: to the praise, laud, and glory of Thy name. Order my living so that I may do that which Thou requirest of me, and me give grace that I may know it, and have will and power to do it." — *Edward VI.*

witchcraft

^b Le. xx. 1-6; Nu. xxiii. 23; Ez. xxi. 21, 22.

^c 2 Ch. xxxiii. 6.

"The vesture of that older priesthood is with us an adornment of the heart; and the glory of them that are chief in priesthood is to us no longer commended by the beauty of vestments, but by a splendor that is of the soul." — *St. Gregory.*

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"The Scripture gives four names to Christians, taken from the four cardinal graces so essential to man's salvation: *saints* for their holiness, *believers* for their faith, *brethren* for their love, *disciples* for their knowledge."—A. Fuller.

the promise of another prophet

a Ac. iii. 22; vii. 37.

"By one offering Christ hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Yet there is no true Christian who does not feel himself constrained to come again and again to "the blood of sprinkling," in order that every fresh sense of sin, which day by day is contracted, may be removed from his conscience.

the test of prophecy

"To arrive at perfection a man should have very sincere friends or inveterate enemies; because he would be made sensible of his good or ill conduct, either by the censures of the one or the admonitions of the other."—Diogenes.

the cities of refuge

b "Goellism, or the duty of the nearest kinsman to avenge the death of a slaughtered relative, being the law

new and full moon, and think the days that from the change precede the full, more fortunate than those that follow it. Their almanacs are marked with lucky and unlucky days. Neither the prince, nor any one who has the means of applying to astrologers, will undertake anything without consulting them." — *Sketches of the Hindus*. "The distribution of the signs or characters, both of days and years, served the Mexicans as superstitious prognostics, according to which they predicted the good or bad fortune of infants, from the sign under which they were born; and the happiness or misfortunes of marriages; the success of wars; and of every other thing from the day on which they were undertaken, or put in execution." — *Cullen's Mexico*. Notions of lucky or unlucky days are not confined to heathen countries. Our own newspapers occasionally bring to light cases of similar absurd superstititions.

15-18. (15) **Prophet**, great spiritual leader. Moses had large faith that God would stand by his people in what they most needed. Some anointed one, a Messiah, perhaps *the Messiah*.^a him . . . **hearken**, wise admonition; listen to messengers from God. Christ the greatest, the very revelation of God in person and speech as well as grand sacrifice.

Moses a type of Christ. — Christ is a prophet like unto Moses as to—I. His teaching. II. His predictions. He foretold, as Moses did, the destruction of the city of the Jews, and of their magnificent temple; and, in the prospect of the inconceivable misery which they were about to suffer. His heart was filled with anguish. III. The people from which He came. He, like Moses, was raised up to Israel from among themselves. IV. His office of mediator. — *Spencer*.

Christ our teacher. — De. xviii. 15-18: Appointed by the Father—chosen from His brethren—able to feel with them, and one whom they would not fear—yet God, but the glory veiled. Ma. xvii. 5: Fulfilment of prophecy—meeting of type and anti-type, the one to depart, the other, "Jesus only," to remain. He. i. 1, 2; Is. lxi. 1 (first part), xi. 2: Anointed with the Spirit. Jo. iii. 34: Without measure. Is. xlix. 2-6: "A sharp sword"—words "quick and powerful"—"a polished shaft"—words fitted to penetrate—"hid in the shadow of His hand"—covered as in sheath or quiver—protected—kept ready for use till the Father's own time; vs. 4, apparent want of success at first; vs. 6, final triumph. Is. l. 4: Prepared by the Father as if carefully and diligently instructed—wakened morning by morning to be prepared for office. Ps. xlv. 2: Words of grace—fulfilled. Lu. iv. 22; Co. ii. 3: Fully qualified. Is. xlii. 1-4, with Ma. xii. 18-21: One who strives not, is quiet, patient, submissive, enduring, considerate, and tender to the weakest; such is the chosen of God, in whom He delights, and hence the exhortation to all who teach, 2 Ti. ii. 24.

19-22. (22) **follow not**, i. e. if the prediction fail: see, however, condition on wh. the fulfilment of a prediction would *not* accredit the prophet: De. xiii. 1-5.

Penalty of disobedience. — "To have been near a great teacher is to have been close to an open gate, the entrance of which would have brought one into a kind of paradise; but to have been near a great teacher sent from God, and not to have observed him or profited by him or blessed him in the name of the Lord, is to have gone down in the volume and in the quality of manhood. Do not imagine that men can despise the Bible and be as good as ever. To scorn the divine is to lose the human. Not to pray nobly is to live narrowly. We do not only offend God by our impiety, we wrong our own soul." — *People's Bib.*

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1-6. (2) **separate**, set apart for special purpose.^b Ex. xxi. 13; Nu. xxxv. 9-34: three such were appointed on each side Jordan. (3) **prepare a way**, road or highway. This the duty of the senate: repairs were made annually in month Adar; road was 32 cubits wide: at cross roads posts were erected to guide the fugitive, and inscribed with the word *Mekeleth*, refuge. (4) **ignorantly**, without premeditation, by accident, ill-usage, case, vs. 5. (5) **helve**, handle. (6) **heart . . . hot**, with sudden excitement at the news.

The way of escape. — I. The Old Law — 1. Appointed a place for refuge; 2.

Ordained that the way to it was to be prepared; 3. Summoned the innocent to the work of preparing that way. II. The modern application. 1. We, too, have a sure refuge; 2. It is our duty by word and deed to prepare the way, by sustaining the ordinances of religion, etc.; 3. Also to urge upon men to make use of the way.

Accessible refuge. — A party of travelers in the desert were overtaken by the fierce simoom. Like blinding snow, driven by the winds of March, came the hot sands. Before the simoom had reached its height, they came suddenly upon a rude building of stone, well protected with roof and doors, which the hand of charity had erected there in the desert for a shelter. With joy they rushed into it, closed the doors, and were safe. So when the storm of indignation sweeps the earth; when the blasts of the Almighty hide the sun, and rock and solid globe; when, at midday, there is darkness that may be felt; when man and beast groan with terror, and the pilots of the desert lose their reckoning and resign themselves to fate, — then is heard a voice above the tempest, "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself for a little moment, till the indignation be overpast; for, behold! the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity."

7-10. (8) all . . . land, in event of territory extending over the country fr. Hermon and Gilead to the Euphrates, according to conditional promise.^a Refuge cities must be within *reasonable distance* fr. the very limits of their district. This command was not carried out, bec. extension of territory was never fully or permanently realized. (9) **three cities more**, in addition to the six.^b

Sentimental pity. — I. There may be the right pity for the man and a true hatred of his sin. II. Pity for the criminal is not to stay the course of justice. Love of justice, and regard for the law of God, to overrule sentiment. III. If pity were to spare the criminal, then all would escape. Each would find some one to pity him.

Cities of refuge. — In Samoa, the manslayer, or the deliberate murderer, flies to the house of the chief of the village, or to the house of the chief of another village to which he is related by the father's or the mother's side. In nine cases out of ten, he is perfectly safe if he only remains there. In such instances, the chief delights in the opportunity of showing his importance. In Samoa, a chief's house is literally his fortification, except in times of open rebellion and actual war. — *Turner*.

11-13. These orders concerning preparation of roads, additional cities on extension of territory, and appeal to elders, are peculiar to Deut.

Revenge. — A pure and simple revenge does in no way restore man towards the felicity which the injury did interrupt. For revenge is but doing a simple evil, and does not, in its formality, imply reparation; for the mere repeating of our own right is permitted to them that will do it by charitable instruments. All the ends of human felicity are secured without revenge, for without it we are permitted to restore ourselves; and therefore it is against natural reason to do an evil that no way co-operates the proper and perfective end of human nature. And he is a miserable person whose good is the evil of his neighbor; and he that revenges in many cases, does worse than he that did the injury; in all cases as bad. — *J. Taylor*.

Justice. —

Of all the virtues justice is the best;
Valor without it is a common pest;
Pirates and thieves, too oft, with courage graced,
Show us how ill that virtue may be placed.
'Tis our complexion makes us chaste or brave;
Justice from reason and from heaven we have;
All other virtues dwell but in the blood;
That's in the soul, and gives the name of good. — *Waller*.

14. **landmark**,^d a little trench, a small cairn, or single erect stone; such simple boundaries might easily be shifted by a dishonest, grasping neighbor. Though gardens were enclosed, fields were left open, marked off only in this simple manner. This law appears here for first time. of old time, the fathers, those who partitioned the land would be so regarded by later generations.

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of the age, as it is still in the East, Moses incorporated it in an improved form in his code." — *Jamieson*.

De. iv. 41-43; Jos. xx. 1-9.

Surely it is better for you to be warned of your danger in this world in order to save you, than to be told of it in the day of judgment only to condemn you.

a Ge. xv. 18; Ex. xxiii. 31.

b "That nine cities, and not six only, are provided by these vss. is the opinion of the Jewish authorities generally, of Lyra, Gerhard, Keil, Schultz, etc." — *Spk. Comm.*

"If strict justice be not the rudder of all our other virtues, the faster we sail the farther we shall find ourselves from that haven where we would be." — *Colton*.

the guilty to be punished without pity

c Ex. xxi. 12; Nu. xxxv. 16, 24; De. xxvii. 24; Pr. xxxviii. 17.

"Revenge is a cruel word: *manhood*, some call it, but it is rather *doghood*. The manlier any man is, the milder and more merciful, as David (2 S. i. 12) and Julius Cæsar, who, when he had Pompey's head presented to him, wept and said 'I seek not revenge, but victory.'" — *John Trapp*.

landmarks

d De. xxvii. 17; Job xxiv. 2; Pr. xxii. 28; Ho. v. 10.

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"I would be so content with what I have, as I would ever think the present best; but then I would only think it best for the present, because, whensoever I look forward, I see what is better: to arrive at which my soul will long. The soul that with but half an eye sees God will ever be on the wing, till she alights on him."—*Feltham*.

the false witness

a De. xvii. 8-11.

b For law of retaliation see Ex. xxi 23, 24. Da. vi. 24. Ma. v. 38, 39.

"This above all, to thine own self be true; and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."—*Shakespeare*.

national spirit in time of war

c Jos. xvii. 16; Ju. iv. 3; 1 S. xii. 5; Ps. xx. 7; Is. xxxi. 1.

"Fortitude is sometimes taken in a large sense to denote that constancy of mind, which is conspicuous not only in undertaking of difficult enterprises, but likewise in bearing of hardships, and thus it includes patience. Sometimes it is taken in a stricter sense to denote

A competent estate.—Abundance is a trouble, want a misery, honor a burden, baseness a scorn, advancements dangerous, disgrace odious. Only a competent estate yields the quiet of content. I will not climb, lest I fall, nor lie on the ground, lest I am trod on. I am safest while my legs bear me. A competent heart is most healthful for my body: I would desire neither to freeze nor to burn.—*Warwick*. *Cost of an estate.*—"What is the value of this estate?" said a gentleman to another with whom he was riding, as they passed a fine mansion surrounded by fair and fertile fields. "I don't know what it is valued at: I know what it cost its late possessor."—"How much?"—"His soul. Early in life he professed faith in Christ, and obtained a subordinate position in a mercantile establishment. He continued to maintain a reputable religious profession till he became a partner in the firm. Then he gave less attention to religion, and more and more to business; and the cares of the world choked the word. He became exceedingly rich in money, but so poor and miserly in soul that none would have suspected that he had ever been religious. At length, he purchased the large estate referred to, built a costly mansion, sickened and died. Just before he died he remarked, 'My prosperity has been my ruin.'"

15-21. (16) false witness, Ex. xxiii. 1; Le. xix. 16. (17) before . . Lord, as represented by the supreme court.^a (19) as he . . thought,^b the false witness shall be punished as would have been the object of his malignant prosecution; not, however, as a matter of private revenge, but as decision of judges, although apparently it rested with the injured party to press the case.

Punishment of the false witness.—I. The words of one witness not sufficient to prove a case against a man. II. Yet the truth of that one witness was to be tested. III. If he be proved to be false he shall suffer the punishment which he thought to have been the instrument of inflicting.

The law of retaliation.—This law of retaliation is in some cases even now observed in Oriental nations. An officer in the navy records his having witnessed a singular application of it in a seaport town in Asia. The governor of the town had a collection of wild beasts, to which one of the people approached for the sake of viewing them. The spectator was so nigh to the cage that a large animal of the feline tribe struck him with his claw and tore out one of his eyes. Application was soon made to the authorities for redress, and the penalty was adjudged to the animal, on the principle of retaliation. The justice of the sentence was admitted; no pecuniary satisfaction was offered, none was sought for; but the governor, rather than have his favorite animal thus mutilated, ordered it to be shot.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1-4. (1) horses and chariots,^c the most formidable elements of ancient armies; of these Israel had none till later times. (2) the priest, not the high priest. Jewish writers say a war-priest was appointed by a special ceremonial to attend the army. (3) faint, no greater security of failure in war than faintheartedness. All generals most anxious about the morale of their troops. tremble . . terrified, two strong words; do not be unnerved and overcome at the start.

Stimulants to courage.—Israel to be animated by the following facts. I. The victories of the past over the strong were secured by the presence of God. II. The presence of God in present conflicts. III. The exhortation of the priest. IV. From this it surely followed that the war was to be just and right and deserve the Divine approval.

Courage and fortitude.—Courage is that power of the mind which bears up against the evil that is in prospect; fortitude is that power which endures the pain that is felt; the man of courage goes with the same coolness to the mouth of the cannon, as the man of fortitude undergoes the amputation of a limb. Horatius Cocles displayed his courage in defending a bridge against a whole army of the Etruscans: Caius Mucius displayed no less fortitude when he thrust his hand into the fire in the presence of King Porsenna, and awed him as much by his language as his action. Courage seems to be more of a manly virtue; fortitude is more distinguishable as a feminine virtue; the former is, at least, most adapted to the male sex, who are called upon to act,

and the latter to the females, who are obliged to endure; a man without courage would be as ill-prepared to discharge his duty in his intercourse with the world, as a woman without fortitude would be to support herself under the complicated trials of body and mind with which she is liable to be assailed. — *Crabbe*. *God with thee*. — When the Crusaders encamped before Jerusalem a terrible struggle ensued. The Saracens, who possessed the city, bore down upon them in countless numbers, and it seemed as though all was lost to the Christian army. All at once a joyful cry rang through the ranks — “St. James is with us! He fights on our side!” In the excitement of the conflict some of them fancied they saw the apostle in the clouds advancing to help them! It gave them new courage. They rushed forward with an energy which could not be withstood, and the battle was won. — *Wolfendale*.

5-9. (5) officers, the *Shoterim*, Ex. v. 6-10. dedicated it, ceremonies of a religious character were customary on taking possession of a new house.^a Unlawful men in relation to relig. duties, and those who were feeble-hearted, would not be acceptable as soldiers; cowards especially were not wanted.

Exemption from the business of war. — I. Founded upon important business transactions. vs. 5, 6. II. Upon imperative social duties, vs. 7. III. Upon a deficiency of personal moral qualifications, vs. 8.

Moral cowardice. — There have been men who could discipline and control armed legions in the most perilous encounters, who never learned the art of self-control. They knew nothing of fear in the most deadly strifes, when the slain around them were numbered by thousands; but they have cowardly shrunk from the contest with self. They have manfully fought for the liberties and honor of their country; but they have been the meanest slaves in the inner world of the heart. Hosts of vile passions, like ghastly spectres, peopled their souls; and they have never dared to look them in the face, or to take one of them as a prisoner of war. Instead of dragging them to the altar, and slaying them like deadly foes before the Lord, they have succumbed to them; nay, more, treacherous to their highest and best interests, they have cherished and fostered them. Bold as they may have been elsewhere, they proved themselves too craven-hearted to assault these internal enemies, or to chase them away from the field of the heart. It is a lamentable fact, nevertheless a fact, that some of earth's greatest heroes have been the basest moral cowards. As the reward of their victories, they have been adorned with robes of office; their breasts have been decked with stars, and made to flash with gems. And well they might; for beneath that glittering robe was a heart stained with foulest blots and infamous crimes. The gems, in many cases, were all outside. Not a single star of virtue studded the heart, or beautified the soul. Within, like their own field of carnage, was full of dead men's bones, moral putrefaction and death. — *Roberts*.

10-15. (10) to fight against it, this injunction does not refer to extermination of the Canaanites, but to subsequent battles and sieges. proclaim peace,^b make offers of peace; Mos. does not encourage wars of offense.^c (11) tributaries, acknowledge their supremacy by regular payments in money or in kind. (12) besiege, cities being walled, a regular process of attack was necessary. (13) male, comp. mod. law of war, only those put to death who are found under arms.

Mercy and wrath. — I. Offered mercy precedes the execution of wrath. 1. A city besieged; 2. Summons to surrender; city not to fall by a sudden surprise, or unwarned; 3. Offer of peace. II. Condign punishment follows rejected mercy. Such rebels, if permitted to escape, would raise the standard of revolt elsewhere, and strengthen the resistance of other towns. Learn — 1. The Gospel a message of reconciliation; 2. The Gospel accepted brings peace; 3. The Gospel rejected declares the eternal ruin of the rejecter.

Peace. — When Alexander besieged a city, he sent an herald into it with burning torch in hand, to proclaim that if any man would repair and submit to him while the torch was burning, he should be saved; otherwise they might expect nothing but fire and sword. Tamerlane, when he came against any place, first hung out a white flag of grace, then a red, and lastly a black flag, to show that now there was no hope of mercy. — *Trapp*. *Acknowledgment of mercies*. — Let not the blessings we receive daily from God make us not to value, or not praise Him, because they be common: let us not forget to praise Him for the innocent mirth and pleasure we have met with since we

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that particular virtue whereby a man contemns dangers, and undauntedly sets upon some daring undertaking.” — *Limborch*.

exemptions from war

a Ne. xli. 27; Ps. xxx. title.

“Cowards die many times before their death; the valiant never taste of death but once. Of all the wonders that I yet have heard, it seems to me most strange that man should fear; seeing that death, a necessary end, will come when it will come.”

“A coward: a most devout coward: religious in it” — *Shakespeare*.

Courage to think is infinitely more rare than courage to act.

on laying siege to a city

b Nu. xxi. 21-24.

c “The Jewish law provided a hardy body of 600,000 yeomanry; these sufficed to secure the country against foreign violence; but as they did not constitute a separate soldier class, the arrangement prevented desire to engage in offensive wars.” — *Graves*.

“The wars of Israel were wars of God. Their enemies were His. He gave public notice

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by these laws, what the nations were to expect if they fought against Him. And by such fearful warnings as these He deterred the nations fr. attacking His people, and promoted the maintenance of peace." — *Wordsworth*.

no peace with the Canaanites

a Ex. xxxiv. 11-17.

Who can find a fruit tree being cut down to help a man over a brook-let, when the meanest gate-post would have done just as well? Yet men lie in the dust, when they could exert most beneficial influence upon society. "Aim high, for he who almeth at the sky shoots higher far than he who means a tree." — *Wolfendale*.

found dead

b Ma. xxvii. 24.

"The place where the remembrance of blood is, is not suited for cultivation and joy, but for sorrow and awe, and penitential desolation." — *Wordsworth*.

"Death is the portion of every man and of every woman, and our beauty so changed, that our acquaintance quickly knows us not; and that change mingled with so much horror, that they, who six hours ago tended upon us,

met together. What would a blind man give to see the pleasant rivers, and meadows, and flowers, and fountains, that we have met with since we met together! I have been told that if a man that was born blind could obtain to have his sight for but only one hour, during his whole life, and should, at the first opening of his eyes, fix his sight upon the sun when it was in its full glory, either at the rising or setting of it, he would be so transported and amazed, and so admire the glory of it, that he would not willingly turn his eyes from that first ravishing object, to behold all the other various beauties this world could present to him. And this, and many other like blessings, we enjoy daily; and for most of them, because they be so common, most men forget to pay their praises; but let not us, because it is a sacrifice so pleasing to Him that made the sun, and us, and still protects us, and gives us flowers, and showers, and meat, and content. — *Walton*.

16-20. (16) these people, Mos. speaks of them as close at hand; just across the Jordan. nothing that breatheth, in this case they were special executors of Div. judgment. (18) teach you not, this the second reason for the entire destruction of the nations. Their influence would have put God's people in too great moral danger.^a (19) destroy the trees, wh. would be needed for fuel, and for military engines. They were not to injure fruit trees. for . . . siege, R. V., "for is the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of thee?"

A war of extermination. — I. Observe the limits of this extermination. Certain nations who had filled the measure of their iniquity. II. Observe the reason of this extermination. Lest they should corrupt a too indulgent victor. Important that the true religion should have no taint of idolatry. Learn — 1. War against sin, one of extermination; 2. One evil habit spared may infect the whole character.

Cutting down fruit trees. — The Mahommedans to this day observe this law, and a curious story is related of the Arabian prophet, that when on one occasion in the siege of a fortress, prolonged by the access of the besieged during the night to the date palms outside its walls, he ordered some of his personal followers secretly to cut down these palm trees, his soldiers next morning remonstrated, so that Mahommed had to invent a special commission for the work, which, however, he never afterwards repeated. — *Temperance Com.*

Planting trees for posterity. — A very poor and aged man, busied in planting and grafting an apple tree, was rudely interrupted by the interrogation, "Why do you plant trees, who cannot hope to eat the fruit of them?" He raised himself up, and leaning upon his spade, replied, "Some one planted trees before I was born, and I have eaten the fruit; I now plant for others that the memorial of my gratitude may exist when I am dead and gone."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-6. (1) who . . . slain, in such case the assumption of premeditated murder was made, and the whole district lay under charge of it, until symbolical expiation was made. (2) elders . . . judges, special commissioners. measure . . . cities, from position of the slain to find out which city was nearest; on its responsibility for cleansing rites would rest. (4) rough valley, unproductive, waste situation. (4) eared, ploughed. (6) washed their hands, ancient act signifying innocence, repudiating connec. w. the crime.^b

Expiating an unknown murder. — Crime is not merely injury against an individual, it is an assault upon society. If murder pass with impunity, no life will soon be safe. In the human race there is a solidarity of interest. Men constitute a family. Cities have a character as well as persons. The real leaders in society are laden with heavy responsibility. It is their paramount duty to foster healthy public sentiment; and if this sentiment does not penetrate far enough to prevent crime, it should penetrate far enough to detect crime. Every man can contribute something to influence public morals, and magistrates should lead the way. The minds of men are more impressed by deeds than by words, especially by symbolic acts surrounded by the sanction of religion. It was of the first importance that the city elders should be beyond any suspicion of connivance with the deed. Therefore they must publicly purge themselves by solemn attestation. A valuable heifer was to be selected, and the elders were required to decapitate the victim — a public protest that this would be their own desert if in any degree they had been

accessories to the crime. The natural scene selected for this rite was significant. It was to be done in a rugged valley given over to barrenness or natural desolation; being an impressive picture of sin's effect. Accompanying this solemn immolation—this appeal of innocence to Heaven—there was the most explicit utterance of words; so that the honor of the rulers might shine out clear and bright. Magisterial authority is founded upon public regard. It was, moreover, a representative act. Every citizen spoke through these elders. — *Pul. Com.*

7-9. (7) **they . . answer**, in the symbolic service, and, as representing the people, shall deny all participation; note similar method in English history. (8) **blood . . forgiven**, life would be recognized as sacred, but they would not be held responsible.

Found dead. — The ceremonies observed in such a case intended — I. To teach the sacredness of human life. II. To bring guilt home to the man-slayer. III. To make each regard himself as his brother's keeper. Learn — 1. We find men dead morally among us; 2. Have we done what we could to prevent the death, or restore to life? 3. Otherwise is not our indifference a crime in the sight of God?

Assassination of the King of Sweden. — When his majesty was informed of the assassination of the King of Sweden by Ankerstroem, he made particular inquiries of a diplomatic character, conversant with the circumstances, with a view to obtain an accurate knowledge of the particulars connected with the perpetration of that diabolical act. This gentleman, in giving the relation to his majesty, thought it necessary to introduce some cautionary observations on the danger of a sovereign exposing his person too incautiously in times when the revolutionary rage at France had already extended its contagion to all other countries. But here the King cut the speaker short, by saying, "Nay, sir, I must differ from you there; for if there be any man so desperate to devote his own life to the chance of taking away the life of another, no precaution is sufficient to prevent him altogether from making the attempt; while a system of constant precaution against such dangers, they being a thousand instances to one wholly imaginary, converts the life of a person who is so guarded into a sense of perpetual restraint, anxiety, and apprehension. No, sir; the best security that a man can have against such dangers, is to act openly and boldly as a man. If an attack be made upon him, his best chance of escaping is to meet it like a man; but if he should fall under it, why, sir, he will fall like a man."

10-14. (10) **taken . . captive**, different situation from that in which none were to be saved alive. (11) **beautiful woman**, female captives often became special slaves; Moses suggests wifehood and not concubinage. (12) **shave . . nails**,^b "these were signs of purification, of separation from heathenism, preparatory to reception among the covenant people of Jehovah." — *Pulp. Com.* (13) **raiment . . off**, in order to put on garments of mourning. (14) **sell . . money**, should be treated with humanity and not as merchandise.

The conquerer taken captive. — I. This precept may be regarded as a protest against the foul crimes too frequently witnessed in time of war. II. As a check to unbridled and suddenly aroused passion. III. As a merciful protection for the defenseless captive. IV. As a hint of the general respect in which helpless women should be held.

An Armenian prince. — The historian Xenophon states that when Cyrus had taken captive a young prince of Armenia, together with his beautiful and blooming wife, of whom he was remarkably fond, they were brought before the tribunal of Cyrus to receive their sentence. The warrior inquired of the prince what he would give to be reinstated in his kingdom; and he replied, that he valued his crown and his liberty at a very low rate, but that if the noble conqueror would restore his beloved wife to her former dignity and possessions, he would willingly pay his life for the purchase. The prisoners were dismissed, to enjoy their freedom and former honors; and each was lavish in praises of the conqueror. "And you," said the prince, addressing his wife, "what think you of Cyrus?" "I did not observe him," she replied. "Not observe him!" exclaimed her husband; "upon whom, then, was your attention fixed?" "Upon that dear and generous man," she replied, "who declared his readiness to purchase my liberty at the expense of his life,"

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cannot — without some regret stay in the room alone where the body is stript of its life and honor." — *Bp. Taylor.*

the guilt of innocent blood

a Student's Hume, p. 74.

I take it that a state of preparedness to meet our Lord, or in other words, a state of Christian watchfulness, consists in the faithful and conscientious daily performance of our several duties toward God and man, in the fear, and love of God.

It has been calculated that there die each day upon this earth 91,824 human beings, wh. gives 3,826 hour by hour, and 64 every minute.

captive women

^b See Le. xiv. 8, 9; Nu. vi. 9-18; viii. 7.

"Compassion is an emotion of which we ought never to be ashamed. Graceful, particularly in youth, is the tear of sympathy and the heart that melts at the tale of woe. We should not permit ease and indulgence to contract our affections and warp us up in a selfish enjoyment; but we should accustom ourselves to think of the distresses of human life, of the solitary cottage, the dying parent, and the weeping orphan," — *Blair.*

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the right of the firstborn

a Lu. xiv. 26; Ro. ix. 13.

"Every indication of God's will is a finger-post to felicity. Without doubt, that each man should be the husband of one wife was the ordination of God." — *Pulpit Com.*

filial disobedience

"One parent is not enough; neither the father without the mother, nor the mother without the father. If one parent is immoderately angry against the child, the other parent ought to intercede for him." — *Origen.*

"Children will grow up substantially what they are by nature—and only that." — *Mrs. Stowe.*

Let not thy table exceed the fourth part of thy income; see thy provision be solid and not far-fetched—fuller of substance than art; be wisely frugal in thy preparation, and freely cheerful in thy entertainment; too much is vanity; enough a feast.

capital punishment

b Jos. viii. 29; x. 26, 27.

c Gal. iii. 13.

"Don't let us rejoice in punishment, even when the hand of God alone inflicts it. The best of us are but poor wretches just saved fr shipwreck; can we feel anything but awe

15-17. (15) **hated**, term used sometimes for a less degree of love.^a Comp. Leah and Rachel, two wives of Jacob. Ref. here is to *second* wife, the first being dead. (17) **double portion**, the right of the firstborn and must not be denied through mere partiality. See cases of changed birthright, Jacob, Esau; Ephraim, Manasseh.

The right of the firstborn. — I. Consider the circumstance implied here. The first wife dead; her children living. She is forgotten in a new love. Her children slighted. The second wife living and loved. Her children take the chief place in the father's love. II. Consider the Divine rule. The firstborn not to lose their place through their mother's fault, or their father's new affection. Learn — Justice to rule over fatherly caprice.

18-21. (19) **unto . . elders**, this only to be done when every paternal effort had failed. The testimony of the parents would suffice, but it must be of *both* parents. This public condemn, upheld the authority of the parent, but prevented private acts of injustice imperiling life. (20) **glutton . . drunkard**, terms which more fully explain "stubborn and rebellious." (21) **stone him**, treat him as a blasphemer; parents being regarded as God's representatives in their children.

Filial disobedience. — I. Here is a sad picture of a too frequent case. 1. A disobedient son; 2. Sorrow-stricken parents; 3. A disordered home. II. Here is the terrible punishment of a great crime. The greatness of the sin marked by the nature of the punishment. Learn — Ought we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits, and live? God is our father; do we obey Him?

Responsibility of parents. — Plato seeing a child do mischief in the streets, went forth and corrected his father for it: that father which does not correct his child when he does amiss, is justly corrected for his faults; and it is the pattern of God's judicial proceedings; as He visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children who imitate them, so He visits the iniquities of the children upon the fathers who countenance and indulge them. Jacob was accountable to Laban for the whole flock; not a sheep or a lamb was lost or torn but it was required at his hands (Gen. xxxi. 39). Thus must family governors be accountable to God for every lamb in the field, for every child in the family, for every servant in the house. God will one day cry aloud in thine ears, husband, father, master, wife, Give an account of thy husbandship, Give an account of thy fatherhood, Give an account of thy mastership. This made Joshua undertake for his house as well as for himself (Jos. xxiv. 15). And this made David careful of his house as well as his heart, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart" (Ps. ci. 2) — *Kitchen. Worth of a child.* — What if God should place in your hand a diamond, and tell you to inscribe on it a sentence, which should be read at the last day, and shown there as an index of your own thoughts and feelings! What care, what caution would you exercise in the selection! Now, this is what God has done. He has placed before you the mortal minds of your children, more imperishable than the diamond, on which you are about to inscribe every day and every hour, by your instructions, by your spirit, or by your example, something which will remain and be exhibited for or against you at the judgment day. — *Payson.*

22-23. (22) **hang him**, this only done after death, not as means of death. (23) **remain all night**,^b partly bec. of swift decay in hot climate, and consequent peril to life of others; partly because spectacle of exposed corpse would defile the land ceremonially; especially the corpse of one guilty of such crime as to deserve the accursed fate of hanging.^c

The philosophy of punishment. — Alvarez, in his history of China, gives the following anecdote of one of its emperors. When riding out one day, the emperor met a procession conducting some malefactors to punishment. His majesty stopped and inquired what was the matter? On being informed he immediately burst into a flood of tears. The courtiers in attendance endeavored to comfort his majesty, and one among them addressed him in these words: "Sire, in a commonwealth there must be chastisement—it cannot be avoided; so have the former kings, your predecessors, commanded it to be; so have the laws ordained it; so doth the government of the State require it." The emperor replied, "I weep not to see these men prisoners; nor do I weep to see them chastised. I know very well that the good without rewards are not encouraged; that without chastisement the wicked

are not restrained; that correction is as necessary to the government of a kingdom, as bread is for the nourishment and sustenance thereof. But I weep because my time is not so happy as that of old was, when the virtues of the princes were such, that they served as a bridle to the people, and when their example was sufficient to restrain a whole kingdom!"—*Percy*.

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—
and pity when we see a fellow-passenger swallowed by the waves?"—*G. Elliot*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

1-4. (1) **brother's**, an extensive term, including neighbors, fellow-countrymen, and even an enemy, regarded as a fellow-creature.^a **hide . . thyself**, so not only refusing help, but also making out thou hadst not seen. (2) **seek . . restore**, shall care for his property and return it if owner identifies. (4) **fall down**, *i. e.* under its burden.^b

strayed animals

a Ex. xxiii. 4.

b Ex. xxiii. 5.

Restoration of lost property.—I. Explain the old law. Property consisted chiefly of flocks and herds. Fences rudely constructed, etc. II. Apply the principle to modern times. Men carry much property with them. Often lose it. The finder not to appropriate, but restore it: *vs.* 4 teaches us that a man should have regard to the well-being of his neighbor. Learn—1. If men acted on this plan there would be security and good neighborhood; 2. Let us extend the rule to men's souls. Is not a man better than a sheep?

"Honesty is the best policy," but he who acts from that principle is not a honest man."—*Whately*.

Ox and ass.—I am shocked at the thoughtless cruelty of many people, yet I did a thing once that has given me considerable uneasiness, and for which I reproached myself bitterly. As I was riding homeward I saw a wagon standing at a door, with three horses; the two foremost were eating corn from bags at their noses; but the third had dropped his on the ground and could not stoop to get any food. However, I rode in absence of mind without assisting him. But when I had got nearly home I remembered what I had observed in my absence of mind, and felt extremely hurt at my neglect, and would have ridden back had I not thought the wagoner might have come out of the house and relieved the horse. A man could not have had a better demand for getting off his horse than for such an act of humanity. It is by absence of mind that we omit many duties.—*R. Cecil*.

He who saith there is no such thing as an honest man, you may be sure is himself a knave.

"An honest man is respected by all parties. We forgive a hundred rude or offensive things that are uttered from conviction, or in the conscientious discharge of a duty."—*Hazlitt*.

5. **woman . . man**,^c sex-life as such to be carefully respected and not confused by exchange of appropriate garments; woman should be known as woman, man as man. There may be reference to practices at heathen temples.

dress

Things in their places.—I. This applies to costume, for obvious reasons. II. But it applies to manners also. Men to be manly; women womanly. If dress of the opposite sex not to be assumed, much less their manners and duties.

c 1 Ti. ii. 9; Tit. ii. 4, 5; 1 Pe. iii. 3, 5.

Blood spots on dress.—It would be strange if at any great assembly, which, while it dazzled the young and thoughtless, beguiled the gentler hearts that beat beneath the embroidery with a placid sensation of luxurious benevolence, as if by all that they wore in waywardness of beauty, comfort had first been given to the distressed and aid to the indigent,—it would be strange, if, for a moment, the spirits of Truth and of Error, which walk invisibly among the masks of the earth, would lift the dimness from our erring thoughts, and show us how—inasmuch as the sums exhausted by that magnificence would have given back the failing breath to many an unsheltered outcast on moor and street—they who wear it have literally entered into partnership with Death, and dressed themselves in his spoils. Yes; if the veil could be lifted from your thoughts, but from your human sight, you would see—the angels do see—on those gay white dresses of yours strange dark spots and crimson patterns that you know not of,—spots of the inextinguishable red that all the seas cannot wash away;—yes; and among the pleasant flowers that crown your fair heads, and glow on your wreathed hair, you would see that one wreath was always twisted that no one thought of—the grass that grows on graves.—*Ruskin*.

"This a precept ag. boldness and effrontery in woman; and ag. effeminacy in man. It is a precept ag. all infraction of those laws wh. God has established at the creation of man and of woman, out of man; and renewed and reinforced in the incarnation of Christ, and in the formation of the Church out of Him, and in her subordination to Christ."—*Wordsworth*.

6-8. (6) **tree . . ground**, according to habit of bird; may check for any necessary or wise purpose the increase, but shall not exterminate.^d (8) **make . . battlement**, protection on roof of house, parapet or railing where roofs are flat.

birds' nests and battlements

Treatment of birds' nests.—I. The minuteness of Divine law is here very beautifully illustrated. II. The beneficence of that law also. III. A prohibi-

^d "Birds are well known to serve important uses in

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the economy of nature, therefore the extirpation of a species, whether of edible or ravenous birds, must in any country be productive of serious evils." — *Michaëlis*.

bition of this kind shows that there is a right and wrong in everything. IV. The principle of this prohibition admits of wide application. V. Beware of the possibility of being merely pedantic in feeling. VI. Kindness to the lower should become still tenderer kindness to the higher. — *Parker*.

Utility of birds. — Most of the smaller birds are supported, especially when young, by a profusion of caterpillars, small worms, and insects; on these they feed, and thus they contribute to preserve the vegetable world from destruction. This is contrary to the commonly received opinion, that birds, particularly sparrows, do much mischief in destroying the labors of the husbandman. It has been observed that a single pair of sparrows, during the time they are feeding their young, will destroy about four thousand caterpillars weekly! They likewise feed their young with butterflies and other winged insects, each of which, if not destroyed in this manner, would be productive of several hundred caterpillars. Let us not condemn a whole species of animals because in some instances we have found them troublesome or inconvenient. Of this we are sufficiently sensible; but the uses to which they are subservient in the grand economical distribution of nature, we cannot so easily ascertain. The great table of nature is spread alike to all, and is amply stored with everything necessary for the support of the various families of the earth. It is owing to the superior intelligence and industry of man that he is enabled to appropriate so large a portion of the best gifts of Providence for his own subsistence and comfort; let him not then think it waste that in some instances creatures inferior to him in rank are permitted to partake with him, nor let him grudge them their scanty pittance; but considering them only as the tasters of his full meal, let him endeavor to imitate their cheerfulness, and lift up his heart in grateful effusions to Him "who filleth all things living with plenteousness." — *Berdick*.

mixtures

9-13. (9) divers seeds, *etc.*,^a "this and foll. injunc. seem founded on the aversion to mixtures wh. characterize several parts of law of Mos." Idea of mixture prob. felt to be out of harmony with holiness, wh. includes simplicity, singleness. (10) ox and ass, in addition to above reason, this was based on principles of humanity; as the habits of working differed so much in these animals, one would only fret the other. (11) woollen . . linen, another illustration of perverted and careless habits which had its reflex influence upon moral life. (12) fringes, Num. xv. 38, 39, badge to help remember God's commandments.

a Le. xix. 19.

"The Church is God's vineyard (Is. v. 7; Je. xii. 10; Ma. xxi. 33; Lu. xx. 15). It must not be sown with the tares of false doctrine mingled with the good seed of true." — *Wordsworth*.

The moral and the positive in the duties of life. — On this verse (11) we remark — I. That it exhibits a "positive" duty. Moral laws are of everlasting obligation; positive may be temporary and local in their existence. II. That, as the inculcation of a positive duty, the precept of the text was not so binding upon the Jews as those duties which were wholly moral. III. That we, who live under the gospel dispensation, are not bound to observe this precept at all. We are not under law, but under grace. IV. That while we are under no manner of obligation to observe this precept in its literal meaning, still the moral principle which underlies that meaning, and which it was intended to illustrate, is as binding now as ever. It teaches us that we cannot "serve two masters;" "thou shalt have no other gods before Me." — *Harley*.

"These laws were made to set forth how God abhorreth all mixtures of religion, and how carefully men should keep their minds from being 'corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.'" — *Trapp*.

Linsey-woolseys. — The different directions here given may be reduced to one idea, that of *genuineness*. The houses were to be substantial edifices, not endangering the lives of others by defective buildings or deficient battlements. The vineyards were to be sown with pure seed, that the plants might have a fair chance of growing luxuriantly. The ploughing was not to be done by an ox and ass together, for though the oxen are so small in Palestine as to be yokable with an ass, the contrariety in temper and inequality in power would prevent good work. Linsey-woolsey was to be avoided as poor stuff compared with either woollen or linen alone. And finally, the fringes were to be made upon their garments, to be at once a finishing and a distinction in the clothes of the chosen people. God gave them thus a *uniform*. The great idea here, consequently, is that God's people should be distinguished by the *genuineness* and honesty of their life-work. — *Pul. Com.*

female character

"Nothing makes a woman more esteemed by the opposite sex than chastity, whether it be that we al-

14-21. (18) chastise him with stripes not exceeding 40. (19) amerce, to punish by a pecuniary penalty unto the father, the insult being regarded as offered to him as head of the family.

A valuable dining-table. — It is related that when it was proposed to Eyre at

Guildhall that he should stand for sheriff, he would fain have excused himself, as he did not think his income was sufficient; but he was soon silenced by one of the aldermen observing "that no citizen could be more capable than the man who had openly asserted that he broke his fast every day on a table for which he would not take a thousand pounds." This assertion excited the curiosity of the then Lord Mayor and all present, in consequence of which his lordship and two of the aldermen, having invited themselves, accompanied him home to dinner. On their arrival Mr. Eyre desired his wife to "prepare the little table, and set some refreshment before the guests." This she would fain have refused, but finding he would take no excuse, she seated herself on a low stool, and, spreading a damask napkin over her lap, with a venison pasty thereon, Simon exclaimed to the astonished mayor and his brethren, "Behold the table which I would not take a thousand pounds for."—*Cassell's Old and New London.*

22—27. (23) betrothed,^a engaged to be married. In Jewish law betrothal was a virtual marriage, and infidelities during time of betrothal were treated as adulteries. (24) cried not,^b it was therefore to be assumed she consented to the sin. If she was the victim of violence, the man only died, as the only criminal.

Generous minds will put the best possible construction on human conduct.—How generously minded a man may be, he is bound to be true. He cannot dissemble facts. He is under obligation to condemn the slightest sin. With the evil thing there must be no connivance. But if it be possible, with due regard to virtue, to give two interpretations on a deed, fairness to the doer requires that we give the interpretation the most favorable and generous. To a prisoner at the bar the judge gives the full benefit of any doubt; and equal justice should be dealt to men in all our judgments upon them. If there be bright spots in their character and deeds, let us fasten our eyes upon these. It will do us good. To search out the diseased parts of humanity, and to find secret pleasure in contemplating these moral sores,—this will do us harm. As we measure our sentiments and judgments out to men, they will measure to us again. We may be blind to our own blemishes—we usually are; but others will rapidly find them out; and if we are harsh and ungenerous in our estimate of men, they will return the treatment, perhaps with compound interest. It is wise, every day, to foster in our breast the charity "that believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."—*Davies.*

28—30. (28, 29) A fine for the injury and completion of marriage met this case, bec. the damsel not being betrothed, no third person was injured.^c (30) father's skirt, comp. De. xxvii. 20.^d

Characteristics of woman.—There is beauty in the helplessness of woman. The clinging trust which searches for extraneous support is graceful and touching. Timidity is the attribute of her sex; but to herself it is not without its dangers, its inconveniences, and its sufferings. Her first effort at comparative freedom is bitter enough; for the delicate mind shrinks from every unaccustomed contact, and the warm and gushing heart closes itself, like the blossom of the sensitive plant, at every approach. Man may at once determine his position and assert his place; woman has hers to seek; and, alas! I fear me that however she may appear to turn a calm brow and a quiet lip to the crowd through which she makes her way, that brow throbs and that lip quivers to the last; until, like a wounded bird, she can once more wing her way to the tranquil home where the drooping head will be fondly raised, and the fluttering heart laid to rest. The dependence of woman in the common affairs of life is, nevertheless, rather the effect of custom than necessity. We have many and brilliant proofs that where need is she can be sufficient to herself, and play her part in the great drama of existence with credit, if not with comfort. The yearnings of her solitary spirit, the outgoings of her shrinking sensibility, the cravings of her alienated heart, are indulged only in the quiet holiness of her solitude. The world sees not, guesses not the conflict; and in the ignorance of others lies her strength. The secret of her weakness is hidden in the depths of her own bosom; and she moves on, amid the heat and the hurry of existence, and with a seal set upon her nature, to be broken only by fond and loving hands, or dissolved in the tears of recovered home affection.—*Bethmont.*

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ways prize those most who are hardest to come at, or, that nothing besides chastity, with its collateral attendants, truth, fidelity, and constancy, gives the man a property in the person he loves, and consequently endears her to him above all things."—*Addison.*

adultery, etc.

a Ex. xx. 14; Pr. vi. 27-29; Le. xx. 10; Ju. viii. 3-5.

b Nu. xxxii. 23; Ps. xxxiv. 15-17; 2 Co. v. 10; Pr. xv. 3; 2 Ch. xvi. 9; 1 S. ii. 3.

"If a sentinel recklessly leave open a portal in the beleaguered city, it is treason. To see a house on flame, and to give no warning, is to become accountable for the destruction of a city. So to make no resistance to the tempter is to court his approach. To go to the battle without sword, or spear, or shield is to invite defeat."—*Pulpit Com.*

c Ex. xxii. 16, 17; Ge. xxxiv. 12.

d Ge. xlix. 3, 4; Ru. iii. 9; Ez. xvi. 8; 1 Co. v. 1.

"Thou, my love, are sweeter far than balmy incense in the purple smoke. Pure and unspotted as the cleanly ermine ere the hunter sullies her with his pursuit."—*Davenant.*

"In thy fair brow there's such a legend writ of chastity, as blinds the adult'rous eye; not the mountain ice, congeal'd to crystal, is so frosty chaste as thy victorious soul, wh. conquers man, and man's proud tyrant, passion."—*Dryden.*

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CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

illegitimacy,
etc.a Ge. xix. 30-38;
Ne. xiii. 1, 2.b "The Amm and
Moa. are to be re-
garded as clans of
the same stock
rather than as two
indep. nations.
See 2 Ch xx. 1."
Spk. Com."As God takes no-
tice of the least
courtesy showed to
His people, even
to a cup of cold
water, to requite
it, so He doth of
the least discour-
teousy to revenge
it." — Trapp.treatment of
Edomites and
Egyptians

c Nu. xx. 18.

d Ex. xx. 5.

vs. 7. "Where
though thou
meetest with
much hardship,
yet thou hadst kind
entertainment at
first, and after that
a subsistence, such
as it was. Our
Henry VI. is said
to have been of
that happy mem-
ory that he never
forgot anything
but injuries. Eli-
sha, by a noble re-
venge, bade set
bread and water
before the Syrians
that came to sur-
prise him." —
Trapp.Be not stingy of
kind words and
pleasing acts, for
such are fragrant
gifts, whose per-
fume will gladden
the heart and
sweeten the life of
all who hear or
receive them.the soldier's
bearing

e Jos. vi. 10, 18, 19.

1-6. (1) enter . . congregation, mutilations which were common to heathen practices wholly forbidden; exclusion a somewhat severe but necessary penalty. **bastard**, the Talmud and the rabbins understand this term as applicable to offspring of adultery rather than to children born out of wedlock. **tenth**, the number of indefiniteness; a "round number." (3) **Ammonite**, **Moabite**, ill. vs. 2. See their incestuous origin. (4) Another reason for their exclusion, Nu. xxii. 5, 6.

Benevolence towards God's ancient people. — I. The duty of benevolence in general. 1. It is a duty; 2. It is a duty absolutely indispensable to our acceptance with God. II. Our special obligation to exercise it towards God's ancient people. 1. We are more indebted to them than to any other people under heaven; 2. The very blessings which we enjoy were taken from them, on purpose that they might be transferred to us; 3. This very transfer of their blessings had been made to us for the express purpose that we might dispense them to that bereaved people in the hour of their necessity. — *Simeon*.

Curious comment on vs. 2. — "*Non ingreditur in ecclesiam Domini*, he shall not enter into the church. The meaning of the phrase is, he shall not marry a Jewish woman. But upon this, grossly mistaken, a bastard at this day in the church of Rome, without dispensation, cannot take orders; the thing haply well enough where 'tis so settled; but that 'tis upon a mistake (the place having no reference to the church) appears plainly by what follows at the third verse, 'An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord, even to the tenth generation. Now, you know, with the Jews an Ammonite or a Moabite could never be a priest, because their priests were born so, not made.' — *Selden*.

7, 8. (7) Edomite, bec. descended fr. Esau twin bro. of Jacob. See, however, their unfriendly treatment. **Egyptian**, later cruelties should not put out the memory of former hospitality. (8) **third generation**,^d deprivation, in their case for three generations, would suffice to mark their sin; their great grandchildren may be admitted.

Lessons from the past. — I. The usual practice of man. To take recent injuries as the rule for conduct, rather than old ties and old benefits. One small affront often makes men oblivious of much former kindness. II. The more merciful divine law. The old relation of Edom; and the ancient hospitality of Egypt to be remembered.

Forgiveness of injuries. — A celebrated tutor in Paris was in the habit of relating to his pupils, as they stood in a half circle before him, anecdotes of illustrious men, and obtaining their opinions respecting them, rewarding those who answered well with tickets of merit. On one of these occasions he mentioned to them an anecdote of Marshal Turenne. "On a fine summer's day," said he, "while the marshal was leaning out of his window, his valet entered the room, and approaching his master with a soft step gave him a violent blow with his hand. The pain occasioned by it brought the marshal instantly round, when he beheld his valet on his knees imploring his forgiveness, saying that he thought it had been George his fellow-servant." The question was then put to each of the scholars, "What would you have done to the servant had you been in the marshal's situation?" A haughty French boy, who stood first, said, "Done! I would have run him through with my sword." This reply filled the whole school with surprise, and the master sentenced the boy to the forfeiture of his tickets. After putting the question to the other children, and receiving different answers, he came at length to a little English girl, about eight years of age. "Well my dear, and what would you have done on this occasion, supposing you had been Marshal Turenne?" She replied with all the sedateness of her nation, "I should have said, Suppose it had been George, why strike so hard?" The simplicity and sweetness of this reply drew smiles of approbation from the whole school, and the master awarded the prize and all the forfeitures to this little girl.

9-14. (9) host, army. **wicked thing**, e. g. theft, violence, licentiousness, and all the excesses common to life in camps. (10-14) These *vs.* contain sanitary regulations to secure cleanliness of person and habit. (13) **upon thy weapon**, with, or besides thy weapon.

*The soldier's bearing (vs. 9).—*I. The nature of this injunction. The true soldier of Israel to be honorable, self-controlled, chivalrous. II. The reason of it. That Israel might be respected for character as well as courage. That by their virtues and successes God—their lawgiver—might be honored. III. The application of it. Character of soldiers of Christ. Right methods for lawful ends.

"*Very many years ago*"—more than thirty years ago—I was driving down through Hertfordshire with the old Duke of Wellington in his carriage. It was a beautiful summer evening, the sun was shining, and everything looked flourishing and joyous. He was very silent for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. At the end of that time he said to me, 'I will tell you what I have been thinking about.' I said, 'Pray do.' He said, 'I have been contemplating this beautiful country, and I have been thinking what a curse war is.' 'Suppose,' he said, 'I had to take military possession of this district, I should have to lay low every beautiful thing which you see here. Take my word for it,' said that old veteran, the 'hero of a hundred fights,' 'take my word for it, if you had seen but one day of war, you would pray to Almighty God that you might never see such a thing again.'"—*Ld. Shaftesbury*.

15—16. (15) *escaped* . . . master, "on Israelitish ground escaped slave was free;" here manifest intention of law to favor any one seeking freedom and not simply trying to run away from justice.

Granville Sharp.—This distinguished philosopher, and friend to the liberties of mankind, first became known to the public in the case of a poor and friendless negro of the name of Somerset. This person had been brought from the West Indies to England by a master, whose name we would, if in our power, gladly hand down to the execration of posterity; and falling into bad health was abandoned by him as a useless article of property, and turned into the streets either to die or to gain a miserable support by precarious charity. In this destitute state, almost, it is said, on the point of expiring on the pavement of one of the public streets of London, Mr. Sharp chanced to see him. He instantly had the poor creature removed to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, attended to his wants, and in a short time had the happiness to see him restored to health. Mr. Sharp now clothed him, and procured him comfortable employment in the service of a lady. Two years had elapsed, and the story and name of the poor negro had almost escaped the memory of his benefactor, when Mr. Sharp received a letter from a person, signing himself Somerset, confined in the Poultry Compter, entreating his interference to save him from a greater calamity even than the death from which he had before rescued him. Mr. Sharp instantly went to the prison, and found the negro, who in sickness and misery had been discarded by his master, sent to prison as a runaway slave. The excellent patriot went immediately to the Lord Mayor, Nash, who caused the parties to be brought before him; when, after a long hearing, the upright magistrate decided that the master had no property in the person of the negro in this country, and gave the negro his liberty. The master instantly collared him in the presence of Mr. Sharp and the Lord Mayor, and insisted on his right to keep him as his property. Mr. Sharp now claimed the protection of the superior tribunals; caused the master to be arrested, and exhibited articles of the peace against him for an assault and battery. After various legal proceedings supported by him with the most undaunted spirit, the twelve judges unanimously concurred in opinion that the master had acted criminally. Thus did Mr. Sharp emancipate forever the race of blacks from a state of slavery while on British ground. "Among the heroes and sages of British glory," says an eminent review, "we can think of few whom we should feel a greater glow of honest pride in claiming as an ancestor than the man to whom we owe our power of repeating with truth,—

"Slaves cannot breathe in England: if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free;
They touch our country, and their shackles fall."

17, 18. The unnatural crimes here mentioned were connected with idolatrous worship, ceremonies, and feasts, esp. those of Ashtaroth or Astarte. (18) *dog*, throughout Scripture treated as evil,⁶ an object of contempt and dislike.

One bosom sin.—One bosom sin, determinately retained, will harden the

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"Cannon and fire-arms are cruel and damnable machines; I believe them to have been the direct suggestion of the devil. Against the flying ball no valor avails; the soldier is dead ere he sees the means of his destruction. If Adam had seen in a vision the horrible instruments his children were to invent, he would have died of grief."—*Luther*.

the runaway slave

21 S. xxx. 11-13, 15; Ex. xxii. 21.

St. Baron, before his conversion to Christianity, caused one of his slaves to be severely beaten and then sold. After his conversion he could not rest till he had induced this slave to cause his imprisonment, where he deplored constantly his crime against his human and Christian brother.

Slavery is that which cramps powers. The worst slavery is that wh. cramps the noblest powers. Worse, therefore, than he who manacles the hands and feet is he who puts fetters on the mind, and pretends to demand that men shall think and believe and feel thus and thus, because others so believed, and thought, and felt before.

whoredom

21 S. xxiv. 14; 2 S. iii. 8; ix. 8; Ph. iii. 2; Re. xxii. 15.

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vs. 18. Perhaps the word *dog* is figurative (*cf.* Re. xxii. 15), and equivalent to the "sodomite" of vs. 17.

usury

a Ps. xv. 5.

b Lat. *usura*, fr. *uti, usus*, to use.

"Get all you can without hurting your soul, your body or your neighbor. Save all you can, cutting off every needless expense. Give all you can. Be glad to give and ready to distribute; laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that ye may attain eternal life."—*J. Wesley.*

vows

c Ec. v. 4, 5; Ac. v. 1-4; Ps. lxi. 13, 14.

"When you have promised to do any good office, the right of the thing promised hath, before the God of Truth, passed over from you to another; you will esteem yourself obliged to stand to your word, though it may be to your own prejudice."—*Venn.*

travelers' refreshment

d Ma. xii. 1; Mk. ii. 23; Lu. vi. 1.

heart, stupefy the conscience, darken the mind, and damn the man! It will resist and overcome inward monitions; it will frustrate and render nugatory all influences from without. "Herod feared John" because he was a good and a holy man. He heard him and was touched; "he heard him often and heard him gladly," and "did many things" in consequence; but there was one thing he would not do—he would not put away Herodias. And she—his bosom sin personified and embodied—led him at last to send an executioner to behead John in prison.—*T. Binney.*

19, 20. See on Ex. xxii. 25; Le. xxv. 36, 37.^a (19) **usury**,^b formerly interest on loans, now applied to exorbitant interest, or beyond legal rate. This injunction prevented breaking up of kindly relations among Jews themselves. Jews have become the great money-lenders of the world.

The blessing of God (vs. 20).—I. The extent of the Divine blessing, "all that thou settest thine hand to," i, e. war, social, domestic, religious life. II. Condition of the Divine blessing—obedience. III. Nature of it. Favor of God, providing for national and personal prosperity. What is life without the blessing of God?

Usurers are full of care.—The men of most credit in our time are the usurers, for they credit most men; and though their greatest study be security, yet it is usually their fortune to be fullest of care. Time is precious to them; for they think a day broke to them is worth a brokerage from their creditor. Yet this they find by use, that as they have much profit by putting out, so must they have much care to get it in. For debtors are of Themistocles' mind, and take not so much care how to repay all, as how they may not pay at all, their creditors, and make this their first resolution how they make no resolution at all. I envy not therefore the usurer's gains, but considering they (as merchant-adventurers) send abroad their estates in uncertain vessels, sometimes into the bankrupt rivers of prodigality and unthriftiness, sometimes into the seas of casualties and misfortunes, that many times their principal comes short home, I think with myself, let them gain much by the adventure that adventure so much to gain. I will make this use of those uses, as to claim no interest in their gains, nor to owe anything to any man but love. If I lend where need is, and receive my principal again, I will account that my principal gain, and think my courtesy but a commanded charity.—*Warwick.*

21-23. See on Num. xxx. 2. They were not compelled to make vows, but it was open to any one to make them in token of their gratitude and devotion.^c

The place of vows.—It is not obligatory to make vows; it is obligatory to fulfill them. I. Vows imply special acts of kindness on the part of God. When surrounding events seemed most adverse to our interests, in answer to prayer, sudden deliverance has come. A precious life was in jeopardy; human help was unavailing; but God graciously interposed, and midnight suddenly became a summer noon. II. Vows imply, on our part, defective piety. Vows are made under the influence of excessive fear or from an influx of sudden joy. Now, this is not wrong. Still there is something better. It is better to be always in a frame of trustful feeling, so that we may welcome whatever God ordains, and realize that what God does is best. III. Vows create for us a new obligation. Having made a debt, we are bound to pay it; but it is better not to accumulate a debt. But having framed a religious vow, truth requires that it should be scrupulously kept. To violate a vow would injure our own soul's life."—*Pulpit Com.*

Heathen vows.—Vows are very common in Samoa; horses, canoes, land, etc., were promised to the gods or their high priests, on condition of recovery from sickness. The same sort of thing is carried on still to a great extent. If a child is sick, his ungodly father may vow amendment, and attention to the Word of God, on condition that the son recovers. In some cases the conditional amendment ends in real conversion; but in most instances perhaps the party soon returns, like "the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in mire."—*Turner.*

24, 25.^d This permission was necess. for the accommodation of travelers, for whom no inns were provided. So abundant was the produce of Palestine that all a person could eat while passing thro' a vineyard or cornfield would be utterly insignificant.

Refreshment for travelers.—Things to be remembered. I. Travelers would be few along vineyard and field paths. II. Walking as they ate they would pluck but little. III. They were to carry none away. Present need only provided for. IV. This law, designed for the land of Israel, is not in force here. To pluck the fruit of another is, with us, theft, since proper places for refreshment are provided.

An Indian custom.—In Eastern countries there is a custom which seems to present an apt illustration of the above texts. A lady who was on a journey in India relates that one day she rested in her palanquin beneath the shade of some spreading banyan trees, while her bearers kindled a fire, and her servant commenced his cooking preparations. Close by them was a garden of gourds, and other Indian vegetables, and the lady was surprised at seeing her servant coolly walk into this garden, and commence gathering first of one kind of vegetable, then of another, till his hands were full, when he went towards the fire and began cutting them up. On this his mistress called him, and told him not to forget to pay for all he had taken from the garden, when the owners should come, which they would most certainly at the time of watering the plants. The man smiled, and said that they would not require payment. Then the lady tried to explain that it was stealing to take the property of another without payment. He smiled again, and with a most truthful expression replied in his broken English, "That no stealing, ma'am; that one custom in my country. Traveling this way, take what we want, but no carry away." The men belonging to the garden soon after appearing, the servant told them, in his native tongue, how his mistress accused him of stealing, on which they all seemed much amused. This had evidently been the habit of their country from time immemorial, and they had no desire or thought of change, but were contented in all things as their fathers had done before them. The verses already quoted, with some others in New Testament, coming to the traveler's mind, she felt assured that this was a very ancient custom, not only in India but also in the Holy Land, the land of the Bible. In Matt. xii. 1, Mark. ii. 23, and Luke vi. 1, it is recorded that the disciples passed through the cornfields, plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. Our Lord did not rebuke them; they might eat, but not carry away.—*Bibl. Treas.*

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The vines are so productive in Palestine, when properly cultivated, and the vineyards so unprotected, that a hungry passenger may fill himself and no one be a bit the poorer. Or he may enter the field of standing corn and make what use he can of his hands. In other words the hungry was regarded as having a right to satisfy the cravings of nature and to pass on. And when it was placed on the statute book as a right, it saved the poor man's self-respect and never interfered with his personal freedom. This "poor-law" gives man his need without asking him to surrender his liberty.—*Pulp. Com.*

"That man is not poor who has the use of things necessary."—*Horne*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

1-4. (1) bill . . divorcement,^a low moral procedure, implying man's authority and right as against woman, but broken down by the force of our Lord's comment^b; the writing of a bill made the reason specific and doubtless altogether prevented much of the barbarous practice grounded in insufficient or improper cause. (4) land . . sin, words which show the result of loose conceptions and practice as related to marriage.

A Jewish writing of divorcement.—The following common form of such a writing illustrates the above. See Maimonides and Lightfoot. "On the day of the week A., in the month B., in the year C., from the beginning of the world, according to the common computation in the province of D., I, N., the son of N., by whatever name I am called, of the city E., with entire consent of mind, and without any compulsion, have divorced, dismissed, and expelled thee—thee, I say, M., the daughter of M., by whatever name thou art called, of the city E., who wast heretofore my wife; but now I have dismissed thee—thee, I say M., the daughter of M., by whatever name thou art called, of the city E., so as to be free, and at thine own disposal, to marry whomsoever thou pleasest, without hindrance from any one, from this day forever. Thou art therefore free for any man. Let this be thy bill of divorce from me, a writing of separation and expulsion according to the law of Moses and Israel.

"Reuben son of Jacob. Witness.
"Eliezer, son of Gilead. Witness."

5. free . . one year, this exemption helped to attach sanctity to the marriage-tie, and to impress on the people that its duties must not readily be evaded. The honorable observance of marriage duty lies at the foundation of family and social morals.

The rival claims of home and country.—I. From this rule it is clearly implied that a man should be a good patriot and citizen, and, if needs be,

divorcement

^a "It appears that the practice of divorces was at this early period very prevalent amongst the Is., who had in all probab. become familiar with it in Egypt."—*Lanc.*

^b Mat. v. 31, 32; xix 3-9.

the newly married exempt from war

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"God in His law is tender-hearted towards women, although in the same code He is severe against their sins."—*Bp. Wordsworth.*

"Who would not bleed with transports for his country, tear every tender passion from his heart, and greatly die to make a people happy?"—*Thomson.*

"What pity is it that we can die but once to serve our country."—*Addison.*

pledges

a "The upper stone being concave, covers the nether like a lid: and it has a small aperture through which the corn is poured, as well as a handle by wh. it is turned."—*Crit. Com.*

b Ja. ii. 5-8; Pr. xix. 17.

man-stealing

c Ge. xxxvii. 28; xlv. 16

"We further reprobate, by our Apostolic authority, all the above offenses (traffic in slaves and holding them in slavery) as utterly unworthy of the Christian name."—*Pope Gregory XVI.*

"Jove fixed it certain, that whatever day makes man a slave, takes half his worth away."—*Pope.*

leprosy

d "Leprosy was the symbol of sin, most often the theocratic punishment, the penalty for sins committed against the theocracy as in case of Miriam, of Gehazi, of Uzziah."—*Trench.*

contend for national liberty. II. It is also clear that the duties of the patriot must, upon occasions and within certain limits, be superseded by those of the husband. Apply—1. To those who sacrifice the claims of home to public engagements; 2. To those who unreasonably neglect public duty for the sake of domestic comfort.

Spartan patriotism.—A Lacedæmonian mother had five sons in a battle that was fought near Sparta, and seeing a soldier that had left the scene of action, eagerly inquired of him how affairs went on. "All your five sons are slain," said he. "Unhappy wretch!" replied the woman; "I ask thee not of what concerns my children, but of what concerns my country." "As to that, all is well," said the soldier. "Then," said she, "let them mourn that are miserable. My country is prosperous, and I am happy." *American patriotism.*—A poor soldier came down from Indiana to West Virginia in the early part of the war, and, alas! too soon lay bleeding at the root of a tree in the midst of the battle. His comrade bowed over him to give him a drink from his canteen. He pronounced the name of mother and of Jesus with fast-failing breath, and when a squadron of cavalry dashed past, bearing the dear old banner, pushed his comrade away faintly screaming, "Follow that flag!" choosing to die alone that it might not fall. Heroic boy! well did he illustrate the spirit which animated that host, a million strong, which saved the nation.—*Foss.*

6. millstone . . pledge, stone, either upper or lower, as security; hand-mill of the east, with which grain is ground for daily consumption; the removal of either stone would prevent work. Similarly to take a man's tools prevented his working so as to pay his debts.^b For precept in the same spirit, see Ex. xxii. 25, 26.

The millstone secure.—Here was another right of the housewife. No legal dstraint could reach the little mill which ground the corn at home and kept the wolf from the door. Thus in her sorrows and in her joys God stood her Friend, and insisted on her rights. A similar shield should be thrown over her still. It is by securing her in her rights at home that woman's cause shall be advanced. She is intended to be a queen in the household. Everything that makes her position there more secure, everything that makes the home sacred, is in the interests of public weal.—*Pulpit Com.*

7. stealing . . brethren,^c expressive phrase implying that such wickedness was known to the lawgiver, Ex. xxi. 16. thief . . die, one of the capital crimes; punishment intended to protect human freedom.

The origin of the slave trade.—It will to some appear singular that the slave trade should have originated in an act of humanity; yet such was the fact, and exhibits an instance of one of the best and most humane men being guilty of cruelty, when his mind was under the influence of prejudice. Barthelme de las Casas, the Bishop of Chiapa, in Peru, witnessing the dreadful cruelty of the Spaniards to the Indians, exerted all his eloquence to prevent it. He returned to Spain, and, pleading the cause of the Indians before Emperor Charles V. in person, suggested that their place as laborers might be supplied by negroes from Africa, who were then considered as beings under the proscriptio of their Maker, and fit only for beasts of burden. The emperor, overcome by his forcible representations, made several regulations in favor of the Indians; but it was not until the slavery of the African negroes was substituted, that the American Indians were freed from the cruelty of the Spaniards.—*Percy.*

8, 9. (8) plague, used in general sense of disease, here with allusion to the contagiousness of leprosy.^d Full regulations given Lev. xiii., xiv. (9) Miriam, sister of Mos., Nu. xii. 10, a special warning against disobedience.

The voices of the past.—I. We are often exhorted to remember; and are told that these things happened to us as examples. "Remember Lot's wife," etc. II. Obedience to this rule will convert past history into a storehouse of instruction, warning, and encouragement. III. Our own past should not be voiceless. IV. That event of the past in which we are most interested is the death of Christ. What does it teach us?

Leprosy symbolic.—God has intended the material world to be a school-house, and every event a vehicle of moral instruction. The sick chamber may become an audience-room, where lessons of heavenly wisdom are conveyed by

the Spirit of truth. Leprosy was singled out by God to be a visible picture of sin; so that "out of the eater there might come forth meat." Out of seeming evil, good can be distilled. As a healed man will cheerfully recompense the physician for his pains, so God required the restored leper to express his gratitude in the form of animal sacrifice. His gratitude could not be expressed in empty words. He was not permitted to bring that "which cost him nothing." In the slaughter of the devoted victim, the grateful man would confess that he himself had deserved to die, and that God had permitted a substitute. If the man were fully penitent, the sight of the dying substitute would vividly impress his heart with a sense of God's mercy. In every arrangement which God made, the good of man was sought. The method will often seem strange to our dim vision, but respecting the beneficent end there can be no question. — *Pulpit Com.*

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Leprosy. By others' faults wise men correct their own. "Therefore," says B. p. Hall, "God strikes some that he may warn all." — *Preacher's Com.*

10-13. (10) go . . house, humiliate him by seeing his poverty. ^a pledge, lending article to be held until repayment of a loan. The creditor would decide whether the pledge offered was adequate. (12, 13) These *vss.* assume that the poor man had nothing to offer in pledge but the garment he wore by day, and used as coverlet by night. **righteousness**, right, acceptable conduct, manifesting proper charity and consideration.

The influence of poverty. — Alone in the garret of a dilapidated house, within a wretched room, stretched on a pallet of straw, covered only by some scanty filthy rags, with no fire in the empty chimney, and the winter wind blowing in cold and fitful gusts through the broken, battered window, an old woman lay, feeble, wasted, gray. She had passed the eleventh hour: the hand was creeping on to the twelfth. It was important to turn to the best account the few remaining sands of life; so I spoke to her of her soul, and told her of a Saviour, urging her to prepare for that other world on whose awful border her spirit was hovering. She looked; she stared; and, raising herself on her elbow, with chattering teeth and ravenous look exclaimed, "I am cold and hungry!" Promising help, I at the same time warned her that there was something worse than cold or hunger; whereupon, stretching out a naked and skinny arm, with an answer, which, if it did not satisfy the reason, touched the feelings, she said, "If you were as cold and as hungry as I am, you could think of nothing else." — *Guthrie.*

^a "Or perhaps there is some little monument of his better days, wh. he reserves to console his misery wh. he would not wish the person from whom he implores aid to see, lest he should demand that in pledge, and either, if denied, refuse relief, or by tearing away this sacred relic, embitter his distress." — *Graves.*

14-18. (14) hired servant, *see on Lev., xix. 13.* (15) his day, *etc.*,^b at justice close of each day: short terms of payment are neces. for manual laborers, who are usually dependent on day's wage for day's food.^c (16) own sin, injunction intended to regulate decisions of earthly judges. God may visit sins of fathers on childr., but earthly rulers must not try to do so.^d (17) pervert, turn aside, *see Ex. xxii. 21, 22; xxiii. 9.* widow's raiment, this with case of stranger and fatherless, indicating great consideration for the poor.

^b "In E. hired servants are paid every day. No one works after the sun goes down, even in winter." — *Jamieson.*

The memorable deliverance. — I. The deliverance obtained. They were redeemed from Egypt. So Christ delivers us from — 1. The curse of the law; 2. The bondage of sin; 3. The tyranny of Satan; 4. The evils of the world. II. The deliverer described. Redemption — 1. Originally proceeds from the mercy and love of God; 2. Is meritoriously procured by Christ; 3. Is personally realized by the power of the Holy Ghost. III. The remembrance enjoined — 1. Grateful; 2. Affectionate; 3. Obedient; 4. Perpetual.

^c *Je. xxi. 13; Mal. iii. 5; Job xxxi. 13-22; Ja. v. 4.*

A Swedish youth. — A gentleman of Sweden was condemned to suffer death, as a punishment for certain offenses committed by him in the discharge of an important public office, which he had filled for a number of years with an integrity that had never before undergone either suspicion or impeachment. His son, a youth about eighteen years of age, was no sooner apprised of the affecting situation to which his father was reduced, than he flew to the judge who had pronounced the fatal decree, and, throwing himself at his feet, prayed that he might be allowed to suffer in the room of a father whom he loved, and whose loss he thought it was impossible for him to survive. The magistrate was amazed at this extraordinary procedure in the son, and would hardly be persuaded that he was sincere in it. Being at length satisfied, however, that the young man actually wished to save his father's life at the expense of his own, he wrote an account of the whole affair to the king: and his majesty immediately sent orders to grant a free pardon to the father, and to confer a title of honor on his son. The last mark of royal favor, however, the youth

^d *2 K. xiv. 6; Ez. xviii. 20.*

"Manufactures, trade, and agriculture, naturally employ more than nineteen parts of the species in twenty; and as for those who are not obliged to labor, by the condition in which they are born, they are more miserable than the rest of mankind, unless they indulge themselves in that voluntary labor which goes by the name of exercise." — *Addison.*

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"Some relaxation is necessary to people of every degree; the head that thinks, and the hand that labors must have some little time to recruit their diminished powers." — *Gilpin*.

the portion
of the friend-
less poor

a Ru. ii. 14-16.

b Le. xix. 9; De. xv. 10; Ps. xli. 1.

"Economy is the parent of integrity, of liberty, and of ease; and the beautiful sister of temperance, of cheerfulness, and health; and profuseness is a cruel and crafty demon, that gradually involves her followers in dependence and debt; that is, fetters them with 'irons that enter into their souls' " — *Johnson*.

disputes and
stripes

c 2 Co. xi. 24. As the scourge was made of 3 thongs, each stroke was reckoned as 3; hence they gave 13, since if they had given 14, they would in fact have given 42.

"Ye lovers of strife, by whose name shall I call you? I would I might call you brethren; but alas, this heart of yours is not brotherly; I would I might call you Christians; but alas, you are no Christians. I know not by what name I shall call you; for if you were brethren, you would

begged leave with all humility to decline; and the motive for the refusal of it was not less noble than the conduct by which he had deserved it was generous and disinterested. "Of what avail," exclaimed he, "could the most exalted title be to me, humbled as my family already is in the dust? Alas! would it not serve but as a monument to perpetuate in the minds of my countrymen the remembrance of an unhappy father's shame!" His majesty, the king of Sweden, actually shed tears when this magnanimous speech was reported to him; and, sending for the heroic youth to court, he appointed him to a confidential office.

19-22. (19) **cuttest . . harvest**,^a beautiful provision, this law of gleanings. (20) **beatest . . olive**, fruit obtained by striking branches with poles. (21) **gatherest . . grapes**, by severing bunches with hook to be caught in hands.^b (22) **remember**, triple strain of appeal in behalf of poor connected with thought of bondage and poverty in Egypt.

Gleaning a Divine ordinance. — I. The privilege of gleaning, as accorded to the Jews: "freely they had received" of God, and "freely they were to give." II. The far higher grounds of this privilege as existing amongst us. Let it be recollected from what misery we have been redeemed. And can we find a stronger argument than this for liberality to the poor? Learn — 1. As gleaners, avail yourselves of your privilege; 2. As proprietors, perform the duty that is here enjoined you. — *Simeon*.

Scene in a harvest-field. —

The gleaner follows, and with studious eye
And bended shoulders traverses the field
To cull the scattered ear, the perquisite
By Heaven's decree assigned to them who need,
And neither sow nor reap. Ye who have sown,
And reap so plenteously, and find the grange
Too narrow to contain the harvest given,
Be not severe, nor grudge the needy poor
So small a portion. Scatter many an ear,
Nor let it grieve you to forget a sheaf,
And overlook the loss. For He who gave
Will bounteously reward the purposed wrong
Done to yourself; nay, more, will twice repay
The generous neglect. — *Hurdis*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

1-3. (1) **controversy**, dispute arising out of some injury done. **justify . . righteous**, comp. Ex. xxiii. 7. (2) **worthy . . beaten**, note the idiom, a *son of beating*. **lie down**, the punish. was inflicted with a rod or scourge on the back. Like "the Egyp. *bastinado*, wh. was applied to the bare back of culprit, who was stretched flat on the ground, his hands and feet being held by attendants." (3) **forty stripes**, this limit prevented passionate treatment of a brother as a slave. A whip of 3 cords, laid on 13 times, made 39 strokes or stripes.

"Then thy brother should seem vile unto thee." — A moderation in punishment is rendered necessary by the quality of the man who is punished. Man is not to be regarded as a beast of burden. Even when he has done wrong he is a man still, and a man capable of restoration and re-adoption into good citizenship. Thus mercy is wonderfully mingled with law even in the Old Testament. When God corrected his people he said he would "correct them in measure." Where the punishment ends hope is to begin. This is really the meaning of all controversial chastisements, losses, and difficulties of every kind. They do not come with overwhelming and destructive force; they come "in measure," and with a purpose of mercy; and as to how we receive such visitations, that will depend upon the spirit in which we view them; if we view them as chastisements only, or the expressions of an arbitrary will, we shall quail under them and be driven into despair; but if we look aside from the chastisement into the purpose it was meant to elucidate or enforce, then we shall kiss the hand which lifts the rod. When the sufferings of Bildad seemed to be intolerable, the exclamation was: "Wherefore are we counted

as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?" Parents should take notice of this law of measured correction. So should all magistrates and judges. Man should never be so treated as to cause his manhood to be ignored. Contempt should never be either the reason or the result of any course of punishment. When penalty ceases to be connected with hope, it ceases to be righteous.—*J. Parker.*

4. not muzzle,^a by putting bag on mouth, or tying up neck (comp. bearing rein of horses), so preventing beast fr. eating while he worked: Wheat, barley, and rice were not thrashed in Judæa, but beaten out by the feet of oxen.

Remuneration.—When John Wesley was about leaving England for Georgia, as a missionary to the Indians, an unbeliever said to him, "What is this, sir? are you one of the knights errant? How, pray, got Quixotism into your head? You want nothing; you have a good provision for life, and are in a way of preferment; and must you leave all to fight windmills, to convert savages in America?" He replied, "Sir, if the Bible be not true, I am as very a fool and madman as you can conceive; but if it is of God, I am sober-minded. For He has declared, 'There is no man who hath left house, or lands, or brethren, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.'" "Manifold more." We reckon a hundred per cent. to be large profits, but here it is manifold, one evangelist says a hundred-fold. Any sacrifice from love to Christ is sure to bring reward; not in kind, it may be, but none the less certain. In that which maketh really rich, there will be ample compensation—spiritual peace, joy, and growth. Christ sees to it that no one shall be a loser by Him, and that whatever is renounced for Him shall be a great deal more than made good. Who ever had more relatives than the apostle Paul? Wherever he labored he won brethren and sisters to himself. "Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine." Many a witness for Jesus, banished from his kindred, finding that his foes are they of his own household, rises up to say that he has met with more than a father's or mother's, more than a brother's or sister's tenderness. "Yea, He shall so provide for you," writes John Fryth, from the Tower of London, where he was prisoner in 1532, "that ye shall have an hundred fathers for one; an hundred mothers for one; an hundred houses for one; and that in this life, as I have proved by experience; and after this life, everlasting joy with Christ our Saviour."

5-10. (5) brother . . take,^b ancient law based upon the custom of keeping up family line, younger son to take up upon death of firstborn and preserve family name (Gen. xxxviii. 8). **(9) loose . . shoe,** planting the foot on a thing was symbol of taking possession and rule, so loosing the shoe was symbol of renunciation; both acts mentioned here are strong expressions of ignominy and contempt in E. The shoe was kept by the magistrate as evidence of the transaction.

Widows and brothers of deceased husbands.—The law of Moses provided that the brother of a man who had died without issue, and whose wife survived him, should marry the widow, and raise up seed in his name; and the firstborn son of such a union should be considered as the son of the deceased brother, and succeed to his inheritance. If the brother refused, the woman was to complain to the elders of the place where she lived, who were to summon the refuser, and on his persisting, the woman was to take off his shoe, and spit before him, or, as many authorities have it, in his face; after which she was at liberty to be married to another man. When there were several brothers, the Mishna states, that upon the refusal of the eldest, application was to be made to the rest; and if none would comply, the first was obliged either to marry the widow, or to submit to the prescribed indignity. By the Gemara, both the obligation and liberty of marrying the wife of a deceased brother are restricted to the eldest of the surviving brothers. By the practice of the modern synagogue this part of the law is abolished by the rabbis compelling their disciples to refuse compliance with the precept. The ceremony of release from the obligation is performed before three rabbis and two witnesses, after the morning prayers in the synagogue. The man puts on a shoe, and the woman repeats, "My husband's brother refuses to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother." The brother says, "I like not to take her." Then the woman

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love as brethren, if you were Christians, you would agree as Christians."—*Bp. Jewel.*

work and wages

a 1 Co. ix. 9-11; 1 Ti. v. 18.

"There is involved in this prohibition the general principle that all labor is to be duly requited, and hence it seems to have passed into a proverb, and was applied to men as well as the lower animals (cf. 1 Cor. ix. 9; 1 Tim. v. 18)."—*Pulp. Com.*

"We shall reap as plentifully as we sow; and at the great day of retribution we shall find that besides the general collation of happiness, peculiar coronets of glory are prepared for eminent saints."—*J. Norris.*

widows

b Ru. iv. 1-13; Ma. xxii. 23-26.

"This law of levirate marriage is not peculiar to the Jews, but is found in all essential respects the same amongst various Oriental nations, ancient and modern; it exists at present amongst S. African tribes, the Arabians, Druses, and tribes of the Caucasus."—*Spk. Com.*

"It is a great mistake to suppose that a woman with no heart will be an easy creditor in the exchange of affection. There is not on earth a more merciless exactor of love from others than a thoroughly selfish woman; and the more unlovely she grows, the more jealously and scru-

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pulously she exacts love to the uttermost farthing."—*Mrs. Stowe.*

unholy intervention

a "A good end, but not to be attained by immediate means."

weights and measures

b "Stones are frequently used still by E. shopkeepers and traders, who take them out of the bag and put them in the balance. The man who is not cheated by the trader and his bag of divers weights, must be blessed with more acuteness than most of his fellows."—*Roberts.*

"To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one pick'd out of ten thousand."—*Shakespeare.*

the doom of Amalek

c 1 Sa. xv. 3, 32, 33.

"Resentment is, in every stage of the passion, painful, but it is not disagreeable, unless in excess; pity is always painful, yet always agreeable; vanity, on the contrary, is always pleasant, yet always disagreeable."—*Home.*

firstfruits

d "When a man went into the field or vineyard, he was to mark that fruit which he observed most forward, and to lay it by for firstfruits; wheat, barley, grapes,

unties the shoe with her right hand, throws it on the ground, spits before him, and says, "So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house, and his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.'" The persons present then exclaim three times, "His shoe is loosed." The woman then receives a certificate from the chief rabbi, who declares her at liberty to marry another. — *Cox.*

11, 12. (11) deliver . . husband, as the woman with child was specially protected, so here no injury to be done to organ of procreation in man; children the comfort and hope of homes and families. (12) cut . . hand, severe punishment for barbarous and shameful conduct.

Sin working punishment.—The deaths in the New Forest by chance arrow-wounds of Rufus, of the Conqueror's youngest son Richard, and also of the illegitimate son of Duke Robert, were looked upon by Saxon peasants as the result of Divine vengeance upon the family whose ancestor had wantonly and barbarously laid the country waste in order to provide himself with a hunting ground.

13-16. (13) divers weights, no dishonesty, but strict justice in business transactions; stones were anciently used as weights^b and might easily be of different sizes. (15) perfect . . just, there should be true morality in all human conduct.

Righteousness in trade imperative.—1. In the providence of God men are thrown together for the purposes of trade. 2. Opportunity is thus furnished for the exercise of right principles of mutual justice and equity. 3. There is often given an opportunity also of taking advantage of others by unequal weights and measures. 4. God requires of us absolute justice to others, always and everywhere. 5. No false maxims of men, such as "business is business," can ever exonerate us from obligations to justice.—*Pulpit Com.*

Genuine repentance.—A poor woman went to hear a sermon, wherein, among other evil practices, the use of dishonest weights and measures was exposed. With this discourse she was much affected. The next day when the minister, according to his custom, went among his hearers, and called upon the woman, he took occasion to ask her what she remembered of his sermon. The poor woman complained much of her bad memory, and said she had forgotten almost all that he had delivered. "But one thing," said she, "I remembered—to burn my bushel." A doer of the Word cannot be a forgetful hearer.

17-19. (17) Remember . . Amalek, at end of precepts of humanity the inhumanity of Amalek is recalled. (19) blot out, be God's executors in punishing.^c Amalekites did all they could in the most cruel and unfair way to blot out Israel. Israel must not imitate their abominable ways.

Punishment, if slow, is sure.—Though God hath leaden feet, yet He hath iron hands. The longer He is before He strikes, the heavier the blow will be when He strikes. Patience is the proper purchase of the blood of Christ. There was no patience under the first covenant. God did not wait for the angels nor for Adam; but as soon as ever they had sinned He throws the one out of Paradise, the other into hell. But for us sinful sons of Adam, God for Christ's sake tarrieth, and waiteth our conversion. Oh! let us not sin against the merit of Christ's blood. For God to wait our conversion is a mercy; the greater mercy is when He gives us grace to make a holy use of His patience, to make His patience our salvation, and to be led to repentance by it.—*Calamy.*

CHAPTER THE -TWENTY-SIXTH.

1-4. (2) first . . fruit,^d of field and tree. This private and personal offering to be distinguished fr. that enjoined Ex. xxii. 29; Lev. xxiii. 10; Num. xviii. 8. In Canaan the Is. were to regard themselves as God's tenants at will, and acknowledge this by sort of rent or tribute of firstfruits. basket, made of osier, peeled willow, or palm leaves, and carried on shoulder. These firstfruits became property of officiating priest after presentation before the altar.

The presentation of the first fruits.—This interesting ceremony: 1. Reminded the individual that the land and its fruits were God's. 2. Required from him

a devout acknowledgment of the fact, with a gift in which the acknowledgment was suitably embodied. 3. Threw him back on the recollection of God's former mercies to his nation. 4. Secured a confession and rehearsal of these from his own lips. It served: 1. To create and deepen religious feeling. 2. To quicken gratitude. 3. To encourage free-will offerings.—*Pulpit Com.*

Bishop Hutton.—While Dr. Hutton, Bishop of Durham, was once traveling between Wensleydale and Ingleton, he suddenly dismounted, delivered his horse to the care of one of his servants, and retired to a particular spot, at some distance from the highway, where he knelt down, and continued for some time in prayer. On his return, one of his attendants took the liberty of inquiring his reason for this singular act; when the bishop informed him, that when he was a poor boy, he traveled over that cold and bleak mountain without shoes or stockings, and that he remembered disturbing a cow on the identical spot where he prayed, that he might warm his feet and legs on the place where she had lain. His feelings of gratitude would not allow him to pass the place without presenting his thanksgivings to God for the favors He had shown him.

5-11. This solemn liturgical formula kept in mind the relig. significance of this gift of firstfruits. It was voluntary acknowledgment of grace received. (5) Syrian . . perish,^a or a wandering Syrian, *lit.* Aramæan, prob. in allusion to Jacob, who lived years, and whose childr. except Benjamin, were born at Padan-Aram, in Syria. down . . Egypt, Gen. xli. (10) set . . worship, truthful confession, sincere offering to God of that which He has given us, and of ourselves to end in adoration or worship. (11) God . . given, all from God; in Him we should ever be happy and know how to use wisely.

A clergyman and merchant.—A poor Welsh clergyman had been noticed by a wealthy London merchant, and received an occasional invitation to dinner. After a time, wishing to improve his circumstances, he set up a boarding school, and was thereby enabled to obtain a bare maintenance for himself and family: while, from unforeseen events, the merchant became reduced in his circumstances. No sooner did this sad reverse become known to the poor honest Welshman, than he hastened to evince his grateful feelings for the former kindness of the merchant. He sent for one of his sons, and boarded and educated him until he was of age to go out in life. A friend of the merchant afterwards met him, and inquired after his tried friend, the Welsh clergyman. With some emotion he informed the friend that he had recently traveled some miles on foot in order to pay a tribute of respect to him, and to his great grief found he had lately departed this life. "But," said he, "his memory shall be cherished while my life and reason last."

12-15. (12) end . . tithing,^b *i. e.* at close of fruit harvest. For first tithe see Num. xviii. 21-24. For second tithe see De. xiv. 22, 23-29. As the third year's gifts were at the man's sole discretion he was required to make a subsequent declaration of faithfulness therein. (13) hallowed, consecrated, set apart for God. (14) in . . mourning, as an act of thanksgiving and joy in God, mourning must not be associated with it. In time of sorrow Israelites were regarded as unclean.^c neither . . use, *R. V.*, "neither have I put away thereof, being unclean," *i. e.* he had not put away any part of it from his house (*vs.* 13) while he was ceremonially unclean. for . . dead, "he had not sent any part of it where there was one dead, acc. to custom for friends to send provisions for the mourners. Hallowed things must not be carried to house of mourning, wh. was ceremonially unclean."—*Pulp. Com.*

Blessed to give.—"Sir," said a poor laboring man to a minister in a letter, "when you preached the missionary sermon last year, I was grieved that I had it not in my power to give what I wished. I thought and thought, and consulted my wife whether there was anything which we could spare without stinting the poor children; but it seemed that we lived as near as possible in every respect, and had nothing but what was absolutely necessary. At last it came into my mind, 'Is that fourpence which goes every week for an ounce of tobacco absolutely necessary?' I had been used to it so long that I scarcely thought it possible to do without it; however I resolved to try; so, instead of spending the fourpence, I dropped it into a box. The first week I felt it sorely, but the second week it was easier, and in the course of a few weeks it was little or no sacrifice at all; at least I can say that the pleasure far outweighed

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figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates, some of each sort must be put in a basket, with leaves between them, and so presented to God."—*Mat. Henry.*

"It was not enough to feel thankfulness, it was necessary to make a public declaration and open profession of it, both by word and deed, in God's house."—*Bp. Wordsworth.*

grateful memory of the past

^a Chaldee trans., "Laban the Syrian sought to destroy my father." Arabic trans., "he had almost destroyed him." So some Targums, Luther, Vulg., etc.

"Duty to God is in itself the highest duty, and comprehends all other duties."

tithes

^b "A strict fulfillment of the onerous and complicated tithe obligations was a leading part of the righteousness of the Pharisees, *Ma. xxiii. 23.*"—*S p k. Com.*

^c *Le. xxi. 1, 11; Ho. ix. 4.*

"People in general have no notion of mixing religion with common life—with their pleasures, with their meals, with all their thoughts. Hence it is they think that their Maker is an enemy to happiness, and that religion is fit for the closet only."—*Mayow.*

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"The secret consciousness of duty well performed, the public voice of praise that honors virtue, and rewards it; all these are yours." — *Francis*.

true
obedience

a Ma. xxii. 36, 37.

b From Lat. *advocare*, to call to, to declare positively.

"The great high road of human welfare lies along the old highway of steadfast well-doing; and they who are the most persistent, and work in the truest spirit, will invariably be the most successful; success treads on the heels of every right effort." — *Smiles*.

memorial
stones and
altars

c "Stones and rocks are seen in Egy. and penin. of Sinal, containing inscriptions made 3,000 years ago, in paint or plaster, of wh., owing to the serenity of the climate, the coating is as firm, and the color as fresh, as if it had been put on yesterday." — *Jamieson*.

the sacrifice. When children found what I was doing, they wished to contribute also; and .. ever they got a penny or halfpenny given them for their own pleasure, it was sure to find its way into the box instead of the cake-shop. On opening the box, I have the pleasure to find that our collected pence amount to one pound, which I now enclose, and pray that the Lord may give His blessing with it." — *Selected*.

16-19. An earnest exhortation closing up this address, and reminding the people that they were pledged to God. (16) **all thine heart**,^a this *inward* obedience God esp. required, but it would find expression in keeping outwardly the foregoing social and ceremonial laws. (17) **avouched**,^b accepted God's covenant, and vowed themselves to be His. (19) **high . . nations**, comp. De. iv. 7, 8; xxviii. 1; Ex. xix. 6; 1 Pe. ii. 9.

The mutual relations of God and His people (vss. 17, 18). — I. Touch a little at the engagement of a covenanted people — their avouching God. II. Speak a little concerning the engagement of a covenanted God — His avouching them. III. Point out the solemnity of these engagements, both to Him and them. — *Simeon*.

Real greatness. — Consider, as you should, that the truly great in this world are the truly good, even though their way through life be noiseless as the light and unnoticed as the quiet air, though men profess to know them not, and though no humble stone point to their last resting-places. Walk, if you will, under the lofty dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, or along the melancholy aisles of Westminster Abbey — move over the marble pavement with careful tread and bated breath. As you view the quiet monuments, and dusky banners, and royal mausoleums, upon which the sunbeams throw their tempered and lonely light through the gorgeously painted windows, think of the grand processions, the solemn pomp, the saddened tones of music, the sorrowful splendor which have attended the interment of these mortals, once so proud, so noble, so brilliant, and if you please ponder their greatness. But do not forget that greatness before men is sometimes littleness before God, and that every man who lives only to love God and do good to his fellows, is in the sight of his Maker truly great. It is honor and blessedness the greatest to belong to the army of Jesus Christ — to be holy and loving and faithful, a witness for God, an instructor in His house, a benefactor among men. — *Rosoman*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

1-8. (1) **Moses . . elders**, elders here joined in exhortation for first time; prominently mentioned because influence now and hereafter to be greatly increased. (2) **stones**^c . . **plaster**, stone monument, plastered to make firm, and perhaps to produce smooth surface for writing law. (3) **all . . words**, the decalogue simply or an authorized epitome. (4) **Ebal**, now *Imad-el-deen*, Deut. xi. 29. (5) **iron tool**, Ex. xx. 25. (6) **whole stones**, such as had not been chipped or broken, keeping up idea of *perfectness*, charac. of Jewish service. (8) **very plainly**, so easily read.

The law of God. — 1. Let us ever regard the Bible as a Book for the people, and let us insist on its being made the ultimate standard of appeal. 2. Let us use it as God meant us to use it, not as *a* book, but as *the* Book, not as man's, but as God's. 3. With such a Book before us, let us walk (1) intelligently, as if we understood the meaning of life; (2) thankfully, as if we apprehended the glory of life; (3) earnestly, as if we knew the solemnity of life; (4) hopefully, as those who are advancing towards the goal of life. — *Pulpit Com.*

An enduring memorial. — The skeleton which the corals secreted during life remains an indestructible record of their existence; for while, with rare exceptions, the bones of the higher animals vanish after a few years from the surface of the earth, the stone-polyp, firmly rooted to the spot which it occupied while alive, marks the lapse of centuries, and seems to bid defiance to all time. The coral reefs of the primitive world form a conspicuous portion of the earth-rind; and as they are frequently situated in the depths of continents, or beyond the limits of the polar circle, lead us back to times when tides broke against the mountains of Switzerland, or the shores of Spitzbergen were washed by a tepid sea. The most ancient monuments erected by

man to mark his transient passage on earth — the Pyramids of Egypt, or the temples of Meroë — do not reach, perhaps, beyond fifty or sixty centuries; but here we have ramparts to which the great wall of China is a pigmy, erected at periods separated from the present time by an incalculable series of ages. *Hartwig.*

9—13. (9) **spake** . . Israel, all capable of instructing took part, priests, the specially trained or educated, as well as consecrated class, next after Moses himself, then Levites, addressed ^a the people. thou . . become, hast gained standing or character of people of God. (10) **obey** . . voice, after passing Jordan more than ever. (12) **Gerizim**,^b now *Jebel-et-Tur*, De. xi. 29. These tribes were descended fr. the two wives, Leah and Rachel. (13) Four of these were descended from the handmaids, Zilpah and Bilhah. Reuben is added bec. he had lost his right of primogeniture; and Zebulun as being Leah's youngest son.

Men who bless or curse. — I. Although in this case the work of blessing or cursing was one to which the various tribes were divinely appointed, it is instructive to notice the nature of the selection in relation to the history of the tribes and character of their founders. II. Observe how men ascend the mount of wealth, knowledge, power, etc., and become the source of blessings or curses to the people who stand below. Learn — to seek God's grace, that as we ascend the hill of life we may be sources of blessing to others.

Man and his master. — "When you see a dog following two men," says Mr. Ralph Erskine, in one of his sermons, "you know not to which of them he belongs while they walk together; but let them come to a parting road, and one go one way, and the other another way, then you will know which is the dog's master. So at times, religion and the world go hand in hand. While a man may have the world and a religious profession too, we cannot tell which is the man's master, God or the world; but stay till the man comes to a parting road: God calls him this way, and the world calls him that way. Well, if God be his Master, he follows religion, and lets the world go; but if the world be his master, then he follows the world and the lust thereof, and lets God, and conscience, and religion go."

14—15. (14) the Levites, they only were to speak, and the *Amen* to the blessings came only fr. side of Gerizim; the *Amen* to the cursings only from Ebal. (15) **graven, molten**,^c graven in wood, molten in metal. Molten images appear, however, to have been afterwards improved, and adorned with the graver. **secret place**, set apart as a shrine. This command covers private as well as public cases of image worship.

Secret sins. — I. Many who seem to be outwardly moral are addicted to sin of various kinds in private. II. The secret sin is, of all others, that which most damages the moral nature of man. III. Knowing their power all will say Amen! to a curse pronounced upon them. IV. If we would pronounce the curse should we not offer the prayer for deliverance?

Besetting sin. — The bosom sin in grace exactly resembles a strong current in nature, which is setting full upon dangerous shoals and quicksands. If in your spiritual computation you do not calculate upon your besetting sin, upon its force, its ceaseless operation, and its artfulness, it will sweep you on noiselessly, and with every appearance of calm, but surely and effectually to your ruin. So may we see a gallant ship leave the dock, fairly and bravely rigged, and with all her pennons flying; and the high sea, when she has cleft her way into it, is unwrinkled as the brow of childhood, and seems to laugh with many a twinkling smile; and when night falls, the moonbeam dances upon the wave, and the brightness of the day has left a delicious balminess behind it in the air, the ship is anchored negligently and feebly, and all is then still save the gentle drowsy gurgling, which tells that water is the element in which she floats; but in the dead of the night the anchor loses its hold, and then the current, deep and powerful, bears her noiselessly whither it will; and in the morning the wail of desperation rises from her decks, for she has fallen on the shoal, and the disconsolateness of the dreary twilight, as the breeze springs with the daybreak, and with rude impact dashes her planks angrily against the rock, contrasts strangely with the comfort and peacefulness of the past evening. Such was the doom of Judas Iscariot. Blessed with the companionship of our Lord Himself, dignified with the Apostleship, and adorned with all the high graces which that voca-

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Ebal and Gerizim

^a Ac. ii. 14

^b "These long rocky ridges lay in the province of Samaria, and the peaks referred to were near Shechem (Nablous), rising in steep precipices to the height of about 800 ft., and separated by a green, well-watered valley, of about 500 yards wide."—*Crit. Com.*

the curses
—
idolatry

^c Ex. xx. 4, 23; xxxiv. 17; Le. xxvi. 1; De. iv. 16, 23.

"The dragon is the first great symbol of sin, and with numerous variations, runs through mythology and art. The serpent is also a frequent emblem."

"The eye is so delicately fine in its construction and so exceeding tender in its susceptibilities that the minutest particle of dust occasions the greatest pain; so it is with the soul of the man which has been born again of the Spirit. The least commission of sin or neglect of duty gives it instant pain and discomfort"—*J. Bate.*

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filial disobedience

a Ex. xx. 12; xxi. 17; Pr. xxx. 11-17; Ez. xxii. 7; Ma. xv. 4.

There should be mutual confidence between parent and child; many sins will be prevented by it, and much happiness maintained by it.

landmarks

b Pr. xxii. 28; xxiii. 10, 11.

"The more honesty a man has, the less he affects the air of a saint." — *Lavater*.

"The blessings not given. No doubt when the solemnity was enacted by Josh. they ran *multis mulandis* in the same formula as the curses, and they were probably delivered alternately with the several corresponding curses." — *Spk. Com.*

the blind

c Le. xix. 14.

"All deception in the course of life is, indeed, nothing else but a lie reduced to practice, and falsehood passing from words into things." — *South*.

"Of all the agonies in life, that which is most poignant and harrowing — that which for the time annihilates reason, and leaves our whole organization one lacerated, mangled heart — is the conviction that we have been deceived where we place all the trust of love." — *Bulwer Lytton*.

tion involved, he was blinded to the under-current of his character, which set in the direction of the mammon of unrighteousness, and which eventually ensured for him an irretrievable fall. — *Goulburn*.

16. setteth light,^a lightly esteems; disregards, and so disobeys. Reverence for parents alone ensures a true obedience. As thro' our parents we gain our first and best idea of God, dishonor to them dishonors God in our hearts.

Cambalus. — It is recorded in history, that Cambalus, a young gentleman of high rank, in the city of Mulgeatum, being out coursing, was waylaid, and in great danger of being robbed and murdered by banditti who infested that country. Gorgus, his father, happened at that instant to be passing the spot, to whom the son related his danger. The father dismounted from his horse, and entreated the son to ride with all haste into the city; but Cambalus, preferring his father's safety to his own, refused to consent to his proposal. The father entreated him with tears to escape, but the son refused to leave him in danger. While the contest was yet undecided, the banditti approached and murdered them both.

17. landmark,^b see on De. xix. 14; a secret way of breaking the law of love to our neighbor. Considered so heinous bec. it confused the heritage God gave to each family.

An honest neighborhood. — Dr. W. Cook Taylor, in his *Notes of a Tour in the Manufacturing Districts of Lancashire*, referring to the Mill of the Messrs. Ashworth, at Turton, says: — "Fruit trees unprotected by fence, railing, or palisade, are trained against the main wall of the building, and in the season the ripe fruit hangs temptingly within reach of every operative who goes in or out of the mill. There is not an instance of even a cherry having been plucked, though the young piecers and cleaners must pass them five or six times every day, and they are far from being deficient in the natural love for fruit, as I found they were good customers to the itinerant hawkers. Mr. Ashworth's garden is on the side of the factory remote from the house; it is rich in fruits, flowers and vegetables, but it is absolutely unprotected. A child could scramble through the hedge, and in my school-boy days, I would have thought little of clearing the gate at a leap. The gate, however, is only secured by a latch, and could not, therefore, exclude an infant. Now, this unprotected garden has never suffered the slightest injury, or depredation. I know less tempting gardens, secured by high walls, ponderous gates, and a regular apparatus of bolts, locks and bars, to which man-traps and spring-guns, were found necessary as an additional protection."

18. blind to wander,^c bec. he fails in consideration for suffering brethren, and increases the distress of those whom God has afflicted.

Men who mislead. — I. It is to be observed that men are very much dependent upon others for guidance in many matters. II. The man who is ignorant of the precise point at which he should aim is as a physically blind man in respect of the path. Therefore to misinform the ignorant is as evil a thing as to mislead the blind. III. The text, therefore, applies to false teachers, whom Jesus calls blind leaders of the blind.

A blind sailor. — A few years ago, a meeting was held in Liverpool for the establishment of a society to supply sailors with Bibles. An active agent of the society having moved the first resolution, said, that as he saw so many sailors around him, he should not ask anyone to second his motion, but leave it to some one of the sailors. There was a deathlike silence for some moments; but, a poor old blind sailor, at the far end of the place, rose, and in a harsh voice said, "Sir, there is not an individual present who has greater reason to second this resolution than the person who now addresses you. Before I had arrived at twenty years of age, I led the van in every species of vice and immorality. Our ship was ordered to the coast of Guinea; a violent storm came on, the vivid lightning flashed around, at last it struck my eyes; from that time to the present I have not beheld the light of day; but, sir, though I was deprived of sight, I was not deprived of sin. I was very fond of having books read to me, but, alas! only bad books. At length, a Scotchman came to my house and said, 'I know you are fond of hearing books read, will you hear me read?' I said I had no objection; he read the book to me. I felt interested; and, at the end of his reading, I said, 'Tell me what book you

have read?' 'Never mind,' said he, I will come again and read more; and he came again, and again, and again. At last the tears gushed out from my blind eyes, and I earnestly exclaimed, 'Oh, sir, what book is this!' He said, 'This book is the Bible!' From that time, though blind, I see; I can now discern the way of salvation by a crucified Saviour; from that time to this I have been enabled to follow my Lord; and I second this resolution, knowing the advantages of circulating the sacred volume." Subsequently to this, the poor old man obtained a few shillings a week, which he divided, in various portions, to different religious societies; and gave sixpence a week to a little boy, to read to him the sacred Scriptures, and to lead him about from house to house, and from cellar to cellar, to promote the best interests of others.

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"Oh! what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive."—*Sir W. Scott.*

19. perverteth,^a taking advantage of desolateness, ignorance, or poverty. judgment, true judgment or justice in their behalf.

perverted justice

Justice perverted.—I. Certain cases in which justice may be perverted. 1. The stranger, ignorant of our laws and customs; 2. The widow, too weak or poor to secure legal advice. II. How this may be accomplished. 1. By bribes to judges: 2. By sophistry of advocates; 3. By manufacture of evidence: 4. By perjury. Learn:—In our regard for justice remember that God is just, and will not by any means clear the guilty.

^a Ex. xxii. 21, 22; De xxiv. 17; Mal. iii. 5; Ps. lxxviii. 5.

Perverted justice.—As when the insect is caught on the web the spider issues from its hiding-place, and with its long legs rolls the helpless victim over and over, and secures it against the possibility of escape; so when justice becomes perverted, and is caught in the snares that men have set to catch it, it is rolled over and over, and bound hand and foot, by these great human spiders that come out of their holes to prey upon the Divinest qualities of individuals and society.—*Beecher.*

It is much easier to get money than to get justice. The world is apt to resent as a wrong done to its self-esteem, that you should claim anything as a right.

20—23. Comp. Le. xviii. 23; xx. 15, etc. Sins arising from unrestrained bodily passion. Heinous as destroying the sacredness of the human body (which is for the Lord) and the family relations.

sins of uncleanness

The heinous nature of sin.—

Sin is composed of naught but subtle wiles,
It fawns and flatters, and betrays by smiles;
'Tis like the panther, or the crocodile,
It seems to love, and promises no wile,
It hides its sting, seems harmless as a dove;
It hugs the soul, and hates when 't vows most love.
It plays the tyrant most by gilded pills,
It secretly ensnares the souls it kills;
Sin's promises they all deceitful be,
Does promise wealth, but pays us poverty;
Does promise honor, but doth pay us shame;
And quite bereaves a man of his good name;
Does promise pleasure, but doth pay us sorrow;
Does promise life to-day, pays death to-morrow.
No thief so vile, nor treacherous as sin,
Whom fools do hug, and take much pleasure in.—*Keach.*

St. Augustine, in his youth, was in the habit of praying against lust and uncleanness, and secretly desired that God would not hear him. How many nowadays, like him, pray against sin, but desire not to be heard because of the inward secret love which they have to some particular habituated sins!

24. smiteth . . secretly, so as to kill him.^b

The malignancy of revenge.—Revenge from some hateful corner shall level a tale of dishonor at thee which no innocence of heart or integrity of conduct shall set right. The fortunes of thy house shall totter, thy character which led the way to them shall bleed on every side of it, thy faith questioned, thy works belied, thy wit forgotten, thy learning trampled on. To wind up the last scene of the tragedy, cruelty and cowardice, twin ruffians, hired and set on by malice in the dark, shall strike together at all thy infirmities and mistakes. The best of us lie open there; and trust me, when to gratify a private appetite, it is once resolved upon that an innocent and helpless creature shall be sacrificed, 'tis an easy matter to pick up sticks enough from any thicket where it has strayed, to make a fire to offer it up with.—*Sterne.*

assassination

^b Ge. ix. 5, 6; Ex. xx. 13; xxi. 12, 14.

"If thou must needs have thy revenge of thine enemy, with a soft tongue break his bones, heap coals of fire upon his head, forgive him and enjoy it."—*Sir T. Browne.*

25. reward to slay,^c nothing can be lower than the hired assassin, having no regard for life of the innocent.

hired bravos

Schiller's "Robbers."—When *The Robbers* of Schiller was first performed

^c De. xvi. 19; Ez. xxii. 12.

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"You may be saved from, you cannot be saved in, your sins. One sin, even one! is the 'dead fly, that maketh the apothecary's ointment to stink;' — the fatal leak, which, however small and concealed from the public eye, if not stopped, fills and sinks the ship." — *Guthrie*.

at Fribourg, in the Brigaw, the youth of that city, moved almost to madness by the ardent and awful scenes which it portrayed, formed the wild design of imitating the hero of the play and his companions. They bound themselves in a confederacy, by the most solemn oaths, to betake themselves to the woods, and live by rapine and plunder, or, as they termed it, to become the exterminating angels of heaven. Fortunately, the plot was discovered by one of the tutors finding a copy of the confederacy, written, it is said, with blood. The parties were all secured, and the future representation of *The Robbers* was prohibited in Fribourg. Such terrible impressions are a wonderful tribute to the energy of Schiller's pen, which, like Rousseau's, may be said to burn the paper. — *Percy. The assassin.* —

"Tis bad enough when the assassin stabs
The perishable body, sending man
Unto his dread account all unprepared;
But, oh! 'tis worse when he essays to pierce
The vital principle within the soul —
The principle of virtue, which alone
Could save, through grace Divine, him from perdition.
This, this, indeed, is dire assassination. — *Egoue*.

rejection of law

a De. xxviii. 15;
Je. xl. 3; Ga. iil. 10.

"Moses is truly called *oceanus theologicus*, the ocean whence all the prophets, since his time, did borrow their divinity." — *Hacket*.

26. Summing up in general terms of all offenses against God's law. The only worthy confirmation of law lies in *obedience* to its commands.^a

Cheerful obedience. — Obedience, which is a proof of love, must be cheerful, for love obeyeth with delight. It is not a burden to pray, but a pleasure; hard duties become easy to love, and the time seems not long nor tedious. As Jacob, for the love of Rachel: "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but as one's days," translated as "few days," "for the love he had unto her" (Gen. xxix. 20). Seven years to love seem but as one day. One day in a holy duty to one who wanteth love seemeth as seven days, if not as seven years; which seem to pass away sooner, and with more delight, than one day spent in flesh-displeasing duties, where there is no love to take off the tediousness of it to the flesh. — *Doolittle*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

the reward of obedience

b Ge. xlix. 25; De. vii. 13; Ps. cxvii. 3; cxviii. 8.
c Ps. cxi. 8.

"No Jew desires to hear or read this chap. in the synagogue. A miserable pauper is engaged by the payment of a certain sum to come near the reader, and to have this chap. muttered into his ear, wh. is done in a low, mournful tone, and when he has listened to it, he retires in silence to his seat. Here is a solemn testimony to the truth of the awful prophecies which it contains." — *Bp. Wordsworth*.

"The six repetitions of the word 'blessed' introduced the particular forms which the blessing would

1—6. (3) blessing . . thee, rewards of obedience enumerated. **overtake**, as if following after those who serve God. (3) **field**, Lev. xxvi. 3-5. God will give abundant crops. (4) **thy body**, *i. e.* thy children.^b (5) **basket**, word only used besides in De. xxvi. 2; refers to the basket for carrying articles required for personal uses. **store**, *lit.* kneading-troughs, Ex. xii. 34, so meaning *meal* for the trough. (6) **comest in, etc.**, all thy journeyings to and fro.^c

The blessings of obedience. — I. They may be regarded as of direct Divine bestowment. Particular providence. II. They may be regarded as the natural fruit of the character of life regulated by these laws. Learn — 1. Obedience to the will of God the soundest policy of life; 2. The highest happiness may be expected from the truest obedience.

Eastern blessings. — Here we have an instance of the interesting custom of blessing those who were about to be separated. A more pleasing scene than that of a father blessing his sons and daughters can scarcely be conceived. The fervor of the language, the expression of the countenance, and the affection of their embraces, all excite our strongest sympathy. "My child, may God keep thy hands and thy feet!" "May the beasts of the forest keep far from thee!" "May thy wife and thy children be preserved?" "May riches and happiness ever be thy portion!" In the beginning of the Hindoo new year, when friends meet for the first time, they bless each other. "Valen, may your fields give abundance of rice, your trees be covered with fruit, your wells and tanks be full of water, and your cows give rivers of milk!" "Ah! Tamban, we have met on the first day of the new year. May you never want sons in your old age!" "Venace, may your dhonies never want freight! May Varuna (the god of the sea) ever protect them! and may you and your children's children derive an abundance of riches from them!" "Do I meet my friend the merchant! This year may your servants be faithful. When you buy things, may they be cheap; and when you sell them, may they be dear!" "Have I the pleasure of meeting with our Divine Doctor? The gods grant

your fortunate hand may administer health to thousands; and may your house be full of riches!" Thus do they bless each other, and rejoice together, on any other great festive occasion. — *Roberts*.

7-11. (7) **seven ways**,^a put for *many ways*, in various directions, in excitement of defeat. (8) **storehouses** in E. commonly made underground. (9) **holy people**, comp. Ex. xix. 5, 6; De. vii. 6. (10) **called . . . name**, rightly so called as faithfully serving him, and enjoying his favor and protection.^b

Effects of Divine blessing in the circumstances of life. — I. Supremacy over enemies. A small number would overmatch a mighty host. II. Success in all undertakings. In all handicraft and labor, in what they had and in what they did they would be blessed. III. Increase of national glory. 1. In renewed covenant. 2. In exalted holiness. 3. In great wealth. 4. In mighty power. 5. In universal favor. "All people of the earth shall see and be afraid of thee." — *Hom. Com.*

The retreat from Moscow. — "The French soldiers," says an eye-witness, "on their retreat from Moscow, would, on halting at night, throng into the houses, throw themselves down on the first dirty straw they could find, and there perish in large numbers of hunger and fatigue. From such sufferings, and from the infection of the air in the warmer season by putrefied carcasses of men and horses that strewed the road, there sprang two dreadful diseases, the dysentery and typhus fever, before which they melted away like dew before the sun. At times they were so overwhelmed with whirlwinds of snow, that they could not distinguish the roads from the ditches, and often found their grave in the latter. The roads, league after league, were chequered with dead bodies covered with snow, and forming undulations or hillocks like those in a graveyard. Many of the survivors scarce retained the human form. Some had lost their hearing, others their speech; and many, by excessive cold and hunger, were reduced to a state of such stupid frenzy that they roasted the dead bodies of their companions, and even gnawed their own hands and arms."

12-14. (12) **good treasure**,^c Jews have saying: There are three keys in hand of Holy One, the key of the rains, the key of birth, and the key of the resurrection. Rain in many countries regarded as special evidence of God's favor and care. Fertility of Canaan due to rain. **lend . . . borrow**, power to lend shows prosperity. (13) **head . . . tail**, head implies independence, sovereignty.

Political pre-eminence of Israel. — I. National prosperity described. 1. Abundant harvests; 2. Industrial enterprise; 3. Boundless generosity; 4. Influence in international counsels. II. National prosperity accounted for. 1. Diligent attention to the law of God; 2. Unswerving strictness of obedience; 3. Above all, the Divine blessing, Pr. xiv. 34; x. 22; Ps. xxxiii. 12.

Morality indispensable to politics. — Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who would labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the destinies of men and citizens. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion: reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. — *Washington*.

15-19. (15) **all . . . curses**, these curses concern precisely the same things as did the blessings; all matters relating to personal and private life, and all relating to public and national life. The moral state of an indiv. or a nation directly influences his outward condition and action. But the misery attending wrongdoing should always be regarded as the **curse of God**. **overtake thee**, no efforts made would secure their escape.

Implicit obedience. — Nothing can be love to God which does not shape itself into obedience. We remember the anecdote of the Roman commander who forbade an engagement with the enemy, and the first transgressor against his prohibition was his son. He accepted the challenge of the leader of the other host, met, slew, despoiled him; and then, in triumphant feeling, carried the spoils to his father's tent. But the Roman father refused to recognize the instinct which prompted this as deserving of the name of love. Disobedience contradicted it, and deserved death. — *Robertson*.

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take in the various relations of life." — *Spk. C. m.*

prosperity in war and peace

a Le. xxvi. 7, 8; Jos. xxiii. 10; Ju. vii. 21, 22.

b De. xxvi. 17, 18; Jos. ii. 10, 11.

"Prosperity (says Ld. Bacon) is the blessing of the Old Test." How many eminent saints fr. being poor, grew rich, as Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, David, Daniel! "Adversity is the blessing of the New," as we see in the Apostles Peter, James, John, Paul, etc.

national pre-eminence

c Eze. xxxiv. 26; Zec. viii. 12.

"Men naturally sympathize with the calamities of individuals; but they are inclined to look on a fallen party with contempt rather than with pity." — *Macaulay*

"Power, like the diamond, dazzles the beholder, and also the wearer: it dignifies meanness; it magnifies littleness; to what is contemptible it gives authority; to what is low, exaltation." — *Colton*.

results of disobedience

"Nothing really succeeds which is not based on reality; sham in a large sense is never successful; in the life of an individual, as in the more comprehensive life of a state, pretension is nothing and power is everything." — *Whipple*.

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a 1 S. xiv. 30.

b "When the heat is very great in Pales. the atmos. is often filled with dust and sand; the wind is a burning sirocco, and the air comparable to the glowing heat at the mouth of a furnace." — *Spk. Com.*

"If no sin were punished here below, there would be no providence; if all sin were punished, where would be the need of future judgment?" — *Bowes.*

"Punishment is the recoil of crime, and the strength of the back-stroke is in proportion to the original blow." — *Trench.*

c 1 S. v. 6, 9.

d La. iv. 14; Zep. i. 17; 2 Co. iii. 14.

"Dark Ages is a term applied to the Middle Ages; acc. to Hallam. ab. 1,000 yrs. fr. invasion of France by Clovis, A. D. 486, to that of Naples by Charles VIII., 1495. During this period learning was at a low ebb."

"Never did any soul do good, but it came readier to do the same again, with more enjoyment. Never was love, or gratitude, or bounty practiced, but with increasing joy, which made the practitioner still more in love with the fair act." — *Shaftesbury.*

Israel, a by-word

e 1 Ki ix 7, 8; Ps xlv. 14; Je. xxv. 9, 18; xlv. 22.

20—26. (20) Comp. with general blessing, *vs.* 12. **vexation**, *R. V.*, "discomfiture."^a (21) **pestilence**, disting. between disease of an indiv. and disease running through a people. If any disease becomes epidemic in a country, it proves the existence of some national neglect or sin. (22) **consumption**, a wasting sickness put for chronic diseases; not exactly the European *phthisis*. **fever**, put for acute diseases; rendered *burning ague*, Lev. xxvi. 16. Description passes to diseases affecting vegetation. **blasting**, effect of E. wind. **mil dew**, blight on the green corn ears. (24) **powder**, *etc.*, allusion to burning sirocco.^b (26) **fray**, drive.

The sirocco.—As the day advanced the sirocco came upon us, blowing across the great "wilderness of wandering." At first it was but a faint breath, hot and parching, as if coming from a furnace. It increased slowly and steadily; then a thick haze, of a dull yellow or brass color, spread along the southern horizon, and advanced, rising and expanding until it covered the face of the sky, leaving the sun a red globe of fire in the midst. We now knew and felt that it was the fierce simoom. In a few moments fine, impalpable sand began to drift in our faces, entering every pore; nothing could exclude it. It blew into our eyes, mouths, and nostrils, and penetrated our very clothes, causing the skin to contract, the lips to crack, and the eyes to burn. Respiration became difficult. We sometimes gasped for breath, and then the hot wind and hotter sand rushed into our mouths like a stream of liquid fire. We tried to urge on our horses; but though chafing against curb and rein only an hour before, they were now almost insensible to whip and spur. We looked and longed for shelter from the pitiless storm, and for water to slake our burning thirst; but there was none. The plain extended on every side, smooth as a lake, to the circle of yellow haze that bounded it. No friendly house was there, no rock nor bush, no murmuring stream nor solitary well. — *Porter.*

27—31. (27) **botch**, an eruption to which the Egypt. were subject at the rising of the Nile. Comp. Ex. ix. 9. **emerods**,^c hæmorrhoids, tumors generally, or those called fistula, or piles. **scab**, scurvy. **itch**, the common disease of that name assumes a malignant form in the E. (28) These indicate maladies affecting the mind. They would be infatuated in their counsels, and so helpless before their enemies. **blindness**,^d here is mental.

Darkness at noonday (*vs.* 29). — Blind man walking through the sunshine. It is night to him. Gropes for the wall, picks his way with his staff, makes slow, painful, uncertain progress. I. It is high noon with the world. Light of truth — intellectual, moral, religious — all around. II. Many are walking in darkness in the midst of this light. This the effect — 1. Of judicial blindness; 2. Of misused moral vision; 3. Of rejection of truth.

The blind groping in darkness. — The meaning and force of this passage are not at once apparent. Thus the Rabbi Jose says, "All my days did I feel pain at not being able to explain it; for what difference can it be to the blind man, whether he walketh in the light or in the dark? And yet," he adds, "the sacred penman would not put down a word unnecessarily. What then does it mean?" Still the question remained unanswered, and that to the distress of the Rabbi. But "one night," he continues, "as I was walking in the road, I met a blind man with a lighted torch in his hand. 'Son,' said I, 'why dost thou carry that torch? thou canst not see its light!' 'Friend,' replied the blind man, 'true it is I cannot see, but others can: as long as I carry this lighted torch in my hand, the sons of men see me, take compassion on me, apprise me of danger, and save me from pitfalls, from thorns and briers.' Thus was the mind of the Rabbi greatly relieved; he felt that the apparently superfluous word was meant to predict the greatness of the calamities that were to befall the Jewish people. Even at noonday they were to grope as the blind do in darkness, without a ray of light to exhibit their distress, and to appeal to the compassion of those who pass by. — *Bibl. Treasury.*

32—37. (34) **be mad**, turned mad by trouble, with the madness of desperation, that leads into deeper wickedness. (35) **in the knees**, *etc.*, reference is to the dreadful disease, called elephantiasis, in which the extremities swell, cover with loathsome sores, and are sometimes even eaten away. The prob. disease of Job. (36) **thy king**, prophetic anticipation. Mosaic system provided no king; but as a fact, one was asked for, and appointed. (37) Name of Jew is still a common term of derision.^e

Heirs of blessing become a proverb (vs. 37). — No fall greater than that of those who, having mounted the highest, miss their footing. I. Israel as she was, and still might be, vs. 1-14. II. Israel as she is this day. 1. An astonishment: men wonder at the seed of Abraham, and the scattered descendants of the subjects of David and Solomon; 2. A proverb; 3. A by-word. III. Present state of Jews a witness for the truth of prophecy.

A by-word. — Jews have been despised among Mohammedans, Pagans, and Christians. There is scarcely any part of the globe where the prediction has not been verified. "In short, the annals of almost every nation, for 1800 years, afford abundant proofs that this has been, as it still is, the case, the very name of Jew being a universally recognized term for extreme degradation and wretchedness, and is often applied by passionate people in derision—'You Jew!'" "And now am I their song; yea, I am their by-word" (Job xxx. 9). — *Hom. Com.*

38—44. (38) locust,^a Ex. x. 4. (39) worms, the vine-weevil, a very destructive creature to grapes. (40) cast his fruit, drop it before it ripened. (41) enjoy them,^b i. e. their society and affection. (43, 44) Contrast with vs. 13.

Self-conquest. — Colonel B — was a man of amiable manners and well-informed mind. Being much engaged in public business which called him from place to place, ardent spirits were often set before him with an invitation to drink. At first he took a social glass for civility's sake; but at length a habit was formed, and appetite began to crave its customary indulgence. He drank more largely, and once or twice was quite overcome, and his friends were alarmed. He was on the brink of a precipice from which many had fallen to the lowest pitch of wretchedness. In his sober hours, he saw the danger he was in, and said to himself one day when alone, "Shall Colonel B — rule, or shall rum rule? If Colonel B — rule, he and his family may be respectable and happy; but if rum rule, Colonel B — is ruined, his property wasted, and his family made wretched! At length," said he, "I set down my foot, and said, Colonel B — shall rule, and rum obey." And from that day Colonel B — did rule; he immediately broke off from his intemperate habits, and lived to a good old age, virtuous, respected, and happy.

45—48. (46) for a sign, a sign of warning to other nations. God's doings are never wonders merely, they are also signs, or indications and illus. of some important truth. (48) yoke . . iron, hard, heavy, galling yoke, wearing away the life.

Man must serve (vs. 48). — I. It is a necessity of his nature to be under rule. There are laws and beings above him. II. It is for his highest good that he serve God in obedience to His law. III. If he refuse to serve God, he will serve his own enemies, as — 1. His evil heart; 2. His perverted judgment; 3. The evil customs he helps to create.

Unmurmuring obedience. — The kind master of the slave Æsop one day gave him a bitter melon, and desired him to eat it. It was nauseous to the taste, but this slave ate it without making a wry face. His master looked and expressed his surprise. "What," answered the servant, pleasantly, "have I received so many favors from you, and cannot I manage to eat a bitter melon without making a fuss about it?"

49—55. (49) nation . . from far,^c referred by some to the Chaldeans, others think reference is made to the wars of the Romans under Vespasian and Titus. eagle, with poss. allusion to Rom. eagle or ensign. tongue, language; this scarcely true of Chaldeans, whose language was only another dialect, not wholly different. (50) fierce countenance, *lit.* strong or firm of face. (53-55) According to Josephus this was literally fulfilled; parental feeling was extinguished by extreme suffering, and near relatives grudged each other's shares of the dreadful food.^d

Lessons from the prophecy. — 1. The severity of God. If the fulfilment of these predictions teaches anything, it is that God will not shrink from the punishment of sin. 2. The self-ruinous character of sin. The fulfilment of these threatenings was largely, though not wholly, brought about by simply giving sin scope to work out its own evil results. — *Pulpit Com.*

The sack of Dundee. — On finding themselves surrounded, as the stormers poured in by the breach and Wellgate Port, the two battalions of Lord Duffus's

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"I am a Jew else, an Ebrew Jew" — *Shakespeare*. See popular idea of a Jew as portrayed in Shylock. "This is the Jew that *Shakespeare* drew." — *Pope*.

famine, etc., threatened

a Mic. vi. 15; Hag. i. 6; Joel i. 4.

b Lam. i. 5.

God directs all agencies to accomplish his designs. None are beyond the reach and none can escape the hand of God. "All troubles," says Bishop Reynolds, "have their commission and instructions from Him—what to do, whither to go, whom to touch, and whom to pass over." — *Hom. Com.*

disobedience to God involves servitude to man

At the crowning of Rich. I. (1189) many Jews were killed at instigation of priests. In 1190, 500 besieged in York Castle killed ea. other.

foreign conquest threatened

c "Soldiers of Rom. army came fr. France, Spain, Britain, and Julius Severus, the commander, left Britain for the scene of contest." — *Brit. Com.*

d 2 Ki. vi. 28, 29; Je. xix. 9; La. ii. 20, iv. 10; Matt. xxiv. 19.

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horrors of war and famine

a 2 K. vi. 28, 29; Je. xix. 9; Le. ii. 20. iv. 10; Is. xlix. 15; Ez. v. 10; Ma. xxiv. 19.

"War suspends the rules of moral obligation, and what is long suspended is in danger of being totally abrogated. Civil wars strike deepest of all into the manners of the people." — *Burke*

"Disobedience is the beginning of evil, and the broad way to ruin." — *D. Davies.*

decimation and dispersion threatened

b Dan. iii. 6.

"The symptoms of spiritual decline are like those which attend the decay of bodily health. It generally commences with loss of appetite, and a disrelish for wholesome food, prayer, reading the Scriptures, and devotional books. Wherever you perceive these symptoms, be alarmed for your spiritual health is in danger; apply immediately to the Great Physician for a cure." — *Payson.*

weariness of life threatened

regiment laid down their arms in front of the town-house at the old Yarn Market, capitulating as prisoners of war; but a merciless fire of musketry was poured upon them from every point, and every officer and man was shot down. Not one was permitted to escape. A similar slaughter of another force took place in the Fish Market. Every house was broken open and pillaged. Lust, rapacity, and cruelty reigned supreme, and the barbarity of the Croats at Magdeburg, and of the English at Drogheda, was now repeated at Dundee. Upwards of 200 women were murdered; 1,300 men and an unknown number of children perished. Blood was dripping from the stairs of the houses, and it ran ankle deep in the gutters of the market-place. For three days this scene of carnage and crime lasted. Nor did it close till the 6th of September, when Monk is said to have seen a starving infant sucking at the gashed breast of its mother, as she lay dead in the street called the Thorter-row. — *Grant.*

56-59. (56) **eye . . evil**, tender and delicate woman insane from hunger and from prostration caused by terrible carnage. (57) **young one,**^a **secretly**, like a wild beast fearing that the portion might be snatched away. (58) **this book**, not the Book of Deuteronomy, which was not then written, but the Book of the Law, the Torah, delivered by Moses to Israel from God; and of which he had been, in his addresses to the people, recapitulating some of the principal points (*cf. vss. 60, 67*). — *Pulp. Com.*

The duty of fearing God (vss. 58, 59). — I. What God requires of us. That we regard Him — 1. With reverential awe; 2. With obedient love; 3. With undivided attachment. II. What we must expect at His hands, if we comply not with His requisition; "our plagues also shall be wonderful" — 1. Here; 2. Hereafter. — *Simeon.*

A wife after battle. — The battle-field makes terrible havoc of domestic sympathies and hopes. I once read of a devoted wife who left her babes, and walked some forty miles to see her husband in the army. She arrived the night before a battle, and contrived by a dexterous appeal to the sentinel's heart, to gain admission to her husband's tent. The hours sped swiftly away, and the dawn heard the signal for battle. She hurried from his fond embrace with many a tender kiss for his babes, but lingered near the scene, and watched, from a neighboring hill, every movement of the two armies, until the combat ceased, and all was quiet once more. The shades of night now hang in gloom over the battle-ground, and forbid all search for the wounded, the dying or the dead. Morn approaches; and with its earliest dawn this faithful wife, with a throbbing heart, wanders over that field of slaughter to see if the father of her babes has fallen. Alas, it is too true! There he is, all covered with gore. She sinks on his bosom in a swoon, and rises no more!

60-64. (62) **few**, this threatening has been remarkably fulfilled. The race has been thinned, and kept down again and again. (63) **plucked . . land**, "Hadrian issued a proclm. forbidding any Jews to reside in Judea, or even to approach its confines." (64) **shalt serve**, not of freewill, but by force,^b be slaves to worshipers of other gods.

An oppressed people. — A gentleman, who was for some years British Consul at Tripoli, mentioned some circumstances, which set, in a striking light, the state of fear and degradation in which the Jews there lived. If the Bey had a fear or jealousy of any man, he sends some one to put a pistol to his head and shoot him. If he happened to be a Christian, remonstrance was made by the consul of his nation. The Bey was quite ready to give satisfaction; he sent some one to shoot the first agent of his cruelty; and then, with an air of great regret, asked the Consul if he was satisfied; if not, he was ready to give him satisfaction still farther. But if the object of his wrath were a Jew, none would think of demanding satisfaction for his death. This people feel the curse in full, that among the nations where they are scattered they should *find no ease, and have no assurance of their life*. They are known by their being compelled to wear a particular dress, which they sometimes change in their houses, on occasion of their merry-makings; but even in these they are not free, the Moors exercising the privilege of free ingress at any time. — *Selected.*

65-68. (66) **hang . . doubt**, *lit. thy life shall be hanging before thee*, as it were, on a thread. (67) pathetic wail. Job vii. 4. (68) **into . . ships**, obs. the contrast, ye came out fr. bondage by God's high hand, monuments of His grace and power; ye shall be carried back into bondage in men's slave-ships. This was literally fulfilled under Titus, and also under Hadrian.

Love veiled in frown.—Probably many may think that this is one of the most awful chapters in the Word of God. Certainly we are not aware of any other in which there is such a long succession of warnings, increasing in terror as they advance. In fact, Matthew Henry tells us of a wicked man who was so enraged at reading this chapter that he tore the leaf out of his Bible. Impotent rage! Impotent as if, when a man dreaded an eclipse of the sun, he were to tear up the announcements thereof. *It would come for all that!* So here; there are two historical facts, viz., that the children of Israel *did* depart from their God, and that all these curses *did* befall them. Our theme is—*Love veiled in frown; or, the terrors of the Lord a necessity of His infinite love.*—*Pulp. Com.*

Pope Clement the Seventh.—Martin Luther observes, in his *Table Talk*, that the history of one of the popes furnished an apt illustration of this text. On the authority of an important person who lived at the court of Clement VII., it has been stated that this pope was in continual fear of his life. In consequence of this, it was the rule at one time that every day, after he had dined or supped, his cupbearer and cooks were imprisoned for two hours, and then, if no symptoms of poisoning manifested themselves in his holiness, they were released. And yet this man was one link in a succession of infallibles, as we are now asked to believe!

"Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
The wild dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave!"

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

1-6. (1) Jewish authorities regard this *vs.* as conclusion of preceding chapters; the Septuagint and Vulgate divide as our version *beside . . covenant,*^a in addition to, or in renewal of. Such renewal suitable to their entrance on promised land. (2) *all Israel*, represented by elders. (3) *temptations*, testings, provings.^b (4) *Lord . . given,*^c as they had no disposition to seek or receive what the Lord desired to give, He is represented as not giving heart, eyes, ears. (6) *bread*, *i. e.* wheaten food, they were fed with *manna*, God's special provision, and with water from the God-smitten rock. So they had been manifestly dependent on God.

Men's blindness in spiritual things.—Consider this complaint (*vs.* 4)—I. As uttered by Moses against the people of his charge. They had "seen" with their bodily eyes all the wonders that had been wrought for them. But they had no spiritual perception of them. They understood not—1. The true character of that dispensation; 2. The obligations which it entailed upon them. II. As applicable to ourselves at this day. 1. By the great mass of nominal Christians the nature of the gospel is very indistinctly seen; 2. The effects of it are very partially experienced.—*Simeon.*

Blind yet seeing.—Professor Hitchcock tells us of a visit he once paid to the mines of Virginia, and says that while traversing some of the dark passages the party were surprised at hearing a plaintively melodious voice uttering a psalm of praise, each verse of which concluded with the words—

"I shall be in heaven in the morning."

On nearing the spot they found an old blind slave, a Christian, who, six years ago, had lost his sight by an explosion of gunpowder. His duty was to open and shut a door by his side whenever the cars or any person had to pass. Hopeless and cheerless seemed his lot, but it only seemed so; God in His goodness had visited him in his affliction, had healed his blindness by giving him superior sight. The eyes of his understanding were opened; he could see Jesus, and through Him was looking for a city which hath foundations.

7-9. (7) *Sihon*, Num. xxi. 21-30. *Og*, Num. xxi. 33-35; De. iii. 1-11. (8) De. iii. 12-17; Num. xxxii. 33.

Soul prosperity (vs. 9).—I. Assured to the obedient. II. To extend through all life, thought, effort. III. Encouragements to obedience found in the successes of the past. IV. Christ has fulfilled the law for us; we trust in Him for the health, and prosperity, and safety of our souls.

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"Use sin as it will use you; spare it not, for it will not spare you: it is your murderer, and the murderer of the whole world. Use it, therefore, as a murderer should be used; kill it before it kills you; and though it bring you to the grave, as it did your Head, it shall not be able to keep you there. You love not death; love not the cause of death."
—*Baxter.*

exhortation
to remember
the past

Egypt, etc.

^a Ex. xxiv. 3-8.

^b De. iv. 34; vii. 19.

^c Is. vi. 9, 10; Jno. viii. 43; Ac. xxviii. 24, 27; Ep. iv. 18.

"This does not lay the blame of their senselessness, sottishness, and unbelief on God, as if they stood ready to receive His grace, and had begged for it, but He had denied them. No, it fastens the guilt upon themselves."
—*M. Henry.*

"To bless God for mercies is the way to increase them."
—*W. Seeker.*

"Ignorance of the truth or spiritual blindness, is generally both the mother and daughter of pride."
—*Quesnel.*

Sihon, Og,
etc.

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"Land is a part of God's estate in the globe; and when a parcel of ground is deeded to you, and you walk over it, it seems as if you had come into partnership with the original Proprietor of the earth." — *Beecher*.

covenant of
and with
Israel

a Jos. ix. 3-21.

The tree brings the fruit, not the fruit the tree; so a good man brings forth good works, but works do not make a man good.

idolatry to
be shunned

b He. xli. 15.

c "Art. Judaica, found in Pales., Arabia, and the deserts of Numidia. Its taste is very bitter, and both leaves and seeds are used in the E. as a tonic medicine." — *Ayre*.

the anger of
God

d Ge. xix. 24, 25.

Travelers are struck with the brown and barren aspect of the Holy Land. Spots here and there, of course, burst into beauty through the gift of rain, but as a whole the land is no longer "with milk and honey blessed." — *Pulpit Com.*

The prosperous. — If we should look under the skirt of the prosperous and prevailing tyrant, we should find, even in the days of his joys, such alloys and abatements of his pleasure as may serve to represent him presently miserable, besides his final infelicities. For I have seen a young and healthful person warm and ruddy under a poor and thin garment, when at the same time an old rich person hath been cold and paralytic under a load of sables and the skins of foxes. It is the body that makes the clothes warm, not the clothes the body; and the spirit of a man makes felicity and content, not any spoils of a rich fortune wrapped about a sickly and uneasy soul. Apollodorus was a traitor and a tyrant, and the world wondered to see a bad man have so good a fortune, but knew not that he nourished scorpions in his breast, and that his liver and his heart were eaten up with spectres and images of death. — *Jeremy Taylor*.

10-18. (10) **your . . . tribes**, lit. *your captains, your tribes*, word *tribes* apparently denotes all not in office. If all were not there present, everybody was represented, and the reacceptance of the covenant was the act of the entire nation. (11) **little ones**, obs. children's relation to cov. **stranger**, proselyte; comp. Ex. xii. 38-48. **hewer of wood, etc.**, the office of bond slaves, and menial servants; afterwards taken by the Gibeonites.

God examining man. — "This day" — a day of thankfulness, regrets, interesting recollections, uncertainty, anticipation. The position indicated implies— I. That we are dependent upon God's bounty. II. That we are continually open to His inspection. III. That our future destiny is in His hands. Application: — Let us this day stand before the Lord as— 1. Humble penitents; 2. Sincere believers; 3. Faithful servants. — *T. W. Hartland*.

14-20. (15) **not . . . us**, intended to include those left in the tents; or coming generations. (17) **idols**, see word in marg. "clods or stocks wh. can be rolled about." (18) **root, etc.**, a fig. for one secretly apostate fr. God, and nourishing idolatry in the land. **gall**, Heb. *rosh*, called *hemlock* in Ho. x. 4; Am. vi. 12; prob. the *poppy*, *Gesenius*; may be used for poison generally. **wormwood**,^c belonging to genus *Artemisia*. (19) **drunkenness . . . thirst**, add the indulgence of the desire in its worst form to the desire.

Peculiarity of Judaism. — There is one primary and capital mark of distinction, differing Judaism (*i. e.* the religious doctrines and rites of the Jews) from all other forms of religion: it professes to come from the First Cause of all things, and it condemns every other religion for an imposture. There is nothing more surprising in all Pagan antiquity than that, amidst their endless (alleged) revelations, *not one of them ever made such pretensions as these*; yet there is nothing which modern writers are more apt to pass over without reflection. The ancient fathers, however, more nearly acquainted with the state of Paganism, regarded it with the attention due to so extraordinary a circumstance. — *Warburton*.

21-24. (23) Descrip. is borrowed fr. features of Dead Sea region. The judgment executed on Sodom^d was intended to be a perpetual warning.

God's retribution. — Learn: 1. The natural connection between suffering and sin. They forsook God and served idols (*vs.* 25), sins are reproduced in posterity, bound by an indissoluble chain of causation to the future. To-day's actions are the result of yesterday's, and the cause of future conditions. 2. The visible proof of this connection in providential history. Divine retributions manifest the sins of nations and the judgment of God upon them. The sterility of Palestine explains the broken covenant. Its barren hills and mute appeal — its awful silence and impressive scenes, utter the curse of God and turn spectators into inquiring penitents. "The curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, because we have sinned against Him" (Dan. ix. 11, 13, 14; cf. 1 Kings ix. 8, 9; Jer. xxii. 8, 9). — *Preacher's Com.*

Peculiarities of the Dead Sea. — The water is perfectly clean and transparent. The taste is bitter and salt, far beyond that of the ocean. It acts upon the tongue like alum; smarts in the eye like camphor; produces a burning, pricking sensation; and it stiffens the hair much like pomatum. The water has a much greater specific gravity than the human body, and hence I did not sink lower than to the arms when standing perpendicularly in it. . . . All of us noticed an unnatural gloom, not upon the sea only, but also over the whole plain below Jericho. This, too, is mentioned by ancient

historians. It had the appearance of Indian summer in America, and, like a vast funeral pall let down from heaven, it hung heavily over the lifeless bosom of this mysterious lake. — *Thomson*.

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25-29. (29) **secret things**, belonging to the future, related to the blessings and curses now pronounced. Moses checks any mere wondering *when* and *how* all this would come to pass, and sets the people on the duty of obeying the will of God as now revealed to them. **us . . children**, all things revealed and especially things appertaining to duty are for our good and the good of those who come after us.

**things
secret and
revealed**

Limitation of human knowledge in Divine things. — Consider the relation of the maxim here set down with regard to — I. God Himself. II. Man. III. The new covenant which has been established between God and man. Learn — 1. To be humble; 2. To distinguish the more vital articles of our faith; 3. That the shortest way to the end of doubt and controversy is by the path of a holy obedience. — *Hitchcock*.

"Of little use is it to fret ourselves with fears and cares about what may possibly befall us. Do duty, and leave the issues to Him who is above."

The limits of revelation. — It leaves a realm of secrecy to God. That is, it does not profess to reveal God fully, for "He cannot, on account of His incomparable greatness and excellence, bring His plans and operations within the comprehension of His creatures." The finite cannot take in the infinite. We only know in part. But we *know*. To doubt the possibility of knowing God would lead us straight to universal scepticism. Agnosticism has no logical halting-ground on this side of universal doubt. Hence we venture not beyond the assigned limits of the knowable. We take all that God gives and use it reverentially. At the same time, we recognize a world beyond our ken, of essence and of purpose and of perception, which is God's alone. Our pride is broken; we are penitent before Him, and we adore. — *R. M. Edgar*.

"Secret things. A cocklefish might as well attempt to bring the ocean into its little shell as a man attempt to understand the ways of God." — *Preacher's Com.*

To do common work is not common, though it is common to view it only as such.

CHAPTER THE THIRTIETH.

1-7. (2) **return**,* in penitence of heart, and confession of lip. **and . . obey**, true repentance finds its worthy expression only in renewed obedience. (3) **turn . . captivity**, change it, put an end to it, bring back captives. Partly fulfilled in times of Judges, and Bab. capt.; but N. T. foretells a yet future restor. of Is.^b (4) **utmost . . heaven**, limits, most distant regions of then known world. (6) **circumcise . . heart**, De. x. 16.

**repentance
and mercy**

Repentance. — 1. Repentance is heedful in order to be restored to God's favor. 2. Repentance prevails with God to show mercy. 3. Repentance is open to the most distant and degraded sinner. 4. Repentance is the gift of God. He works in the mind, seeks out the lost, and exalted Jesus to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. (Acts, v 31). — *Hom. Com.*

a 1 KI. viii. 29-53; Ne. i. 9; Lu. xv. 17-19.

b Ro. xi. 25-27.

The humble heart. — "But He giveth grace," pours it out plentifully upon humble hearts. His sweet dews and showers of grace slide off the mountains of pride, and fall on the low valleys of humble hearts, and make them pleasant and fertile. The swelling heart, puffed up with a fancy of fulness, hath no room for grace. It is lifted up, is not hallowed and fitted to receive and contain the graces that descend from above. And again, as the humble heart is most capacious, and, as being emptied and hollowed, can hold most, so it is the most thankful, acknowledges all as received, while the proud cries out that all is his own. The return of glory that is due from grace comes most freely and plentifully from an humble heart: God delights to enrich it with grace, and it delights to return Him glory. The more He bestows on it, the more it desires to honor Him with all; and the more it doth so, the more readily He bestows still more upon it; and this is the sweet intercourse betwixt God and the humble soul. This is the noble ambition of humility, in respect whereof all the aspirings of pride are low and base. When all is reckoned, the lowliest mind is truly the highest; and these two agree so well, that the more lowly it is, it is thus the higher; and the higher thus, it is still the more lowly. — *Leighton*.

"My soul, hath found inexpressibly more sweetness and satisfaction in a single line of the Bible, nay in two such words as these 'thy God' and 'my God' than all the pleasures found in the things of the world since the creation, could equal." — *Brown of Haddington*.

"The blackness of the picture of Israel's rejection and desolation is relieved by this rim of gold on the further edge. The verses seem to teach, not only that if Israel repent, mercy awaits it, but that Israel will repent." — *Pulp. Com.*

8-10. (9) **plenteous**, wealthy, prosperous: having property of thine own, instead of being bond-servants. **rejoice . . thee**, the response of God's mercy to man's repentance is tenderly shown in Christ's par. of prodigal son.^c (10) **all . . heart**, the most wicked wandering and disobedience must be fol-

c Lu. xv.

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Rabbi Eleazer aid to his disciples: "Turn to God one day before your death." "But how can a man," replied they, "know the day of his death?" "True," said Eleazer: "therefore you should turn to God to-day; perhaps you may die to-morrow. Thus every day will be spent in returning."

evidence of experience

Vs. 14. "In the heart for our personal salvation in the mouth for God's glory and the salvation of others. In the heart and not in the mouth is cowardice; in the mouth and not in the heart is hypocrisy."—*Robinson*.

By the light of God's Word alone you can learn whether you have a sure footing or stand in slippery places.

the Divine alternative and the human choice

a Jos. xxiv. 14, 15.

A conspiracy was formed against the life of Archius, a Grecian magistrate. A friend, who knew the plot, dispatched a courier, who delivered to the magistrate a packet with this message, "My Lord, the person who writes you this letter conjures you to read it immediately—it contains serious matters." Archius, who was then at a feast,

lowed by the most sincere and thorough repentance. But God's compassion and love are very great.

Repentance.—I. A sincere repentance is the turning of the heart to God. II. A sincere repentance is regulating of the life in accordance with the will of God. III. A sincere repentance may humbly hope in the mercy of God.

Thorough repentance searches out sin.—When a wound in a soldier's foot refuses to heal, the surgeon examines it very minutely, and manipulates every part. Each bone is there, and in its place; there is no apparent cause for the inflammation, but yet the wound refuses to heal. The surgeon probes and probes again, until his lancet comes in contact with a hard foreign substance. "Here it is," saith he, "a bullet is lodged here; this must come out, or the wound will never close." Thus may some concealed sin work long disquiet in a seeking soul. May the Lord search us and try us, and see if there be any evil way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting!—*Spurgeon*.

11—14. (11) not . . thee, either by distance or mysteriousness; no excuse of ignorance or inability can be pleaded. (12—14) see Ro. x. 6—9. (13) sea, the Mediterranean, perhaps, but used in general to express remoteness in a rhetorical way.

The Bible in itself.—The text shows—I. The closeness with which the Word of God addresses the soul, and the paternal familiarity of its style: "the word is very nigh unto thee." II. That His Word is to be avowedly our counsellor: "in thy mouth." III. That it is to be embraced by our affections and dwell in them: "in thy heart." IV. That obedience to it is the necessary proof of a believing reception of it: "that thou mayest do it."—*Dalby*.

Experimental evidence of the Bible.—My next proof consists of experimental evidence. In order to appreciate it, I would bid the objector come with me to some sequestered glen amid the hills and valleys of Scotland. I will take him to the patriarchial occupant of a lonely cabin, where you may behold the gray-headed man, amid intermingling smiles and tears, bending morning, noon and night over one book—"the big ha' Bible." Let us ask him, "How do you know that that book called the Bible is the Book of God? You never read the writings of Paley, the Analogy of a Butler; you never studied the Credibility of Lardner, nor the eloquent Demonstrations of a Chalmers: how came you to believe it?" "Come to believe it?" would the peasant say: "I have felt it in my heart and conscience to be the Book of God; it has taught me the truths I never knew before; it has given me a peace the world could never give; it has calmed my beating heart; it has staunched my bleeding wounds; it has kindled within me the love of God and hopes of glory. Not the Book of God! I am convinced of it as that I am here a living, breathing man."—*Cumming*.

15—20. (15) life . . good, these always go together. The Div. witness of acceptance, wh. is life, ever rests on that wh. is good. The Div. displeasure, wh. is witness of soul-death, as surely follows that wh. is evil. The choice is offered to men along with holy persuasions to that wh. is good. (20) he . . life, or that is thy life, viz., to love and fear the Lord alway. The only acceptable obedience springs fr. love.

A last word.—I. An alternative. Life and death; good and evil (vs. 15); blessing and cursing (vs. 19). An alternative for the nation, but also for the individual. II. A warning (vss. 17, 18). If the heart is drawn away from God, and turns to idols, i. e. sets up any other objects in God's place, and forbears to give to God His proper love and honor, he whose heart does this, or the nation if it does so, shall surely perish. III. An appeal (vss. 19, 20). "Therefore choose life," etc. On which note: 1. That choice or moral determination underlies our salvation. 2. That the choice God wishes, involves the choosing of himself, with a view to love Him, to obey Him, and to cleave to Him. 3. That the choice of God is the choice of life, and carries all lesser good with it.—*Pulpit Com.*

The choice of Martius.—In the early times of the Christian Church a Christian soldier named Martius served in the Roman army. This was no uncommon circumstance then. He was young, of a good and wealthy family, and much respected in his profession. The office of centurion becoming vacant, he was chosen as a suitable person to hold it. But another soldier came forward, and declared that Martius, being a Christian, was legally unfit

for the post; and that he himself, being next in rank, ought to be preferred. Martius, being questioned, at once confessed his religion; but the governor, knowing the terrible consequences which must follow, if the point were to be seriously taken up, said he might have three hours for consideration, after which the question would be repeated. Theotecnus, Bishop of Cesarea, heard what was going on. He came to the tribunal, and, taking the arm of Martius, led him into the nearest church. Then, taking a soldier's sword, he laid it down beside a New Testament. "And now," he said, "choose, my son, between these two." Martius did not hesitate; he laid hold at once of the Word of God. "You have done well, my son," said the faithful pastor. "Hold fast by Him whom you have chosen, and you shall soon enjoy Him forever. He will strengthen you for all that remains, and you shall depart in peace." The remaining time was spent in earnest exhortation and solemn prayer. When the three hours were past, he was again summoned to the bar. He boldly confessed his faith in Christ, was condemned and beheaded. His name will ever be remembered with honor as one of "the noble army of martyrs."

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replied, — smiling, "Serious affairs to-morrow." On that night the plot was executed, and Archus was slain.

"Now is the accepted time." When you are launched into the ocean of eternity, there is for you no return into the land of present privileges.

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

1-6. (1) went . . spake, a Heb. idiom: comp. Ex. ii. 1; Job i. 4. (2) I . . more, both by reason of age,^a though strong and capable, and by reason of the importance^b of transferring responsibility that the new leader might gain experience, Moses could no more go out and in. (3) Joshua, as his prowess and wisdom were well known, the people would be encouraged by his appointment as Mos., successor.

Moses encourages Israel

a De. xxxiv. 7.

God gives encouragement to those who carry on His work. — Fellow-workers may fall, but God compensates for loss. 1. By His presence. "He will go over before thee." If under the inspiration of Alexander, Cæsar and other great leaders, soldiers have performed exploits, what can we not do with God present! 2. By His promise. God's promises may be trusted, God's bonds given and sealed with His own hand. "He will not fail thee." 3. By His help. Promise must issue in performance. God is strength for burdens and a shield for battles. His grace makes the heart stout and the arm strong. "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." — *Preacher's Com.*

b Nu. xx. 12; xxvii. 13; De. iii. 27.

"Good words do more than hard speeches, as the sunbeams without any noise will make the traveler cast off his cloak, which all the blustering winds could not do." — *Leighton.*

The men appointed by God to special office receive from Him special preparation. — Moses himself had received a wondrous preparation, first at his mother's knee, next in the palace of Pharaoh, and next in the solitudes of Midian. And Joshua, who is to succeed him as leader, though not as law-giver, has also received important preparation. He is first associated with Moses in the mount, as he is receiving the law. He is thus trained to firm faith in the invisible King and accustomed to His wonders. He is next exercised in battle, leading the Israelites against Amalek, and proving himself skilful in the field. He had also, as a spy, become minutely acquainted with the land of promise, and brought up with Caleb an encouraging report. None was so fitted as he for high command. Just as the twelve were carefully trained to be the apostles of the church, so was Joshua trained, and so is every one selected for important work." — *Pulpit Com.*

"Whatever be the meanness of a man's occupation, he may prosecute it on principles common to him with Michael and Gabriel or any of the highest spirits of heaven." — *Btiney.*

7, 8. (7) sight . . Israel, publicly handing over to him the leadership, so that his authority might not be questioned by the people.^c good courage, that kind which ever attends firm, simple faith in God. inherit it, enter on possession of the inheritance. (8) fear not,^d the reasons for fear were greater than Joshua could at this time estimate. The confidence of faith is the true preparation for life's work and war.

Moses encourages Joshua

c De. iii. 28.

Fear not. — "Fear not," for it is God Himself who shall go before thee and help thee. I. He is able to help thee: "He will not fail thee" in either adversity or prosperity. He will guard thee against the immediate dangers of the one, and the seductive influences of the other. II. He is willing to help thee. III. He has promised to help thee, and His promises are sure. — *Hoatson.*

d Jos. i. 5, 6, 9.

Results of encouragement. — Little Charley was the dull boy of his school. Even his master sometimes taunted him with his deficiencies. One day, a gentleman who was visiting the school looked over some boys who were making their first attempt to write. There was a general burst of amusement at poor Charley's effort. He colored, but was silent. "Never mind, my lad," said the

"God sends his teachers with every age, To every clime and every race of man, With revelations fitted to their growth And shape of mind." — *Lowell.*

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Words are little things, but they sometimes strike hard. We wield them so easily that we are apt to forget their hidden power.

Moses writes and commits the law to the Levites

a De. xvii. 18.

b Ne. viii. 1-3.

"The end of reading God's word is that we may be enabled to obey it."

"It is said of some of the mines of Cornwall, that the deeper they are sunk, the richer they prove, and though some lodes have been followed a thousand, and even fifteen hundred feet, they have not come to an end. Such is the Book of God. It is a mine of wealth which never can be exhausted. The deeper we sink into it the richer it becomes."—*Charles Graham.*

Moses informed of his approaching death

"It has always appeared to me," says Dr. Johnson, "as one of the most striking passages in the visions of Quevedo, that which stigmatizes those as fools who complain that they failed of happiness by sudden death. Quevedo asks, 'How can death be sudden to a being who always knew that he must die, and that the time of his death was uncertain?'"

gentleman, cheeringly, "don't be discouraged: just do your very best, and you will be a writer some day. I recollect when I first began to write being quite as awkward as you are; but I persevered, and now look here." He took a pen, and wrote his name on a piece of paper in fine, legible characters. "See what I can do now," he added. Many years afterwards that gentleman met Charley again. He had turned out one of the most celebrated men of his day; and he expressed his firm conviction that he owed his success in life, under God's blessing, to the encouraging speech made by the school visitant.

9—13. (9) wrote . . law, "The statement that Moses 'wrote' the Deuteronomic law (Deut. xxxi. 9, 24) does not refer to the present book of Deuteronomy, but to the code of laws which underlies it."—*Delitzsch.* **sons of Levi,** comp. use of this term with *sons of Aaron.* **elders,** these acted as local magistrates, to administer law in its social applications. **(10) release,** De. xv. 1. **tabernacles,** Le. xxiii. 34. **(11) read . . law,**^b not the whole Pent., but summaries such as in Book of Deut.

The law read to the people.—Things to be observed respecting this reading of the law. I. It was to be read each seventh year. 1. How carefully it would be read; and 2. How attentively listened to, since the penalties of disobedience were so great. II. It was to be read to all: to—1. The aged, who had heard it before; 2. To young children, who knew nothing, as the first thing for them to learn; 3. To the stranger, that he might see the greatness and goodness of Israel's God from His laws. III. It was to be read in order that all might learn to fear and serve the Lord.

The great law-giver.—The strongest impulse in the character of Moses appears to have been that of protective justice, more particularly with regard to the helpless and down-trodden classes. The laws of Moses if carefully examined, are a perfect phenomenon; an exception to the laws of either ancient or modern nations in the care they exercised over women, widows, orphans, paupers, foreigners, servants, and dumb animals. No so-called Christian nation but could advantageously take a lesson in legislation from the laws of Moses. There is a plaintive, pathetic spirit of compassion in the very language in which the laws in favor of the helpless and suffering are expressed, that it seems must have been learned only of superhuman tenderness. Not the gentlest words of Jesus are more compassionate in their spirit than many of these laws of Moses. Delivered in the name of Jehovah, they certainly are so unlike the wisdom of that barbarous age as to justify the ascription of them to Him who is Love. Some of them sound more like the pleadings of a mother than the voice of legal statute.—*Beecher.*

14, 15. (14) give . . charge, God transferred responsibility to the new leader by bringing the older and the younger man together in the most sacred relation (see Aaron and Eleazer, Num. xx. 25-28; and Elijah and Elisha, 2 Kings ii). **tabernacle . . congregation,** R. V. "tent of meeting;" first time mentioned in Deuteronomy. Last meeting of Jehovah with Moses in the tabernacle. **(15) pillar of a cloud,** Ex. xxxiii. 9. **door,** Ex. xxix. 4; the entrance of the tent covered by a movable curtain.

The official investiture of Joshua.—It was fitting that a public transference of authority should be made from Moses to Joshua. As John said of Jesus, so substantially Moses said of Joshua, "He must increase, but I must decrease." I. The occasion. Moses was about to die. He contemplates the event with calm serenity. His chief concern is a competent successor. The good of others was still Moses' uppermost desire. II. The place. God had appointed the meeting to take place in the tabernacle. All great enterprises should be consecrated in the sanctuary. God has engaged to be found by us here. III. The appearance. So ineffably dazzling is the native glory of God, that no mortal eye can look upon it. In accommodation to human weakness, God tempers His brightness by an attendant cloud. IV. The charge. God's charge came to Joshua through human lips, yet none the less was it God's charge.—*Pulpit Com.*

Death a blessing.—I congratulate you and myself that life is passing fast away. What a superlatively grand and consoling idea is that of death! Without this radiant idea, this delightful morning star, indicating that the luminary of eternity is going to rise, life would, to my view, darken into midnight melancholy. Oh, the expectation of living here and living thus always, would be indeed a prospect of overwhelming despair! But thanks

be to that fatal decree that dooms us to die; thanks to that gospel which opens the vision of an endless life; and thanks, above all, to that Saviour Friend who has promised to conduct all the faithful through the sacred trance of death into scenes of paradise and everlasting delight.—*Foster*.

16-21. (16) **sleep . . fathers**, the usual O. T. conception of death: comp the simple term, *he died*, used before call of Ab., as in Gen. v. with expression concerning Ab. Gen. xxv. 8; Isaac, xxxv. 29; Jacob, xlix, 29, 33. **whoring**,^a seeking after some one else to serve and love; the word indicates the wilfulness and wickedness of their so doing. (17) **anger**, God speaks under fig. of an outraged king. Distinguish between the anger of passion and anger as the response of a noble nature to shameful wickedness. (19) **this song**, given in ch. xxxii.;^b writings in verse are sententious, easily remembered, so suited for popular instruction. **put . . mouths**, this method for the times, better than the delivery of written law; but here this added to the other.

The song of Moses (vs. 19).—Consider—I. Its subject matter. Its contents are—1. Commemorative: it record's God's sovereign mercy to His people—(1) In the original designation of the land of Canaan to them; (2) In the manner in which He had brought them to it; (3) The richness of the provision which He had made for them; 2. Prophetic; 3. Promissory. II. Its peculiar use. 1. To justify God; 2. To humble the people; 3. To prepare them for His promised blessings.—*Simeon*.

The advice of Eliot.—The Rev. John Eliot, styled "The Apostle of the Indians," was once asked by a pious woman, who was vexed with a wicked husband, and bad company frequently infesting her house on his account, what she should do? "Take," said he, "the Holy Bible into your hand when bad company come in, and that will soon drive them out of the house."

22-27. (22) **taught . . children**, heroic faithfulness to the last; Moses with his wonderful intelligence and far-sightedness doing his utmost. (23) **he . . charge**, on behalf of Jehovah, and in His exact words, vs. 14. See note vs. 9. (26) **in . . ark**, R. V., "by the side of the ark;" prob. in a little chest beside the ark of the cov. Only the tables of stone were in the ark.^c (27) **rebellion**, = rebelliousness. **stiff neck**, Ex. xxxii. 9; not easily moved to that which is good; strongly self-willed.

Homiletic hints.—*An aged saint teaching the people to sing (vs. 22).*—I. He composed the song. II. He taught it to the people. *Moses' charge to his successor (vs. 23).*—I. A word of exhortation, "Be strong," etc. II. A word of encouragement, "Thou shalt bring," etc. III. A word of promise, "I will," etc. *An ancient amanuensis in the discharge of duty (vs. 24-26).*—I. Persevering in his work till it was finished. II. Caring for its preservation when it was done. III. Contemplating the high purpose his work would serve.

A premier in a new character.—There is an interesting and, I believe, authentic story told in connection with a visit Dr. Guthrie once paid to the Duke of Argyll at Inverary Castle, by special invitation. A large and brilliant assemblage of guests, including Mr. Gladstone, were staying at the castle, and before they retired for the night, Dr. Guthrie was asked by the duke to conduct "family worship." "With great pleasure will I conduct it," said the Doctor; "but in the castle of Argyll we must observe the good old Presbyterian form, and begin by singing a psalm." It was agreed that a Scotch psalm should be sung to a Scotch tune; but the difficulty was to find a "precentor," that is, a gentleman or lady who would raise "the tune" and lead the singing. After a number of ladies and gentlemen had been appealed to, and declared themselves unfit for the duty, Mr. Gladstone stepped forward saying, "I'll raise the tune, Dr. Guthrie;" and well did he perform his task. We all know what a fine voice the Premier has, but it is not so well known that he is a good singer. This modern scene in Inverary Castle would make as good a subject for a picture as many a scene of greater historic importance.—*Leisure Hour*.

28-30. (28) **gather . . elders, etc.**, a special congreg. to hear the song with which Mos.' public addresses were to close. (29) **I know . . corrupt**, he knew partly thro' his past experience of them, partly through his gift of prophecy. In every way of counsel and warning he seeks to fence them round.

B. c. 1451.

he is told to write a song for the people

^a Ex xxxiv. 15; Ju. ii. 17.

"Give me the making of the nation's ballads," said Lord Chat-ham, "and I care not who makes the laws."

^b "National songs take deep hold of the memories, and have a powerful influence in stirring the deepest feelings of a people. So this song was to be learnt as embodying the substance of the preceding addresses, and of a strain well suited to inspire the popular mind with a sense of God's favor to their nation."—*Jamieson*.

he writes the song and teaches it, etc.

^c 1 Ki. viii. 9; comp. 2 Ki. xxii. 8; see 2 Chr. xxxiv. 14.

"This was not so much a provision for the safe custody of the vol., . . . as a witness or protest against their breach of the covenant, of wh. the ark was a symbol, by idolatry."—*Spk. Com*
The Jews assert that, in addition to this copy of the written-law, Moses wrote twelve others, one of wh. he gave to each tribe. But the interpretation of the law he did not commit to writing, but gave it in charge to the elders of Israel and Joshua, and the rest of Israel.

he gathers the elders together

B. C. 1451.

As a traveler rejoices greatly when he hears his own country or home; so may the Christian as he approaches the heavenly country.

Death is like a postman, who knocks alike at the door of rich and poor; and brings to this man wedding cards, and to his neighbor a funeral envelope; to one the pleasant news that his richly-laden vessel has arrived in port, and to another tidings of disaster and bankruptcy.

the song of Moses

declaration of name and truth of God

a Is. lv. 10, 11.

b Ps. xviii. 31, 46; Is. xxviii. 16.

Rock—rock—rock—Israel had seen little else during the thirty-eight years of wandering. The older men could remember the seclusion and sublimity of the rock sanctuary of Sinai. The congregation had mourned for Aaron under the shadow of Mount Hor, "rising aloft with vast cliffs, perpendicular walls of stone, pinnacles, and peaks of every shape."—*Pulpit Com.*

reminds the people of their folly

A vision of the future.—I. What Moses foresaw, *vs.* 29. II. What Moses, foreseeing this, did. 1. He did not abandon the case in despair; 2. He was the more zealous in the utterance of warning; 3. His repeated warnings left the people without excuse.

The results of death.—Meditate often on the change in the condition which death affects. It is by a thin partition that we are here separated from what is inconceivably great and awful: for the spiritual and eternal world is near. At the moment of death this partition is broken; the dark veil that is between us and the other world is rent, and we are instantly amidst a new and amazing state of things, awake and conscious in the world of spirits. What a wonderful and important situation! The very thought is almost overwhelming. The spiritual world bursting in upon the soul and its faculties, in the vastness of its extent, the newness of its objects, the splendor, the glory, and the might of its inhabitants, and the importance of its demands on the stranger that has entered it, presents what is greatly filled with alarm. And do you not think that you shall then need support, and a kindly ministering hand to lead and guide you? You are not destitute. Be disciples of the mighty Saviour, who died as your Friend, but who lives for evermore; who has gone before to provide mansions, and prepare a place of rest and delight for His followers. Seek now to be faithful, and, amidst all that might appal you in that unknown land, He will bear you up. He will receive you to Himself; that where He is, there you may be also.—*Taylor.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-SECOND.

1-4. (1) Mos. had previously appealed to heaven and earth; *see* De. iv. 26, xxx. 19, xxxi. 28, 29; comp. Ps. i. 4; Is. i. 2. (2) *my . . shall*, or let my doctrine drop, as . . rain," softly falling, but with penetrating, quickening power. *dew*, very copious in Pales., partly supplying the want of rain in summer. *tender herb*, young, just sprouting, needing moisture. (3) *greatness*, comp. Ps. xxix. 1, 2, xvi. 2-8; 1 Ch. xxix. 11. (4) *Rock*, a strong fig. of stability and faithfulness; a safe foundation to rest on.^b

"*This doctrine of the living God as the rock is fraught with comfort and refreshment for man (vs. 2); i. e.* what the rain is to the herb, what the show-ers are to the grass, that is this teaching concerning God to the soul of man. 1. Our heart wants God (Ps. lxxxiv. 2). 2. *Such a God—this God* is as rain and as dew: refreshing, enlivening, restoring. 3. This doctrine of God is meant to make the heart productive of holiness. God's revelation of Himself is meant to draw men to Himself; in doing this God saves them."—*Pulpit Com.*

Work to the end.—Mr. Cecil tells us than when Mr. Newton had passed eighty years of age, some of his friends feared he might continue his public ministrations too long. They not only observed his infirmities in the pulpit, but felt much on account of the decrease of his strength, and of his occasional depressions. On these things being mentioned to him, he replied that he had experienced nothing which in the least affected the principles he had felt and taught; that his depressions were the natural result of fourscore years, and that, at any age, we can only enjoy that comfort from our principles which God is pleased to send. "But," it was asked, "in the article of public preaching, might it not be best to consider your work as done, and to stop before you evidently discover that you can speak no longer?" "I cannot stop," said he, raising his voice. "What! shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?"

5, 6. (5) *They have corrupted, etc.* R. V., "They have dealt corruptly with him, they are not his children, it is their blemish." *corrupted themselves*, Ex. xxxii. 7-9. (6) *thy father*, comp. Is. lxiii. 16. *bought thee*, acquired thee for His own; with allusion to the deliv. fr. Egypt. *made thee*, as a nation.

Is not He thy Father?—Consider—I. That God sustains a Fatherly relation towards us. See Him as our father in—1. The work of creation; 2. The redemptive plan; 3. The workings of Providence. II. That, as such, we owe Him peculiar duties. As our Father—1. We ought to be like Him: 2. We ought to obey Him; 3. We ought to love Him. III. That this relationship involves certain duties with regard to our fellow-men. They are of the same

family as we. Then there should be—1. Family union; 2. Family correspondence; 3. Family love.—*Lister*.

Heathen marks.—There may be here an allusion to the marks which the worshippers of particular idols had on different parts of their bodies, particularly on their foreheads. The different sects of idolaters in the East are distinguished by their sectarian marks—the stigma of their respective idols. These sectarian marks, particularly on their foreheads, amount to nearly one hundred among the Hindoos, and especially among the two sects, the worshippers of Seeva and Vishnoo. In many places they are renewed daily; for they account it irreligious to perform any sacred rite to their god without his mark on their forehead. The marks are generally horizontal and perpendicular lines, crescents, circles, leaves, eyes, etc., in red, black, white and yellow. The Hindoos every morning perform their ablutions in the sacred lakes, and offer a sacrifice under the solemn grove. After having gone through their religious ceremonies, they are sealed by the officiating Brahmin with the mark either of Vishnoo or Seeva, the followers of whom respectively form the two great sects among the Hindoos.—*Forbes's Orient. Mem.*

7—9. (8) *set . . bounds*,^a set apart beforehand; planned that Pales. should be the abode of His peculiar people. *according . . number*, *i. e.* proportionate to the wants of their population. (9) *Lord's portion*,^b Ex. xv. 16, xix. 4, 5.

The Lord's portion His people.—How are they His? I. By His own sovereign choice. He chose them, and set His love upon them. II. By purchase. About His title to them there can be no dispute. With Christ's precious blood they are bought. III. By conquest. What a battle He had in us before we would be won!—*Spurgeon*.

A singular custom.—At Munich there prevails a singular custom. Every child found begging in the streets is arrested and carried to a charitable establishment. The moment he enters the hospital, and before he is cleaned and gets the new clothes intended for him, his portrait is taken in his ragged dress, and precisely as he was found begging. When his education is finished in the hospital, this portrait is given to him, and he promises by an oath to keep it all his life, in order that he may be reminded of the wretched condition from which he had been rescued, and of the gratitude he owes to the institution which saved him from misery, and gave him the means by which he was enabled to avoid it in the future.

10—14. (10) God's dealing with the nation during its wanderings in desert of Sinai. Israel is represented as a man ready to perish in a desert, found, fed, and guided safely to his home. *howling wilderness*, wilderness in which howling of wild beasts was heard, desolate, terrible. (11) *as an eagle*,^c this bird is noted for the care and attachment of female for her young. (13) *high places*,^d the table-lands of Gilead, had given them foretaste of fertility of Canaan. (14) *Bashan*, famous for its cattle.^e *fat . . wheat*, this portion was regarded as very delicate, so offered in sacrifice; ^f fig. is taken fr. it to express the finest and most nutritious wheat.

A panorama of grace.—How Israel was found, led, taught, kept. I. Where God found him. Partly metaphorical—the state of Israel in Egypt being likened to that of a man perishing in the desert; partly literal—it being in the desert that God found the people when He took them into covenant. An image of the helpless and hopeless condition of the sinner. II. How God dealt with him. That Israel was kept in the wilderness so long was his own fault. But grace overruled the discipline for good. The long sojourn in the desert made Israel's case, also, a better type of our own. III. Whither God conducted him. To a land of plenty and rest. Made his defense the munitions of rocks. Provided him with all that heart could desire. So does God bring the believer to a large and wealthy place—a place of “fulness of joy,” of richest satisfactions, of most perfect delights. *The eagle.*—I. Her aim. She aims at teaching them self-reliance. It is not God's wish that His children should go in leading-strings. They must be trained to prompt, fearless, self-reliant action. This was an aim of the discipline of the wilderness. Our action is to be in a spirit of dependence, but it is to be active, not passive dependence. II. Her method. She stirs up her nest. She does not leave her brood to the ignoble ease they would perhaps prefer. So God rouses His people to action by making their place uneasy for them. By placing them in trying situations, by removing comforts, by the

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“Good turns aggravate unkindness, and our guilt is increased by our obligations. It is ingratitude that makes a godly man's sin so heinous, which otherwise would be far less than other men's, since his temptations are stronger and his resistance greater.”

Israel is the Lord's portion

^a Ac. xv. 18; xvii. 26; Pr. xvi. 33.

^b Am. iii. 2; Ps. cxxxv. 4; De. vii. 6; Tit. ii. 14.

“‘Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours, And ask them what report they bore to heaven; And how they might have borne more welcome news.”

Israel's original state and after blessedness

^c Ex. xix. 4; Is. lxiii. 9.

^d “Gave Is. command of those positions which would carry with them dominion over the whole land.”—*Spk. Com.*

^e Ps. xxii. 12.

^f Ex. xxix. 18.

“The eagle bears its young on its wings for protection as well as aid. The archer must first penetrate the body of the old bird before he can touch the young.”—*Jackson*.

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"What an instructive lesson to Christian parents does this history read! How powerfully does it excite them to teach their children betimes to look toward heaven and the Sun of Righteousness, and to elevate their thoughts thither more and more on the wings of faith and love; themselves all the while going before them, and encouraging them by their own example!"—*Kirby*.

Israel's
pride and
ingratitude

a De. xxxiii. 5, 26;
Is. xlv. 2.

b Le. xvii. 7.

"Wealth is not acquired, as many persons suppose, by fortunate speculations and splendid enterprises, but by the daily practice of industry and economy. He who relies upon these means will rarely be found destitute, and he who relies upon any other will generally become bankrupt."—*Wayland*.

"Wealth is to be used only as the instrument of action; not as the representative of civil honors and moral excellence."—*Porter*.

the Divine
anger and
jealousy

c Ps. xcv. 8; He. ii. 8, 15.
d He. iii. 19; Ro. xi. 20.

"We should look upon the merits and virtues of men, to emulate and excel them;

stimulus of necessity, by the sharp provocation of afflictions. He goads them to think, act, and put forth the powers that are in them. It is not for the good of Christians that they should have too much comfort. III. Her care. The experiment is not carried to the point of allowing the young to hurt themselves. She hovers over them, supports them on the tip of her wings, *etc.* God tries us, but not beyond our strength. — *Pulpit Com.*

Sir Humphrey Davy had an opportunity of witnessing the proceedings of eagles after they had left the eyry thus describes them:—"I once saw a very interesting sight above one of the crags of Ben Nevis, as I was going, on the 20th of August, in the pursuit of black game. Two parent eagles were teaching their offspring, two young birds, the manœuvres of flight. They began by rising from the top of a mountain in the eye of the sun. It was about mid-day, and bright for this climate. They at first made small circles, and the young birds imitated them. They paused on their wings, waiting till they had made their first flight, and then took a second and larger gyration, always rising towards the sun, and enlarging their circle of flight so as to make a gradually extended spiral. The young ones still slowly followed, apparently flying better as they mounted; and they continued this sublime kind of exercise, always rising, till they became mere points in the air, and the young ones were lost, and afterwards their parents, to our aching sight."—*Salmonia*.

15—18. (15) *Jeshurun* . . kicked, Israel under poetical name meaning happy one, dearly beloved; acted like pampered, over-indulged animal; without reason rebelled. (16) *jealousy*, figure taken from matrimonial relationships. (17) *devils*,^b destroyers, false gods usually conceived as malignant and destructive. not . . God, to whom allegiance was due.

I. *Prosperity is not real happiness*. Nature knows nothing of moral distinctions; treats all alike. But distinguished rank, long life, abundant wealth and ripe scholarship, do not satisfy inward craving. "Prosperity is like salt water, the more you drink of it the thirstier you are." II. *Prosperity profits very little*. The wealth of empires cannot add to stature of body or mind, nor secure health and virtue. It is insecure and exposes to envy. III. *Prosperity is spiritually dangerous*. 1. In leading to self-dependence. 2. In begetting contempt for God. "Lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." 3. In causing apostasy for God. "Then he forsook God." Guard against selfishness. Be watchful and humble. — *Preacher's Com.*

Rich for a moment.—The ship *Britannia*, which struck on the rocks off the coast of Brazil, had on board a large consignment of Spanish dollars. In the hope of saving some of them, a number of barrels were brought on deck, but the vessel was sinking so fast that the only hope for life was in taking at once to the boats. The last boat was about to push off, when a midshipman rushed back to see if any one was still on board. To his surprise there sat a man on deck with a hatchet in his hand, with which he had broken open several of the casks, the contents of which he was now heaping up about him. "What are you doing?" shouted the youth. "Escape for your life! Don't you know the ship is fast going to pieces?" "The ship may," said the man. "I have lived a poor wretch all my life, and I am determined to die rich." His remonstrances were answered only by another flourish of the hatchet; and he was left to his fate. In a few minutes the ship was engulfed in the waves. We count such a sailor a madman; but he has too many imitators. Many men seem determined to die rich at all hazards. Least of all risks do they count the chance of losing the soul in the struggle. And yet the only riches we can hug to our bosom with joy in our dying hour are the riches of grace, through faith in our only Saviour, Jesus Christ. Let us make these riches ours before the dark hour comes.

19—22. (19) *abhorred*, greatly despised. *provoking*,^c Ex. xxiii. 21. In order to be understood by man God speaks as if He were a man. We must carefully remove the *evil* element fr. anger, despising, provoking, *etc.*, when these are applied to God. (20) *froward*, perverse, wayward; used frequently in Bk. of Prov. *no faith*,^d that faith which includes *dependence*. (21) *not a people*, so esteemed by Israel as not sharing their religious privileges. This prophecy was fulfilled in the jealousy of Is. at calling of Gentiles. (22) *lowest hell*, R. V., "lowest pit," Heb. *sheol*, the grave; fig. for the utmost misery.

The power of example.—When native converts on the Island of Madagascar used to present themselves for baptism, it was often asked of them, "What first led you to think of becoming Christians? Was it a particular sermon or address, or the reading of God's Word?" The answer usually was, that the changed conduct of others who had become Christians was what first arrested their attention. "I knew this man to be a thief; that one was a drunkard; another was very cruel and unkind to his family. Now they are all changed. The thief is an honest man, the drunkard is sober and respectable, and the other is gentle and kind in his home. There must be something in a religion that can work such changes."—*S. S. Times.*

23—25. (23) spend . . arrows, empty all in the quiver. Arrows of God are war, famine, pestilence; sometimes also evil beasts.^a (24) burning heat, the fever of pestilence: serpents . . dust, Ge. iii. 14.

The arrows of the Almighty.—The Apollo Belvedere represents the god, in scorn discharging an arrow at one who thought to elude his vengeance. The arrows of God are—I. Numerous. II. Sharp. III. Well aimed. IV. Far-reaching. V. Swift. VI. Destructive.

God's agents are numerous and terrible.—A few only are mentioned here, but these may serve as samples of others. Material forces are pressed into service. The atmosphere will be a conveyer of pestilence. Fire is a well-known minister of God. Earthquake and volcano have often been commissioned to fulfil Jehovah's will. As a skilled warrior aims well his deadly arrows upon his foes, so God sends his lightnings abroad out of his quiver. Famine is decreed; "they shall be burnt with hunger." Sickness and fever shall follow; they shall be "devoured with burning heat." Pestiferous insects shall assail them, and wild beasts shall overrun the land. The sword of the invader shall fall with ruthless violence upon young and old—upon babe and veteran. They who escape from one peril shall fall under another. From the hand of God release is impossible. — *Pulpit Com.*

26—29. (26) into corners, R. V., "afar;" utterly disperse them. (27) feared . . wrath, R. V., "feared the provocation;" conduct of enemy misinterpreting God. behave . . strangely, R. V., "misdeem;" mistaking the real cause of Israel's ruin.^b (29) latter end, sad consequences of continued disobedience.

God seeks to make foolish men wise.—1. By striking providences. Such mentioned here (*vss.* 24, 25). Affliction and misfortune, inward darkness, distress, and insanity. Providences which alarm and make us think. Providences which create joy and gratitude, all overruled for good and designed to instruct. 2. By inspired teaching. The Bible, an inspired guide, declares the providence and justice of God. A teacher unerring, free, and common to all. — *Preacher's Com.* *God's pathetic appeal to men.*—Wisdom is far-seeing. Not content with estimating present experiences and fortunes, it embraces the remoter issues of our choice; it takes in all the possibilities of the future. I. As there has been a beginning of the present life, so there will come an end. II. The end of probationary life demands our serious consideration. III. The highest wisdom forecasts the whole reach of life, both present and future. — *Pulpit Com.*

Considering the latter end.—A young woman in London, who had been disappointed in marriage, came to the determination to commit suicide; she had chosen the time, the place and the means. Just before the appointed hour that she intended should close her earthly career, she was asked by a friend to go to Surrey Chapel. She complied with the invitation. The late Rev. John Griffin, of Portsea, was the preacher, and the text he selected was De. xxxii. 29. At the close of the discourse, quite unconscious who were his auditors in so large and crowded a congregation, Mr. Griffin was led to address himself particularly to any one who might have resolved to rush into the presence of the Judge of quick and dead,

"And dare Him to do his worst!"

It need scarcely be added that this young woman could not fulfil her awful purpose at the chosen time and place. The week rolled on, and the next Sabbath she again repaired to Surrey Chapel, where a discourse by Mr. Griffin, from Nah. i. 3, "The Lord hath His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of His feet," led her to see that God, in His provi-

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not upon their blemishes and faults, to conform to them, or to rejoice over their possessors.

"For want of faith,
Down the steep precipice of wrong he slides,
There's nothing to support him in the right."
— *Young.*

the arrow and the sword

a Le. xxvi. 22; Je. xv. 2, 3; Eze. v. 17.

"In Scripture Divine punishments are compared to the sending forth of arrows. When an arrow is thrown by the hand of God there is no buckler that can resist it; it never misses the mark." — *S. Martin.*

consideration of the end

b Eze. xx. 13, 14; xxxvi. 21.

It is said of Pius Quintus, that when dying he cried out in despair: "When I was in low condition, I had some hopes of salvation; but when I was advanced to be a cardinal, I greatly doubted it; but since I came to the popedom, I have no hope at all."

"When we think of death, a thousand sins, which we have trode as worms beneath our feet rise up against us flaming serpents." — *Sir Walter Scott.*

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God is our Rock

a Ex. xiv. 25; 1 S. iv. 8; v. 7; 1 Ki. xx. 28.

b Is. i. 9, 10; Eze. xvi. 48, 49.

c "This fruit, wh. the Arabs call 'Lot's' or 'Orange,' is of a bright yel. color, and grows in clusters of three or four. When mellow it is tempting in appearance, but on being struck, explodes like a puff ball, consisting of skin and fibre only."—*Jamieson*.

"Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart; a broken reed at best, but oft a spear; on its sharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires."—*Young*.

vengeance belongs to God

d Ps. xciv. 1; Ro. xii. 19; Heb. x. 30.

e M. Henry. Ps. xc. 13.

f 2 Ki. xiv. 26.

"On him that takes revenge, revenge shall be taken: it is like a rolling stone, which, when a man hath forced up a hill, will return to him with a greater violence, and break those bones whose sinews gave it motion."—*Bp. Taylor*.

God is eternal

g Ju. x. 14; Is. xlvii. 12, 13; Je. ii. 28.

h Is. xlv. 23; Je. xx. 5; He. vi. 17, 18.

dence, was always acting for the accomplishment of His purposes of love and grace. The result was the deliverance of this young woman from an awful and ignominious death, and her conversion to God.

30-33. (30) **shut . . up**, from His help. (31) **their rock**, a sudden comparison of the confidence of Israel's enemies with Israel's confidence, *i. e.* idol-gods with Jehovah.^a (32) **their vine**, here reference reverts to Israel's. **Sodom, Gomorrah**, are used throughout Scr. as emblems of utter depravity.^b **grapes of gall**,^c comp. De. xxix. 18. (33) **dragons**, here for serpents, Ps. lviii. 4; exl. 3. **asps**, kind of adder, Ro. iii. 13.

Their rock is not as our Rock.—As "our Rock," Christ is—I. A fountain: a fount of living waters, a fount from which we may drink and be refreshed, and in which we may wash and become clean. II. A shadow from the heat: "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." III. A refuge: when we are pursued by Divine justice, in the Rock we find a sanctuary; there we are safe from the Law. IV. A fortress: besides hiding ourselves here, we are called upon to resist our enemies from it. V. A sure foundation, the *only* sure foundation. VI. An "offense" to His enemies.—*Mackay*.

The apple of the Dead Sea.—We made a somewhat singular discovery when traveling among the mountains to the east of the Dead Sea, where the ruins of Ammon, Jerash, and Adjeloun well repay the labor and fatigue encountered in visiting them. It was a remarkably hot and sultry day: we were scrambling up the mountain through a thick jungle of bushes and low trees, which rises above the east shore of the Dead Sea, when I saw before me a fine plum-tree, loaded with fresh-blooming plums. I cried out to my fellow-traveler, "Now, then, who will arrive first at the plum-tree?" and as he caught a glimpse of so refreshing an object, we both pressed our horses into a gallop, to see which would get the first plum from the branches. We both arrived at the same moment, and each snatching at a fine ripe plum, put it at once into our mouths; when, on biting it, instead of the cool, delicious, juicy fruit which we expected, our mouths were filled with a dry bitter dust, and we sat under the tree upon our horses, sputtering and hemming, and doing all we could to be relieved of the nauseous taste of this strange fruit. We then perceived, and to my great delight, that we had discovered the famous apple of the Dead Sea, the existence of which has been doubted and canvassed since the days of Strabo and Pliny, who first described it.—*Curzon's Tour*.

34-36. (34) **laid . . store**, intended to intimate that God would not be taken at unawares by the sin, or in the punishment of His people. (35) **belongeth vengeance**,^d active vindication of His outraged authority. **shall slide**, R. V., "Vengeance is mine, and recompense, at the time when their foot shall slide." (36) **repent . . for, or concerning**. Not changing His mind, but changing His ways to pity and help them.^e **none shut up**,^f *etc.*, R. V., "none remaining shut up or left at large," proverbial expression perhaps = bond or free.

Our extremity is God's opportunity.—I. To what a state God's people may be reduced—1. By temporal afflictions; 2. By spiritual trouble. II. The seasonable interpositions which they may hope for. III. The reason why God permits such crises previous to the bestowment of His promised blessings. 1. For the making of us more sensible of our dependence upon Him; 2. For the magnifying the more His own glorious perfections; 3. For the rendering of His mercies more influential on our minds.—*Simeon*.

Revenge.—To do another man a diskindness, merely because he has done me one, serves to no good purpose and to many evil ones: for it contributes nothing to the reparation of the first injury; but instead of making up the breach of my happiness, it increases the objects of my pity, by bringing a new misery into the world more than was before; and occasions fresh returns of malice, one begetting another, like the encirclings of disturbed water; till the evil becomes fruitful and multiplies into a long succession, a genealogy of mischief.—*Norris*.

37-40. (38) **rise . . help**, let other gods prove their power. (39) **See now, observe and learn**. (40) **lift . . hand**, solemn adjuration. **live forever**, God appeals to His own eternal existence.^h

The great Supreme.—Let us notice—I. The views here given of the Divine

character. 1. God's existence and supremacy; 2. His sovereign and uncontrollable agency; 3. His unending duration; 4. His avenging justice. II. The effects which the contemplation of those views should produce. 1. Adoration; 2. Trust; 3. Fear; 4. Earnest seeking after God.

The patience of God.—Suppose a man should come into a curious artificer's shop, and there, with one blow, dash in pieces such a piece of art that had cost many years' study and pains in the contriving thereof, how could he bear with it, how would he take on to see the workmanship of his hands so rashly, so wilfully destroyed! He could not but take it ill, and be much troubled thereat. Thus it is, that, as soon as God had set up and perfected the frame of the world, sin gave a subtle shake to all: it unpinned the frame, and had like to have pulled all in pieces again; nay, had it not been for the promise of Christ, all this goodly frame had been reduced to its primitive nothing again. Man, by his sin, had pulled down all about his ears; but God in mercy keeps it up: man, by sin, provokes God; but God in mercy passeth by all affronts whatsoever. Oh the wonderful mercy! oh the omnipotent patience of God!—*Spencer*.

41-43. (42) drunk . . blood, strong fig. to indicate vast number of slain. beginning . . revenges, *R. V.* "head of the leaders of the enemy;" arrows and sword shall deal with chiefs or leaders of opposition and destroy them. (43) Conclusion of song, with general appeal. Judgment is God's strange work, mercy is His delight.

My glittering sword.—The text suggests—I. A reluctance in the execution of judgment (*Neh. ix. 17*). II. A deliberate preparation for the punishment of the ungodly. III. A complete vengeance upon the wicked proportionate to the previous reluctance and deliberation.

The only shelter.—Ah! you can lock, and bolt, and bar your door against the burglar or the thief: but who can find lock, or bolt, or bar that shall keep out malaria and atmospheric diseases, that make their way through every crack, and cranny, and crevice of our dwellings? If men only had to contend against their fellow-men, they might find relief; but since it is the mighty agencies of time and space, subtle, wonderful and inexplicable, against which they have to contend, who can forge weapons with which to oppose these? It is not safe to live. Human life is in danger under the best conditions. There are no circumstances, except where a man sits under the shadow of the wings of the Almighty, in which there is safety.—*Beecher*.

44-47. Supplementary words. *Hoshea*,^a *Joshua*, *Oshea*, *Jehoshua*, *Jeshua*, and *Jesus*, are other forms of this name, *Salvation of Jehovah* seems to be the significance. This may be the first mention that *Joshua* makes of himself in the sacred writings. (46) set . . unto, give serious heed, make matter of heart-effort. (47) it . . life,^b not merely the prolonging of your life, but the basis of all those conditions and enjoyments wh. make life worth living.

Religion our life.—Consider, concerning religion, that—I. It is not a vain thing. This it would be very easy to show, for its truth is confirmed by the testimony of all Scripture, and of all Christian experience. But the very terms of the negative imply a strong affirmation. II. It is our life. It is essential to—1. Our peace of mind; 2. Our support under the trials of life; 3. Our fitness for the eternal world.

Moravian missions in the West Indies.—The origin of the missions of this devoted class of Christians, in the West Indies, was illustrative of the power of God to bless the feeblest efforts of His people. Some of the brethren who accompanied Count Zinzendorf to the coronation of Christian VI. in Denmark, in 1731, became acquainted with a negro named Anthony, from the West Indies, who was then in the employ of the Danish nobleman, and who frequently conversed with the brethren from Herrnhut, and especially with the elder David Nitschmann. He told them that he had often sat on the seashore of the island of St. Thomas, and prayed for a revelation from heaven; and that, by the providence of God, he had been brought to Copenhagen, where he had embraced Christianity. He drew an affecting picture of the condition of the negroes, both temporal and spiritual, among whom was his own sister, who was also very desirous of Christian instruction; and he assured the brethren that if a mission were established there was good reason to expect success. Such was the influence of this statement, that brother

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"A merchant that keeps debit and credit writes both what is owing him and what he oweth himself. But God doth not so; His mercy is triumphant over His justice; and therefore He wipes out what we owe Him, and writes down that only which He owes us by promise."—*Spencer*.

promise of mercy

"A heathen could say, when a bird (scared by a hawk) flew into his bosom for refuge, 'I will not kill thee, nor betray thee to thine enemy, seeing thou fleest to me for sanctuary.' Much less will God either slay or give up the soul that takes sanctuary in His name."—*Gurnall*.

end of the song and words of Moses

a Nu. xlii. 16.

b Ro. x. 5; Le. xviii. 5; Pr. iii. 2, 22; iv. 22.

The light of religion is not that of the moon—light without heat; but neither is its warmth that of the stone—warmth without light. Religion is the sun, the warmth of which indeed swells, and stirs, and actuates the life of nature, but who at the same time beholds all the growth of life with a master eye, makes all objects glorious on which he looks, and by that glory visible to all others.

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"As flowers never put on their best clothes for Sunday, but wear their spotless raiment, and exhale their odor every day, so should Christian life, free from stain, ever give forth the fragrance of the love of God."—*H. W. Beecher.*

Moses commanded to ascend Mt. Nebo

a Nu. xxi. 10, 11, 20.

"This present, unless we see gleaming beyond it the eternal calm of the heavens above the tossing tree-tops with withering leaves, and the smoky chimneys, is a poor thing for our eyes to gaze at, or our hearts to love, or our hands to toil on."—*Mac-laren.*

Moses blesses the tribes

b Ge xxvii. 27-29, 39, 40; xlix. 1-27.

c 1 Sa. ix. 6; 1 K. xii. 22.

d Ps. lxxviii. 17.

"This last enemy strikes the body as a robber forces open the door of a house, in order to reach the treasure that lies within. If the soul's life has been hid with Christ in God, the spoiler will be disappointed of his prey."—*Arnot.*

Leonard Dober became stimulated with an ardent desire to go to St. Thomas, so that he could not sleep in the night for it. At first he thought these desires could not be accomplished, and that they were therefore useless; but when he arose one morning he was much impressed with the passage, Deut. xxxii. 47. He was still more encouraged on finding that one of his intimate friends, whom he had thought of asking to be his companion, had also felt a strong wish to go to the same place, had expressed a desire that he might be his associate, and had only, by some scruple, been prevented from naming it to him. These two brethren, after fervent prayer, resolved, for the love they bore to the souls of the poor negroes, to go to St. Thomas, and, if there were no other way of accomplishing their design, to sell themselves for slaves, that they might have an opportunity of instructing them in the way of salvation. The names of these two heroes, who deserve to be held in everlasting remembrance, were Leonard Dober and David Nitschmann. They embarked in August, 1732.

48-52. (48) *self same day*, day on which he spake the song in the laws of Israel and practically surrendered or transferred his great responsibility to Joshua. (49) *Abarim*,^a mountains on E. of Jordan, *Pisgah* was probably a ridge of these mountains, of wh. Nebo was a prominent point or spur. (50) *Aaron* . . *Hor*, Num. xx. 25, 28, xxxiii. 38. (51) *trespassed*, Num. xx. 12, 13, xxvii. 14.

A solemn summons. — I. From One who will then be obeyed, even by those who have been most rebellious. II. Concerning an event that awaits us all. III. When we hear the summons our destiny will be fixed forever. IV. The uncertainty of the time should fill us with anxiety to be constantly prepared. V. May it find us, as it did Moses, serving the Lord.

Premonitions of death. — Fletcher, the divine, had a dream which shadowed out his impending dissolution; and, believing it to be the merciful warning of heaven, he sent for a sculptor, and ordered his tomb. "Begin your work forthwith," he said at parting: "there is no time to lose." And, unless the artist had obeyed the admonition, death would have proved the quicker workman of the two. Mozart wrote his Requiem under the conviction that the monument he was raising to his genius, would, by the power of association, prove a universal monument to his remains. When life was fleeting very fast, he called for the score, and musing over it said, "Did I not tell you truly, that it was for myself that I composed this death-chant?"

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-THIRD.

1-5. (1) *blessing*, compare those of Isaac and Jacob.^b *man of God*,^c term for a prophet; applied to Mos. Josh. xiv. 16; Ps. xc., heading. (2) Figure taken from the sunrise. *Seir*, mountain land of Edom. *Paran*, "mounts. on S. border of desert towards the peninsula."—*Robinson.* *ten thousands* . . *saints*,^d *lit. from myriads of holiness*; some think term should be given as a proper name, *Meribah-Kadesh*, *Ewald*, *Fürst*. (3) *people*, the 12 tribes. (5) *king* . . *Jeshurun*, not to be taken literally perhaps Joshua's comment on the greatness of Moses, implying that he was the man of supreme authority, intellectual power, and royal goodness. Deut. xxxii. 15.

The king and his viceroy. — Moses, having received the direction about his death, proceeds next to formally bless the tribes. We have in these verses the introduction to the blessing. I. The advent of God. He is represented as rising at Sinai, as scattering rays from Seir, and as riding forth in sunlike majesty from Mount Paran. The idea is borrowed from the dawn. Next let us notice His court — "myriads of saints." This cannot refer to Israel, as some suggest, but to the holy ones accompanying the Lord from heaven. Next let us notice His gift to men — "from his right hand went a fiery Law for them." This fiery law can only mean that moral law which penetrates unto the heart with its fiery heat. II. The viceroy. He is called here "the man of God," and justly so. He was the man who recognized himself as God's property, as God's servant, as God's minister. — *Pulpit Com.*

The death-bed of Richard Baxter. — "You come hither to learn to die; I am not the only person that must go this way. I can assure you that your whole life, be it ever so long, is little enough to prepare for death. Have a care of this vain, deceitful world, and the lusts of the flesh; be sure you

choose God for your portion, heaven for your home, God's glory for your end, His Word for your rule, and then you need never fear but we shall meet with comfort. God may justly condemn me for the best duty I ever did; and all my hopes are from the free mercy of God in Christ. I was but a pen in God's hand, and what praise is due to a pen?" When he was asked how he did, his answer was, "Almost well."

6—11. (6) **live**,^a though deprived of right of primogeniture keep place among tribes. **be few**, *lit.* a number, *i. e.* a small number. This really a warning; Reuben sunk to be a mere nomadic tribe. (7) **bring . . . people**,^b refers to Judah marching at the head of tribes; his return was pledge of victory won. **sufficient**, to preserve his independence. (8) **Thummin**, Urim, Ex. xxviii. 30 Its possess. the crowning glory of the priestly tribe. **thy holy one**, Levi, as head of tribe. **Massah**, Ex. xvii. 1-7. **Meribah**, Nu. xx. 1-13. (9) Illus. by Ex. xxxii. 26-28. (11) **loins**, regarded as seat of strength; like head, seat of mind; and heart, of affection.

Qualification for the ministry. — St. Francis, founder of the order of Franciscans, hesitated long between the contemplative and the active religious life. He and his disciples were men quite unlearned. He wished to persuade others to follow, like himself, the way of salvation; but he knew not how to set about it. He consulted his brethren what he should do. "God," said he, "has given me the gift of prayers, but not the gift of words; yet as the Son of Man, when He was upon earth, not only redeemed men by His blood, but instructed them by His words, ought we not to follow His Divine example?" And, in his great humility, he requested not only of his brethren, but also of Clare and her sisterhood, that they would pray for him that a sign might be given what he should do. The answer was to all the same, "Go preach the gospel to every creature." And when he preached such eloquence was given to him from above that none could resist his words, and the most learned theologians remained silent and astonished in his presence. — *Mrs. Jameson.*

12—17. (12) **between . . . shoulders**, on his sides or borders; figure from man carrying his son.^d (13) **deep . . . beneath**, the stores of water whence flow springs. (15) **mountains**, the sheltered side of wh. were covered with vine, olive, fig, *etc.* (16) **dwelt . . . bush**, there manifested as the God who sanctifies by His indwelling presence. (17) **unicorns**,^e the wild bull; ox is frequent emblem of strength and glory. Some think ref. is to Ephraim as the firstling of Joseph's family. — *Spk. Com.*

The safety of the beloved of the Lord. — Of Benjamin three things are here said, which will beautifully apply to all God's people. I. He was the special object of the Divine affection; "beloved of the Lord." God especially loves His spiritual children. II. He was to dwell near to the Lord; "by Him." All God's people are near to Him — 1. By grace; 2. In Providence; 3. With regard to the prevailing impressions of the mind. III. He was to abide in perfect security; God's chosen dwell in safety. — *Burns.*

Influence of lunar rays on vegetation. — Of the precious things thrust forth by the moon may be noticed the night-blowing flowers of all countries, the delicious scent of which is most agreeable. It has been remarkable that, on account of the fragrance of these and other flowers, which in the clear moonlight and dewy nights fill the air for miles with their perfume, it is most delightful to pass through the woods of North America at a late hour; and the same may be said of night traveling in tropical countries. Of the many plants which bloom under the influence of the moon may be mentioned one more particularly, a creeping plant of great beauty and fragrance, well known in the East under the name of the "moon creeper." Its large, convolvulus-shaped flowers are of a yellowish white, and its leaves of a dark green hue. Under the sun's warm and powerful rays, these flowers are faded, drooping and entirely closed, but in the moonlight they expand their petals, and flourish in the greatest luxuriance, elegance, and perfection, covering the lattices with a sheet of white blossoms, and filling the air with their grateful odor. The moonlight flowers appear to be mostly of a white or palish color, and their scent, though sweet and very powerful, seems wanting in the freshness which characterizes those of the day. So rapid is the growth of plants, in the clear moonlight nights, when the dew is plentifully deposited, that one shoot of the moon flower creeper was found to have grown two inches in a single night. The moon is known to exercise an influence on all vegetation, and especially

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Reuben,
Judah, Levi
a Ge. xvii. 18.
b Je. xxx. 3; 1 Ch.
v. 2; He. vii. 14;
Re. xxii. 16; Ps.
cxlvi. 5.

"Every man's life lies within the present, for the past is spent and done with, and the future is uncertain."

"How fond it were to wish for such a King. And no obedience to His sceptre bring, Whose yoke is easy, and His burthen light; His service freedom, and His judgments right." — *Waller.*

Benjamin,
Joseph
c Jos. xviii. 11-16.
d De. i. 31.
e Nu. xxiii. 22;
xxiv. 8.

"Ajax seemed devout towards God so long as nothing was required of him contrary to his affections; but when he was commanded to spare Ulysses, — 'In other things I will obey thee, but not in this thing,' said he. So it is with the religion of many at the present day." — *Cavendish.*

It makes a great diff. whether character develops in peace or strife. A child who becomes a believer in a pious Christian family, grows up very unlike one whose faith leads him into opposition to his parents, and exposes him to contest and censure.

a. c. 1451.

so from the new to the full moon. In olden time seeds were put in the ground at the wane of the moon, that they, according to an old rhyme, might with the planet "rest and rise."

Zebulun,
Issachar,
Gad, Dan

18-22. (18) **going out**, *i. e.* to thy commerce and fishing. Zebulun dwelt on sea-shore.^a **in thy tents**, Issa. a home-keeping, agricul. people. (19) **mountain**, Ex. xv. 17. **seas . . sand**, both of water and shore.^b (20) **enlarge Gad**, the mountains of Gilead shut him in. **lion**, suggestive of strength and courage, 1 Chron. xii. 8. (21) **portion . . lawgiver**, ruler's portion. **with . . heads**, though settled early on the east side of Jordan, Gad joined the other tribes in the subjection of Canaan. (22) **Bashan**, Gad's abode or lair, as lion.

a Jos. xix. 10, 11,
17, 22; 1 Ch. xii.
32, 33.

b "Both tribes should traffic with the Phenicians in gold and silver, pearl and coral, esp. in murex, the shell fish that yielded the famous Tyrian dye, and in glass, wh. was manufactured from the sand of the river Belus in their immediate neighborhood."—*Jamieson*.

The abundance of the sea.—May relate—I. To maritime greatness. II. To commercial prosperity. III. To skill in fishing. *Treasures hid in the sand.*—Uses of the sand. I. Gold often mixed with it. II. Useful in manufactures—glass, etc. III. A natural defense against the encroachments of the ocean. IV. A suggestive figure of the countless souls of the faithful.

The distressed emigrants.—In the seventeenth century, some pious people resolved to leave their native land, and remove to America, which at that period was no better than a wilderness. Among other hardships they there endured, they were sometimes in such straits for bread that the very crumbs of their former tables would have been dainties to them. Necessity drove the women and children to the seaside to look for a ship which they expected to bring them provisions, but no ship for many weeks appeared; however, they saw in the sand vast quantities of shell-fish, since called clams. Hunger impelled them to taste, and at length they fed almost wholly on them; and to their own astonishment, were as cheerful and healthy as they had been in England with plenty of the best provisions. A worthy man, one day after they all had dined on clams, without bread, returned God thanks for causing them to "suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand"—a passage till then unobserved by the company, but which ever after endeared the writings of Moses to them.

"Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor
And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away."
—*Cooper*.

Naphtali,
Asher

23-25. (23) **west and . . south**, not geographical description, "the sea and the sunny district." See location.^c (24) **dip . . oil**, suggesting fruitfulness of olive. It may refer to olive oil being pressed out with the foot. (25) **shoes**, R. V., "bars." **iron . . brass**, strong. **days . . strength**, strength suited to the days, and so capacity for endurance.

c Jos. xix. 32-34.

"I reproach myself often with recollections of all the complainings and vain longings in which I have indulged in life, forgetting how many blessings God gives, and how many dangers surround without touching us. We must not cling to the world, nor make ourselves too much at home in it; a little more, and we shall be beyond the troubles of life."—*Bismarck*.

Strength according to the days.—I. It is not the design of these words to suppress forelooking and foreplanning in secular things. II. Nor are they designed to teach men that God will maintain a providence of miracles in their behalf. III. They teach us that we cannot know beforehand what help will spring up from our circumstances. IV. They also teach us that anxiety for the future is labor lost. Apply the subject to those who—1. Follow conscience against their interests; 2. Wish to reform from evil habits, but fear they will not be able to hold out; 3. Look wistfully on a Christian life, but doubt if they would be able to maintain it; 4. Are exceedingly troubled in regard to expected events; 5. Are troubled about their own death.—*Beecher*.

God's resources ample.—More blessing is left than is given. Giving doth not impoverish God. His sun, running his daily course, is as bright after he has kissed all the lands with light, as he was when he first came to begin the glowing task of the day. The sun is not wasted; when he dips in the western water, he dips with a promise that he will be back again soon. We may nod a moment and get ourselves ready to behold the vision, because before we can well close our eyes he will be up again, making the east white and glistening. There is no end to the divine blessing. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" and when you have slaked your thirst, the fountain will seem to abound the more for the water which you have withdrawn; there will be more at the end than at the beginning.—*People's Bib.*

"Little can we at the beginning of an action guess at God's intention at the conclusion."—*Bishop Hall*.

the God of
Jeshurun

d Ex. xv. 11; Ps. lxxxvi. 8; lxxviii. 4, 33, 34; civ. 3; Na. i. 8; Ps. xviii. 9, 10.

26-29. (26) **God . . Jeshurun**,^d R. V., "none like unto God, O Jeshurun." **rideth . . heaven**, surrounded by clouds and glory of heaven. (28) **fountain . . Jacob**, Israel as posterity descended from Jacob as father. **corn . . wine**, land of abundance. (29) **liars**, R. V., "thine enemies shall submit themselves unto thee." **thou . . tread**, shalt triumph, gain dominion over them.

God our home.—The word “refuge” (vs. 27) may be translated “mansion,” or “abiding-place,” which gives the thought that God is our abode, our home. There is a great sweetness in this metaphor, for very dear to our hearts is our home. I. It is at home that we feel safe; we shut the world out, and dwell in quiet security. So with God “we fear no evil.” II. At home, we take our rest. So our hearts find rest in God. III. At home, also, we let our hearts loose; we are not afraid of being misunderstood. So we may freely commune with God. IV. Home is the place of our truest and purest happiness. It is in God that our hearts find their deepest delight. V. It is for home that we work and labor. So must we work for God.—*Spurgeon. Beloved of the Lord.*—Two gentlemen were once riding together, and as they were about to separate, one said to the other, “Do you ever read your Bible?” “Yes; but I get no benefit from it, because, to tell the truth, I do not feel that I love God.” “Neither did I,” replied the other, “but God loved me.” This answer produced such an effect upon his friend that he said, “It was as if one had lifted him off the saddle into the skies.” It opened up to his soul at once the great truth, that it is not how much I love God, but how much God loves me.—*Preacher's Com.*

The everlasting arms.—

Oh! weary heart, upon life's rugged mountains,
Where trembling feet but slowly find their way,
Searching for shady grot or cooling fountains,
Where quiet waters in the silence stray:
Fainting with care, bowed with life's weary trial,
Weak with the contest of temptation's night;
God is thy refuge, fear not His denial,
But trust thyself to His strong arm of might.

Oh! then if on the highway thou shalt weary,
And find no grateful shade in which to rest—
The trees too far, the path so long and dreary—
Bethink thee how His children may be blest;
How all the day His tender love doth cover,
And make each soul beside Him safely dwell.
Till earthly days and nights alike are over,
And hearts no more their weary wanderings tell. — *Douglas.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FOURTH.

1-4. Editorial conclusion written after death of Moses. (1) *Nebo*,^a De. xxxii. 49. *Pisgah*, the height. all the land, much of it could only be seen fr. this point as a distant mountain outline. (2) *utmost sea*,^b the Mediter. beyond wh. no land could be descried. (3) *Zoar*, at the end of the Dead Sea, Ge. xix. 22. (4) *said*,^c Ge. xii. 7, xiii. 15.

Pisgah, or a picture of life.—Here we have life ending in the midst of—I. Labor. If men die thus in the midst of labor, we infer that there should be—1. Cautiousness as to the work pursued; 2. Earnestness in the prosecution of their calling; 3. Attention to the moral influence of their labor, both on themselves and others. II. Earthly prospects. If men die thus, then human aspirations after—1. The earthly should be moderated; 2. The spiritual should be supreme. III. Physical strength: “his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.” Consider how large a proportion of the human family die in this state.—*Thomas.*

The view from Mount Pisgah.—“His eye was not dim,” and so God called him up to a mountain top, and rolled away all the mists that might have covered that fair land, and there it all lay outspread. He saw its smiling green meadows at his feet, between which the Jordan swiftly flowed, and to the right his eye glanced along the valleys and woods, and bright waving corn-fields that stretched away into the dim distance, where rose the purple, snow-crowned hills of Lebanon. To his left he saw the mountains swelling, like mighty billows of the sea, all struck into stillness, and perhaps as he looked upon them some angel voice whispered in his ear, “There will stand Jerusalem, the city of peace; there shall be the temple where for ages and ages Jehovah shall be worshipped, and see yonder, among the hills, on that little

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“The strength wh. the hour of trial brings often makes the Christian a wonder to himself.”

A gentleman crossing a dreary moor came upon a cottage. When about to leave, he said to its occupant, “Are you not afraid to live in this lonely place?” “Oh, no!” said he, “for faith closes the door at night, and mercy opens it in the morning.”

Moses views the promised land

a Nu. xxvii. 12.

b De. xi. 24.

c Ge. xxvi. 3, xxviii. 13.

“Though we believe that death will free the holy soul fr. its remaining pollutions—that it will change suffering and affliction into health and joy, and oppressive weariness into everlasting rest—yet there is no magic in the wand of death which will convert an unholy soul into a holy one.”—*H. More.*

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speck in the landscape, a Cross shall one day stand, and the Son of God shall die to save the world." Across the beautiful land he might, perhaps, catch some dim sight of the blue Mediterranean or at least have discerned where the white mist hung above its waters. — *Green.*

death and burial of Moses

a Jos. i. 1, 2; Ju. 9.

b Nu. xx. 29.

There is full compensation for failure in every true life. Like Moses we shall rise to have our heart's desire, to look on the land and on Him who is the glory of it. — *John Ker.*

Joshua succeeds Moses

c Nu. xxvii. 18, 23.

d Nu. xii. 6-8; Ex. xxxiii. 11; De. v. 4.

e De. iv. 32-34.

f De. vii. 18, 19.

g No. ix. 6-10.

What we have to know here, is the Lord's will; and what we have to do here is, through grace, to do what we know; all besides Christ has done for us already.

"Let dissolution come when it will, it can do the Christian no harm; for it will be but a passage out of a prison into a palace; out of a sea of troubles into a haven of rest; out of a crowd of enemies to an innumerable company of true, loving, and faithful friends; out of shame, reproach, and contempt, into exceeding great and eternal glory." — *Bunyan.*

5-8. (5) word . . Lord, lit. *at the mouth of the Lord*, wh. the Rabbins explain "by a kiss of the Lord." — *Spk. Com.* Clearly ref. is to his not dying of disease, but by special appointment of God, and in fulfil. of His threat. (6) he . . him,^a i. e. God, or perhaps *he was buried*. Beth-peor, De. iii. 29, iv. 46. (8) thirty days,^b seven days the usual time of mourning, extended for great or official persons.

Thoughts on the death of Moses. — I. The best must die: "the servant of the Lord." II. The best may die in the zenith of their greatness. III. The best may die when apparently indispensable. IV. The best may die where they little expect: "Moab." V. But all die when and where God decrees. — *Griffin.*

Did Moses go to heaven when he died? — An infant school teacher was one day speaking about the life of Moses. "Please, sir," said a little boy, "did Moses go to heaven when he died?" The teacher replied, "I do not think it says in the Bible that Moses went to heaven." "Oh, yes, it does," said another little fellow. "Where?" asked the teacher. "Do you not remember, sir," said the boy, "that when Jesus was on a mountain, Moses and Elias appeared to him from heaven? And you know, sir, that Moses could not come from heaven unless he had gone there."

9-12. (9) laid . . on,^c in token of imparting his spirit to him. (10) face, . . face,^d expression for exceeding intimacy and familiarity. (11) all . . wonders,^e miracles, plagues. which . . him,^f Moses acted upon the highest authority. do . . land, to punish the oppressor and deliver the captive. (12) that . . hand, clothed with omnipotence. all . . terror, which filled the heart of Egypt. showed . . Israel,^g that Israel might fear no human foe, but learn to fear and trust the Lord Jehovah.

The distinctive greatness of Moses. — I. Moses was the first to disclose the glorious nature of God and His gracious relationships to our race, as the cornerstone of a great commonwealth. II. He was the first to proclaim, by his sacrificial institutes and teachings, the one principle that "without shedding of blood is no remission." Sacrifice was adopted in other nations as a human expedient for appeasing Divine wrath: Moses declares it to be a Divine appointment for the acknowledgment of human sin and of the Divine holiness. III. He was the first to proclaim the elementary principles and the true basis of the noblest human ethics: "Be ye holy; for I am holy." IV. He was the first to require of a people love to God as the spring of all obedience, and to assign as the reason for their love the care of God to them. V. He was the first, yea, the only one in all history, to demand of a tyrant the liberation of an oppressed people, and to form them into a new commonwealth, with the avowed aim and purpose of planting in the world a new religious faith and life. VI. He was the first who made provision for the education of a whole people in the things of God; with virtue and piety for its lessons, and the home for its training-school. VII. He was the first who aimed at educating a people to self-government. Thus from the first the people were made "workers together with God." — *Pulpit Com.*

Burial of Moses.—

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave.
And no man dug that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er;
For the angels of God upturned the sod,
And laid the dead man there.

This was the bravest warrior
That ever buckled sword;
This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word;

And never earth's philosopher
 Traced, with his golden pen,
 On the deathless page, truths half so sage,
 As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor?
 The hillside for his pall;
 To lie in state while angels wait
 With stars for tapers tall;
 And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
 Over his bier to wave;
 And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
 To lay him in his grave.

Oh, lonely tomb in Moab's land!
 Oh, dark Beth-peor's hill!
 Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
 And teach them to be still.
 God hath His mysteries of grace—
 Ways that we cannot tell;
 He hides them deep, like the secret sleep
 Of him He loved so well.—*Mrs. C. F. Alexander.*

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"My work is done;
 I have nothing to
 do but to go to my
 Father."—*Countess
 of Huntingdon.*

"Death cannot
 come to him un-
 timely, who is fit
 to die."

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

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Introduction.

I. Title, JOSHUA, derived not so much fr. the author as the contents—the hist. of the achievements of J. The first Bk. in the Canon called by name of an individual. **II. Author.** “Nothing can be said to be really known as to the authorship of the Book. Jewish writers and the Christian Fathers ascribe it to Joshua himself.” This view has been embraced in recent times by König and as regards the first half of the book, by Hävernick. But while the book appears to have been compiled by one who lived in the time of the events recorded, and was, indeed, an eye-witness of them, there are scattered up and down it a number of of historical allusions which clearly point to a date beyond the death of Joshua. We shall not in all probability be far wrong in conjecturing that the book was composed partly from personal observation and inquiry, partly out of authentic documents already in existence, by one of “the elders who outlived Joshua,” and within a few years after his death.—*Cambridge Bible*. **Scope and Design.** i. To demonstrate the faithfulness of God in fulfilling His word to the patriarchs (a.) Abraham (Ge. xiii. 15)—(b.) Isaac (Ge. xxvi. 4)—(c.) Jacob (Ge. xxxv. 12)—(d.) Joseph (Ge. l. 24)—(e.) also to Moses (Ex. iii. 8). ii. To show the portion of land allotted to ea. tribe. “It stands in somewhat the same relation to the Pentateuch as the Acts of the Apostles to the Gospels. While the Pentateuch gives the origin and principles of Judaism, and the Gospel those of Christianity, in the Books of Joshua and of the Acts of the Apostles we see those principles in action. The two books give us the youth—the one of the Jewish and the other of the Christian Church. In each case we are introduced to the first beginnings of ecclesiastical history. It is important to keep this aspect of the Book of Joshua constantly in view, in order to retain an adequate appreciation of its significance. Neither the Pentateuch nor the Gospels are primarily historical. They are rather the textbooks of the Old and New Covenant; and the historical elements which they contain are there, not so much as history as in order to explain the origin, and illustrate the meaning, of the covenant in each case. The Book of Joshua and the Acts are primarily historical. Their object is to show how the promises made to the church were in the first instance fulfilled, and how provision was made for a still larger fulfilment in the future.”—*Pulpit Com.*

Joshua.—“Joshua certainly had some, if not most, of the qualities which make a great general—firmness and gentleness, winning ready trust and obedience from his men; decision and rapidity, whereby the enemy was sometimes virtually defeated before the action began. The plan of the invasion shows true military skill. Joshua succeeded in doing what French generals attempted and signally failed to do in the recent war with Germany. He chose a weak point near the middle of the frontier and pushed on to the centre of the country and beyond it, thus cutting the invaded land in two. The southern half was conquered or won over before the northern half had quite recovered from its panic, or could agree what to do against the invaders. The south being successfully subdued, the north was then conquered in like manner. The Canaanites were beaten in detail. From the miraculous ford at Jordan he pushed on to Jericho, from Jericho to Ai, from Ai to Gibeon, and from Gibeon to the Beth-horon, where his first great decisive battle was fought and won against the five kings of the Amorites, on the same spot where Judas Maccabæus more than twelve centuries later as triumphantly vanquished the Syrian army under Seron. . . . The second half of the Book of Joshua (chs. xiii.–xxii.), the Domesday Book of Palestine, is mainly taken up with the details of the distribution. They are no less honorable to the man who carried them out than the details of the campaign which rendered them possible. The division of Palestine among the tribes will bear comparison for equity, sagacity, and permanent results with perhaps most divisions of conquered territory in modern times, from the Norman conquest of England downward. With characteristic unselfishness he waited until every one else had received their share before asking anything for himself; and then it was but a small portion in the rough mountain country that had been assigned to his own tribe of Ephraim. Here he built the city of Timnath-Serah, and spent the remainder of his days.”—*Pulpit Com.*

Synopsis.

(According to the Cambridge Bible.)

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CHAPTER THE FIRST.

1-5. (1) **death of Moses**, in the land of Moab, on the eastern side of the Jordan, where he was buried over against the idol sanctuary of Beth-Peor (Deut. xxxiv. 6). Through thirty days of stillness the camp had been full of weeping and mourning for the great Lawgiver.^a **Joshua**, orig. Oshea;^b Gk. form of word *Jesus*.^c **minister**, Joshua is not spoken of as Moses' "servant," but as his "minister." For his formal appointment to the office see Num. xxvii. 15 ff. (3) **sole of your foot**, fig. used bec. reference is to land, on wh. foot rested. (4) **this Lebanon**, tho' distant, it was visible fr. their position at the time, and formed N. boundary. **Euphrates**, Ge. ii. 14, xv. 18. The largest, the longest, and by far the most important of the rivers of Western Asia. **Hittites**, put for Canaanites generally, as being the dominant tribe. **great sea**, Mediterranean. (5) **as . . with Moses**, "the narrative labors to impress upon us the sense that the continuity of the nation and of its high purpose was not broken by the choice of person and situation."

God's way illustrated.—I. His plans. 1. Are not dependent on men; 2. Are sometimes best advanced by the removal of men who have been eminently useful; 3. Sometimes show the inferior man succeeding where the more eminent man has failed; 4. Have their highest relation not to one man, or two, but to men at large. II. God's choice of men for His service has regard—1. To temperament and disposition; 2. To previous training; 3. To past character; 4. To the work to be accomplished. — *F. G. Marchant.*

Now therefore arise.—In many different situations of life we may hear the same exhortation that was addressed to Joshua. A wise, considerate, and honored father is removed, and the eldest son, a mere stripling, is called to take his place, perhaps in the mercantile office or place of business, certainly in the domestic circle. He is called to be the comforter and adviser of his widowed mother, and the example and helper of his brothers and sisters. Well for him when he hears a voice from heaven, "Your father is dead; now therefore arise!" Rouse yourself for the duties that now devolve upon you; onerous they may be and beyond your strength, but not on that account to be evaded or repudiated; rather to be looked on as spurs provided and designed by God, that you may apply yourself with heart and soul to your duties, in the belief that faithful and patient application shall not be without its reward! Or it may be that the summons comes to some young minister as successor to a father in Israel, whose ripe gifts and fragrant character have won the confidence and the admiration of all. Or to some teacher in a Sunday-school, where the man of weight, of wise counsel, and holy influence has been suddenly snatched away. But be the occasion what it may, the removal of any man of ripe character and gifts always comes to the survivor with the Divine summons, "Now therefore arise!" That is the one way in which you must try to improve this dispensation; the world is poorer for the loss of his gifts—learn you to make the most of yours! — *Blaikie.*

6-9. (6) **be strong . . courage**, literally, *be strong and vigorous*. The word does not refer so much to the *character* of Joshua as to his actions. He was to be a man of action, alert, prompt, ready to act when occasion demanded (see Deut. xxxi. 6, 7, 8, 23). (7) **prosper**, Heb. *act wisely*, guided by the law. (8) **book of the law**, Joshua is admonished that the law must be strictly and carefully observed, if the great work, to which he had been called, was to be successfully accomplished. He was "to read, mark, and inwardly digest it," and carry out its provisions to the letter.^d (9) **commanded thee**, the Hebrew leader is reminded again and again that it was not his work, but God's work, which he had been raised up to carry out.

Courageous in spirit (vs. 7). — The Christian ought to be of a very courageous spirit, in order that he may glorify the Lord by enduring trials in a heroic manner. I. If he be fearful and faint hearted it will dishonor his God. II. Besides, what a bad example it is! One downcast believer makes twenty souls sad. III. Further labor is light to a man of cheerful spirit; and success waits upon cheerfulness. He who sows in hope shall reap in joy; therefore "be thou strong and very courageous." — *Spurgeon.*

Be of good courage. — If seeking God, seek hopefully, expecting to find Him. If distressed with doubts, face them bravely, and calmly wait the rising of the broader light which will include all that is best of old and new. Be of good

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Joshua
appointed
the leader of
Israel

a De. xxxiii. 1.

b Nu. xiii. 8.

c He. iv. 8.

"The road to perfection demands only those who are ever pressing onwards; it rejects those who turn back, those who turn aside, in short all who stand still, no matter for how short a time." — *St. Augustine.*

"Man acts and God leads him." — *Bossuet.*

"Though the great man rises above the level of common humanity, he is no more to be looked upon as distinct and separate from the masses beneath him than the loftiest mountain that bathes its head in heaven can be said to be independent of the earth, from whose surface it rises in its sublimity and grandeur; pay not thy praise to lofty things alone; the plains are everlasting as the hills." — *Ferguson.*

his encourage-
ments

d Ps. i. 2; cxix. 9-11

"We want a knowledge of the Bible, not merely as words and phrases, but as influential principles. Not the Hebrew and not the Greek do we want so much as a translation of them into thought and feeling and conduct." — *Aldridge.*

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"Never think of natural weakness when face to face with some sacrifice God requires of us and some combat in which we must engage." — *Lobstein*.

he prepares Israel to cross Jordan

a Ex. v. 6; De. xvi. 18; xx. 5.

b "It does not appear that manna ever formed the whole and sole sustenance of the people. See Nu. xx. 1-5." — *Spk. Com.*

c Nu. xxxii. 33.

d Ex. xlii. 18, marg. Calmet thinks that these officers were heralds, as we should now term them, who were only sent forth on certain occasions like the present.

Scripture is the only fireproof in which conscience can enwrap itself to prevent being seared into unfeeling callousness by the burnings of surrounding and inward sin.

Israel promises to obey Joshua

e Nu. xxxii. 17, 18.

It has been observed that Joshua is one of the very few saints in Scripture of whom no faults is recorded. This also is to be noted about him, that "his character is to an extent overshadowed by the grandeur of the events and circumstances in which he was placed."

"We are prepared for everything when we have yielded ourselves wholly to God." — *Bossuet*.

courage, for hardihood of spirit, while it is needed, is sufficient for what you have to do. *Strength goes with it.*—The momentum of a projectile is the product of its mass and velocity; and a lighter ball, if driven with greater force, will do all the work of a heavier one that moves more slowly. And this law of mechanics is true of souls. There is many a soul light, fragile, weak, but which hurls itself with energy against resisting forces, which has a power of overcoming far in excess of that possessed by many stronger and lordlier natures. Be strong and of good courage. — *R. Glover*.

10-15. (10) officers,^a their duties were at once civil and military. (11) victuals, the word denotes especially provisions for a journey; order given in anticip of manna ceasing after their crossing the river.^b within three days, order prob. not given until after return of the spies. (12) Reubenites, etc., the portion of Is. wh. was permitted to settle E. of Jordan.^c (13) this land, the country of Sihon and Og. In it Is. was then located. (14) mighty . . . valour, not the whole of the adults who were fit for war, and who numbered, according to Num. xxvi. 7, 10, 34, upwards of 136,930 men, but 40,000 "prepared for" war, Josh. iv. 13.^d (15) rest, fr. enemies, and by settlement in the land.

Duties of brotherhood (vss. 12-15). — Observe—I. The duty of those more early or more richly blessed, helping their less favored brethren. II. The blessedness of doing so. 1. They had the reward of being grandly useful in the service they rendered. 2. Their service resulted in the development of a finer brotherhood. 3. There was developed in these tribes a noble sentiment of patriotism. 4. They were gainers even from a material point of view, for their service was repaid in later times by protection from their foes. — *R. Glover*.

Helping our brethren. — A common obligation rests on all men to whom God gives an easy inheritance, to help those whose lot is only won through hard work and stern conflict. The two and a half tribes had fertile lands, and had them through the service of all Israel; now, having rest, they were to fight the battles of their brethren. God teaches the young nation that men who have rest are to help men who are in unrest and conflict. How it all reads like a verse out of the N. T. What is it but saying, "We, then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves?" It is God's early version of a later proclamation, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Do we use our rest to help our brother who is yet in stern anxiety and conflict? Especially should he who has entered into the rest of faith, labor for the help of him who is borne down into sin by many temptations. Feltham well said, "Shew me the man who would go to heaven alone if he could, and I will shew you the man who will never be admitted to heaven." — *F. G. Marchant*.

16-18. (16) all . . . commandest, a joyful answer instinct with a spirit of true fraternal love and resolute obedience.^e (17) Lord . . . thee, this the true ground of obedience, and the security of success. (18) be strong, the task of a leader is easy when he is sustained by the prayers of his people, and when their exhortations are an echo of the words of God (see vss. 6-9).

The moral advantages of a good organization. — Here we have God electing Himself a leader for His people. Three things about the true leader which are most notable: (1) He must be directly called of God; (2) Being thus called, he will walk constantly in the Divine counsel; (3) Walking thus, he shall achieve the most distinguished success. As in the case of Joshua, so in the church God has appointed leaders. Every man has a place, and ought to keep to it. — *Parker*.

Loyalty. — It is a beautiful sight, the united loyalty of a great nation. Nothing more beautiful has ever been known in the long reign of Queen Victoria than the crowding of her people in hundreds of thousands to witness her procession to St. Paul's on that morning when she went to return thanks for the rescue of her eldest son from the very jaws of death. It was a sight not unlike to this that was seen in the streets of New York at the centennial celebration of the inauguration of George Washington as first President of the United States. One was thrilled by the thought that not only the multitude that thronged the streets, but the representatives of the whole nation, gathered in their churches throughout the land, were animated by a common sentiment of gratitude to the man whose wisdom and courage had laid the foundation of

all the prosperity and blessing of the last hundred years. Are not such scenes the pattern of that spirit of loyalty which the entire race of man owes to Him who by His blood redeemed the world?—*Blaikie*.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-7. (1) *Shittim*,^a *lit. acacia trees*.^b two men, young men probably. Brave, doubtless, and prudent, such as Joshua, who had himself been one of the twelve spies (Num. xiii. 16), would be likely to select, knowing, as he knew, all the dangers to which they would be exposed. *Jericho*,^c *place of fragrance*. "The first stage of Joshua's conquest was the occupation of the vast trench, so to speak, which parted the Israelites from the mass of the Promised Land," and which was dominated by the city of Jericho, a place of great antiquity and importance. *harlot's house*, some^d would read, *a woman, an innkeeper*, but text is correct. (3) *told*, by sentinels posted in this time of danger. (3) *Bring forth*, to be killed as spies. (4) *hid them*, instead of timidly surrendering them to the king she resolved to shield and protect them. *wist . . were*, no doubt she had suspicions, poss. not actual knowledge about them. Scr. does not commend herequivocation. (5) *shutting of gate*, done at sunset in E. cities. (6) *roof, flat. flax*, laid to be dried; piled in little stacks three or four feet high. (7) *fords*,^e expecting return of spies to camp. *shut the gate*, to be sure of them if still in city.

Rahab and the spies.—I. Joshua's conduct. 1. He does not despise the use of means. 2. The use of ordinary means, where possible, is a law of God's kingdom. II. The conduct of the spies. 1. They went un murmuring on a task of the utmost peril. 2. They preferred duty to reputation. 3. They did not recklessly expose themselves to danger. III. Rahab's conduct. 1. Her faith. 2. Her unselfishness. 3. Her falsehood. 4. Her treachery to her own people.—*J. J. Lias*.

Enemies becoming friends.—It is wonderful to see how many things once looked upon as enemies have become friends of Christ. Geology and astronomy were once used by infidels as weapons wherewith to destroy Christianity, but to-day are among the strongest proofs of the Bible, and helps to its understanding. Every science, so soon and so far as it is proved true, is immediately captured by Christ, and becomes His possession. Commerce is carrying missionaries all over the world. For the sake of traffic all lands have been compelled to open their gates to Christian nations, and Christian missionaries enter. The daily papers have to preach the gospel.—*Peloubet*.

8-13. (8) *laid . . down*, composing themselves for the night. (9) *the Lord*, *lit. "Jehovah"*; the name is remarkable as used by Rahab. But the Israelites had long been encamped in the neighborhood, and she might easily have become acquainted with the name of their God. *your terror*, ~~terror~~ of you. The prophetic words of triumph in Moses' song were now fulfilled (Exod. xv. 14-16; comp. also Deut. xi. 25). (10) *heard*, the inhabitants of the land had heard of two important events, which filled them with alarm; (a) the drying up of the Red Sea before the Israelites (cp. Ps. cvi. 7, 9, 22; cxxxvi. 13); (b) the defeat at Jahaz of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and at Edrei of Og, the giant king of the district.—*Camb. Bib.* (11) *melt*, Ex. xxiii. 27; De. ii. 25, xi. 25. (12) *true token*, pledge wh. ye will faithfully keep. (13) *alive*, in the time of destruction she knew was coming.

Rahab protecting the spies.—Consider—1. The service she rendered. 1. What she did; 2. From what principle she acted (He. xi. 31). II. The reward she obtained. 1. She and all her family were preserved; 2. She is enrolled amongst the number of God's most eminent saints; 3. She was made an ancestor of the Messiah Himself. Learn—(1) There is no person so vile but he or she may become an eminent saint; (2) Faith, if true, will uniformly produce good works; (3) Whatever we do for God shall most assuredly be richly rewarded.

Acknowledgment of God.—Rahab had an eye to see and an ear to hear. She had not gazed in stupid amazement on the marvellous tokens of Divine power displayed before the world, nor accepted the sophistry of sceptics referring all these marvels to accidental thunderstorms and earthquakes and high winds. She knew better than to suppose that a nation of slaves by their own resources could have eluded all the might of Pharaoh, subsisted for forty

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"We have not only to submit to God's will, but to submit cheerfully."—*S. t. Francis de Sales*.

two men sent as spies to Jericho

a Nu. xxv. 1; xxxiii. 49.

b "Acacia groves still remain in the vicinity."—*Ayre*.

c "It was the key of W. Palestine as standing at the entrance of the two main passes into the central mountains."—*Stanley*.

d Josephus, *Targ.*, etc.

e Jord. is crossed at several well-known fords, tw. just below Sea of Gal., one above and one below the pilgrim's bathing-place, just opposite Jericho." *Smith's Dict. on Jordan*.

Rahab extorts a promise of safety

"Good works are works of piety, works of righteousness, works of charity; every work that comes from a good cause, commanded by a rule of goodness, performed in a good manner, to a good end, is a good work, whether the object matter be God or man."—*Anthony Burgess*.

"Kindnesses do not always produce what we expect: from a hand which we hate they are regarded as offenses."—*Gornville*.

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"That inexhaustible good nature which is the most precious gift of heaven, spreading itself like oil over the troubled sea of thought, and keeping the mind smooth and equable in the roughest weather." — *Washington Irving.*

they escape from Jericho

a 2 Co. xi. 33.

b "Behind the city rose the jagged range of the white limestone mountains of Judea, here presenting one of the few varied and beautiful outlines that can be seen amongst the southern hills of Palestine." — *Stanley.*

"Garments that have once been rent in them are subject to be torn on every nail; and glasses that are once cracked are soon broken. Such is man's good name once tainted with just reproach." — *Bp. Hall.*

the scarlet thread

c This cord was spun of threads dyed with cochineal, i. e. of a deep and bright scarlet color, so easily distinguished." — *Spk. Com.*

"Health, beauty, vigor, riches, and all the other things called goods, operate equally as evils to the vicious and unjust, as they do as benefits to the just." — *Plato.*

years in the wilderness, and annihilated the forces of such renowned potentates as Sihon and Og. She was no philosopher, and could not have reasoned on the doctrine of causation, but her common sense taught her that you cannot have extraordinary effects without corresponding causes. It is one of the great weaknesses of modern unbelief that with all its pretensions to philosophy, it is constantly accepting effects without an adequate cause. Jesus Christ, though He revolutionized the world, though He founded an empire to which that of the Cæsars is not for a moment to be compared, though all that were about Him admitted His supernatural power and person, after all, was nothing but a man. The gospel that has brought peace and joy to so many weary hearts, that has transformed the slaves of sin into children of heaven, that has turned cannibals into saints, and fashioned so many an angelic character out of the rude blocks of humanity, is but a cunningly devised fable. What contempt for such sophistries, such vain explanations of facts patent to all, would this poor woman have shown! How does she rebuke the many that keep pottering in poor natural explanations of plain supernatural facts, instead of manfully admitting that it is the Arm of God that has been revealed, and the Voice of God that has spoken! — *Blakie.*

14-16. (14) *our life for yours, lit.* "our souls instead of yours for death." Virtual oath; may God put us to death if we fail thee. (15) *cord*, strong enough to bear weight of a man. *upon the . . wall*, prob. town wall was back wall of house, so window looked toward the country. Sometimes in E. cities houses are built on the walls with overhanging windows. Comp. escape of Paul from Dam. (16) *she said*, had said, previously. *mountain*,^b Quarantania (now Jebel Karantul) 1,200 to 1,400 feet high. It is literally honeycombed with caves, so that a man might be concealed for months in the immediate neighborhood of Jericho without detection.

The self-producing power of piety. 1. Mercy begets mercy; 2. Faith causes faith; 3. Kindness and truth reproduce themselves in kind. — *Marchant.*

Kindness to an enemy. — A slave who had, by the force of his sterling worth, risen high in the confidence of his master, saw one day trembling in the slave-market a negro, whose gray head and bent form showed him to be in the last weakness of his old age. He implored his master to purchase him. He expressed his surprise, but gave his consent. The old man was bought and conveyed to the estate. When there, he who had pleaded for him took him to his own cabin, placed him on his own bed, fed him at his own board, gave him water from his own cup; when he shivered, carried him into the sunshine; when he drooped in the hut bore him softly to the shade. "What is the meaning of all this?" asked a witness. "Is he your father?" "No," "Is he your brother?" "No." "Is he, then, your friend?" "No; he is my enemy. Years ago he stole me from my native village, and sold me for a slave; and the good Lord has said, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.'" — *C. Stanford.*

17-20. (17) *we will be blameless, or, "we are blameless."* We must supply "unless you do what we shall now say unto you." (18) *line of scarlet*, as a sign of the house, and token of confidence in them.^c It was prob. in sight of Is. while marching around the walls. (19) *go out, etc.*, on the day of entrance of Israel into the city; the protection was only to extend to the house in wh. they found shelter. *his blood*, = his "blood guiltiness," his "responsibility for blood" (20) *and . . business*, this precaution necessary to her safety, not theirs. If she told of her private arrangement, people of city might kill her, or remove the token. The spies might, however, have meant, keep our secrets while we are hiding.

The scarlet thread. — I. A remembrance to her of mercy she was to expect. II. A remembrance to Israel of a great kindness done to the spies. III. A pledge of safety to all who were in the house. Learn—1. So Israel of old was safe behind the blood-sprinkled doors; 2. So our salvation is secured by a crimson sign.

The importance of public integrity. — It is a national calamity when a nation is not believed. When the policy of a government is made up of diplomacy and subtlety and acts of small cleverness, the policy is ruinous; it may be dignified by the name of "statesmanship," but the name can only make

the ruin greater by deferring it, through a temporary concealment. A good label will not alter the contents of a poison-bottle, nor can a promising name keep a rotten vessel afloat through a storm. *The commercial world* could not go on for a month, if "credit" were not maintained. There are few pulpits where the relation of truth to prosperity is preached as it is "on 'Change." He who does anything to lessen the faith of men in each other, does just so much to ruin them for all prosperity in the things of this life and the next.—*Hom. Com.*

21-24. (21) bound . . window, not at once, but when city was surrounded, then it would not be seen by inhabitants. **(22) abode there**, in caves of the limestone ridge. **all the way**, bet. Jericho and fords of Jordan. **(23) returned**, to this two things neces., to come down fr. mountain and swim over Jordan. **all things that befell them**, compare the words of the sons of Jacob to their father, Gen. xlii. 29; of Moses to his father-in-law, Exod. xviii. 8. **(24) all the inhabitants**, this was the most important part of their communication, that the inhabitants of the land were utterly dispirited and cast down.

With and without God in the world.—I. He who watches and works without God, watches and works in vain. II. He who goes out under the care of God is safe from the wrath of men. III. He who reports the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord can never report too confidently or too cheerfully.—*Marchant.*

The servants of God victorious from the first.—When Jesus told His disciples that He beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven, He taught us that those who set themselves against Him and His cause are fallen powers, no longer flushed with victory and hope, but defeated and dejected, and consciously unable to overcome the heaven-aided forces that are against them. Well for all Christian philanthropists and missionaries of the Cross, and brave assailants of lust and greed and vice and error, to bear this in mind! The cause of darkness never can triumph in the end, it has no power to rally and rush against the truth; if only the servants of Christ would be strong and of a good courage, they too would find that the boldest champions of the world do faint because of them.—*Blaikie.*

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the spies
return to
Joshua

"Friendship consists properly in mutual offices and a generous strife in alternate acts of kindness."

"Those who, struggling against some infirmity, persevere with faith, in spite of failures and distress, are already conquerors in the struggle."—*Catvin.*

"Kindness in ourselves is the honey that blunts the sting of unkindness in another."—*Landor.*

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-6. (1) Shittim, Jos. ii. 1, some six miles fr. the river. They descended from the upper terraces of the valley of Jordan, to the level of the river. **(2) three days**, by Heb. reckoning; *one entire day*, includ. evening of arrival and morning of crossing. **officers**, or, overseers; Jos. i. 10. The word denotes (1) *the head man of the people*. (Exod. v. 6-19) and (2) the magistrates of the town. (Deut. xvi. 18). **(3) ark**, Ex. xxv. 10; when at rest it was in place of honor, the centre of the camp; during a march usually in middle of procession. **priests the Levites**, disting. fr. Kohathite Levites, the usual bearers; this a solemn occasion. **and go after it**, in the wilderness the Pillar of Cloud had led the way, now the Ark of the Covenant takes its place. **(4) space**, of nearly a mile; partly for the sake of reverence, partly that it might be observed and marked as it led the way. **(5) sanctify yourselves**, see Ex. xix. 10, 14, 22, 23. This would consist partly in ceremonial purification, partly in turning to the Lord in a spirit of expectant faith. **(6) take up**, lift on shoulder by the poles. **before**, instead of in the middle.

The presence of God.—I. The sign for the special movement of God's people is God's presence going before them. 1. In both the Old and the New Testaments this is repeatedly made the sign for going forward. 2. The Pillar of Fire and Cloud and the Ark of the Covenant, were the two and only visible signs, indicating God's presence, that the Israelites had to accompany them on their journeys. II. Even when God is most manifestly present with his people, he leaves ample room for faith—1. The Pillar of Cloud was withdrawn. 2. The people knew not how they were to cross the river. 3. Much firmness would be needed at the river. III. The consciousness of God's presence best goes with reverence and deep humility. IV. Reverence and humility are nothing, unless there be holiness. 1. Holiness is to be the rule of God's people in every-day life. 2. Yet special seasons demand special consecration.—*Marchant.*

Israel re-
moves from
Shittim to
Jordan

a Nu. iv. 15; Jos. vi. 6; 1 Ki. viii. 3-6.

"A man's strength does not stand in himself, but in leaning on God. The middle of the Atlantic is as safe as any other part when a storm is raging. And a child is as safe as a strong man, because if the ship does not go down, both are preserved; but if it does go down, they are both drowned. The difference in their strength is nothing when it is the Atlantic."—*Beecher.*

"It is right that God who is all purity should only reveal himself to a heart that is purified."—*Pascal.*

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"A master gives his servant work to do, but he cannot give him strength to work; but God as He cuts us out work, so He gives us strength. 'My strength shall be made perfect in thy weakness.' 'Give thy strength unto Thy servant.'" — *T. Watson.*

God promises to cut off the waters of Jordan

a Jos. iv. 14.

b De. v. 26.

"The Roman censors took a ring off the finger of the son of Africanus, in which his father's image was engraven, because he was degenerated from the noble qualities of his father; not allowing him to wear on his finger what he did not bear in his mind. Neither will God suffer any to bear His name who do not bear His image." — *Spencer.*

the passage of Jordan

c The passage should run, "rose up an heap far away, by Adam, the city wh. is beside Zartan." — *Spk. Com.*

"The river about Jericho has a firm, pebbly bottom on wh. the host might pass without inconvenience." — *Jamieson.*

"God loves to bring us to our difficulties when they are at flood-tide, that we may not attempt to cross them without His help." — *Marchant.*

Early in the morning. — Frederic II., King of Prussia, used to rise early, and he gave strict orders to his attendants never to suffer him to sleep longer than four o'clock in the morning, and to pay no attention to his unwillingness to arise. One morning, at the appointed time, the page whose turn it was to attend him, and who had been long in his service, came to his bed and awoke him. "Let me sleep but a little longer," said the monarch, "I am still much fatigued." "Your majesty has given positive orders I should wake you so early," replied the page. "But another quarter of an hour more." "Not one minute," said the page; "it has struck four; I am ordered to insist on your majesty's rising." "Well," said the king, "you are a brave lad; had you let me sleep on, you would have fared ill for your neglect."

7-13. (7) **magnify**,^a by witness of great miracle, like that of divided sea, which honored Mos. before Is. (8) **brink**, edge or border. (9) **and Joshua said**, vss. 9-13 contain the substance of an address to a solemn assembly of the people, in which a fuller explanation is given of what has been stated generally in vss. 7 and 8. (10) **living God**,^b as opposed to senseless, helpless idols of the nations around. **Canaanites, etc.**, Ge. xv. 18-21; De. vii. 1. Seven nations are here enumerated, as also in varying order, in De. vii. 1; Josh. ix. 1; xi. 3. (11) **Lord . . earth**, Jos. iii. 13; Ps. xlvii. 2. A significant title of the Most High, at a time when the conquest of the land was contemplated. (12) **twelve men**, to carry stones, Jos. iv. 2, 3. (13) **cut off from the waters**, R. V., "cut off, even the waters," etc. The whole bed of the stream should dry up.

An important lesson well taught (vs. 7). — I. The lesson itself: that God was with Joshua, as he had been with Moses. Important that the people should have confidence in their new leader. II. How it was to be imparted. By a crowning success and a great prodigy, in the passage of Jordan.

Description of the Jordan. — The Jordan would scarcely be dignified with the name of river in America, and its appearance is, in reality, quite insignificant. It is, however, deep, narrow, and very muddy, and hurries away to the sea with great velocity. In approaching the river you descend several benches or terraces, and though much swollen with the rains and the melting snows of Lebanon (at the time of our visit), it was still fifteen or twenty feet below its proper banks . . . There are the banks that were flooded when the Israelites passed over. Nor was the miracle unnecessary. It would be impossible for such a host to cross the Jordan at the same season of the year without either a bridge or a miracle, for boats could do nothing in such a current, and it is too deep to ford. Travelers have differed widely in their description of the Jordan, principally from two causes — visiting it at different seasons of the year, and at different places. When and where I saw it, the width might have been twenty yards, and its depth ten feet. — *Thomson.*

14-17. (14) **removed . . tents**, indic. full preparation for the passage; they took the tents with them. It was on the 10th day of Abib or Nisan, the same month that before witnessed the departure from Egypt. (15) **overfloweth . . harvest**, *brimful*, fills all its banks, this occurs in April or May, fr. melting of snow on Antilibanus. During this time river cannot be forded. (16) **Adam**,^c far up, beyond where they stood, at the city of Adam, that is beside Zaretan, about 80 miles from the place where the host was encamped, the waters which rushed down from above "stood and rose upon an heap," drawn up by the Divine Hand. **salt sea**, called also Dead Sea. (17) **in the midst**, middle of the bed, prob. at place of the usual ford. **passed . . on**, where the passage exactly took place cannot now be determined, but the typical significance of the narrative is very impressive. Whether we consider (i) the solemn inauguration of Joshua to his office; or (ii) his attestation by the waters of the Jordan; or (iii) the choice of twelve men, one from each tribe, to be the bearers of the twelve stones, and the builders of the monument founded therewith (1 Cor. iii. 10; Rev. xxi. 14), we see types of the other "Joshua," Who was solemnly inaugurated and divinely attested by the rushing waters of the same stream, and Who ordained His twelve Apostles to be the Pillars of His Church, and the builders of the Spiritual Temple. — *Camb. B.*

The division of the waters. — This was: I. A revelation of God, showing 1. God's control over nature. 2. His control over the nations, — for the miracle was a pledge of victory (vs. 10). II. A chapter in the moral education of the people; an education in faith, and in the courage that springs from

faith. Learn—1. Life to most of us is a succession of trials of faith. 2. The inspiring effect of a noble example. — *J. Waite.*

Safety in apparent danger.—A lady was awakened one morning by a strange sound of pecking at the window; and when she got up she saw a butterfly flying backwards and forwards inside the window, in a great fright, because outside there was a sparrow pecking the glass, wanting to reach the butterfly. The butterfly did not see the glass, but it saw the sparrow, and evidently expected every moment to be caught. Neither did the sparrow see the glass, though it saw the butterfly, and made sure of catching it. Yet all the time, the butterfly because of that thin, invisible sheet of glass, was actually as safe as if it had been miles away from the sparrow. — *James Inglis.*

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

1-5. (1) **Lord spake**, not at this partic. time; instructions were given before, but are restated here to complete the account. (3) **twelve stones**, the commemoration of events by the setting up of huge stones was by no means peculiar to the Jews, though it was often used by them, as, for instance, Gen. xxviii. 18; xxxv. 14; 1 Sam. vii. 12. Almost every nation has adopted it. The Egyptian obelisks, the stones at Hamath, supposed to be of Hittite origin, the dolmens and other megalithic monuments of the Celts, the Logan or rock-ing-stones, are cases in point. The Scandinavians filled their country with them. — *Pulpit Com.* **lodging place**, convenient situation some little distance fr. river bank. (4) **prepared**, poss. referring to their election by the tribes, and approval by Jos.; more prob. it means set ready, appointed. (5) **before the ark**, these twelve men had probably hitherto remained, from motives of reverence, somewhat behind the ark—they are now commanded to advance.

The stones of memorial.—Consider the lessons to be learned.—I. From their number. The twelve tribes of Israel all passed over. Ancient promises of God fulfilled. II. From their original resting-place. The bed of the river. A visible proof of the miracle. The stones henceforth as dry as Israel's feet had been. III. Their final destination. Israel's first lodging in Canaan. IV. Their historical use. To set forth, not the prowess of Joshua, but the mercy of God.

The Jordan.—This river, being the principal stream of Palestine, has acquired a distinction much greater than its geographical importance could have given. It is sometimes called "the river," by way of eminence, being in fact, almost the only stream of the country which continues to flow in summer. The river rises about an hour and a quarter's journey (say three miles or three miles and a quarter) north-east from Banias, the ancient Cesarea Philippi, in a plain near a hill called Tel-el-Kadi. Here there are two springs near each other, one smaller than the other, whose waters very soon unite, forming a rapid river from twelve to fifteen yards across, which rushes over a stony bed into the lower plain, where it is joined by a river which rises to the north-east of Banias. A few miles below their junction the now considerable river enters the small lake of Hùleh, or Semechonitis (called "the waters of Merom" in the Old Testament). This lake receives several other mountain streams, some of which seem to have as good claim to be regarded as forming the Jordan as that to which it is given in the previous statement; and it would, perhaps, be safest to consider the lake formed by their union as the real source of the Jordan. After leaving the lake, the river proceeds about twelve miles to the larger lake, called by various names, but best known as the Sea of Galilee; after leaving which it flows about seventy miles farther, until it is finally lost in the Dead or Salt Sea. — *Kitto.*

6-9. (6) **sign**, a standing record of mirac. passing of Jordan. No inscription on it gave information, but its existence started inquiries. (7) **cut off**, stayed fr. flowing; there is no indic. that it was a mere path bet. heaps of water, as is too often imagined. (8) **laid . . there**, i. e. in Gilgal. "The children of Israel" are spoken of as the doers of this, because it was done by the twelve who acted for them. (9) **twelve . . Jordan**, another set of stones, making heap in bed of river, prob. at place of usual ford, and visible above usual water line. **unto this day**, the time when Bk. of Joshua was written.

Teaching the children.—I. Mistakes we are apt to make. 1. We assume

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The Rev. W. Cowper, sometime minister at Stirling, and afterwards Bishop of Gallo-way, thus spoke of his dissolution to his friends. "Death is somewhat dreary and the streams of that Jordan wh. is between us and our Canaan run furiously; but they stand still when the ark comes."

stones for a memorial

'Spoil not thy memory, nor make it bad by suspecting it. How canst thou find that true which thou wilt not trust? Marshal thy notions into a handsome method. One will carry twice more weight, trussed and packed up in bundles, than when it lies untowardly flapping about his shoulders.' — *T. Fuller.*

"We owe it to ourselves to remember all God's benefits, for the recollection of them is green pastures and still waters when we are weak." — *Glover.*

Monuments are the grappling irons that bind one generation to another. — *Joubert.*

"Aristotle calls it the scribe of the soul; and Bernard calls the memory the stomach of the soul, because it hath a retentive faculty and turns heavenly food into blood and spirits." — *T. Watson.*

the purpose of the memorial

a "The erection of cairns or huge piles of stones, as monuments of remarkable incidents, has been common amongst all peo-

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ple, especially in the early and rude periods of their history. They are the established means of perpetuating the memory of important transactions.—*Jamieson.*

Israel's vanguard

a Jos. i. 16-18.

b "The higher terrace of Jordan, about seven miles broad. The mountains here recede somewhat fr. the river, and leave a level and fertile space."—*Spk. Com.*

"Many people have their own god; and he is much what the French may mean when they talk of *Le bon Dieu*—very indulgent, rather weak, near at hand when we want anything, but far away, out of sight, when we have a mind to do wrong. Such a god is as much an idol as if he were an image of stone."—*Hare.*

the waters of Jordan return

c Ex. xxv. 16; xxxi. 18.

"In our fields abundance of wet breeds abundance of weeds, and, consequently, great scarcity of corn. And is it not so with our souls? The more of God's blessings and wealth, the more weeds of carnality and vanity; and the more rich to the world, the less righteous to God commonly."—*Spencer.*

that the children of Christians will become Christians; 2. We suppose that a child must grow to maturity before its conversion can take place; 3. The teaching of children is often made interesting rather than substantial. II. Some encouragements we may forget. The work—1. Has God's command; 2. Is full of promise; 3. Has an eternal and glorious reward.—*Hom. Com.*

Memorial stones.—The practice of setting up a stone in memorial of mercies received is still common in the East. Mr. Morier describes what he witnessed in ascending the rock of Istakhar, in Persia: "We ascended on the north-west side, winding round the foot of the rock, and making our way through narrow and intricate paths. I remarked that our old guide every here and there placed a stone on a conspicuous bit of rock, or two stones one upon the other, at the same time uttering some words which I learnt were a prayer for our safe return. This explained to me what I had frequently seen before in the East, and particularly on a high road leading to a great town, whence the town is first seen, and where the Eastern traveler sets up his stone, accompanied by a devout exclamation, as it were in token of his safe arrival!"

10-13. (10) **priests . . stood**, their patient attitude, standing still and motionless, was eminently calculated to impart courage to the people. **hasted**, indic. either that their faith was mingled with fear, or that haste was needed to get so large a host across in a given time. (11) **clean passed over**, people, flocks, and baggage, all safe on further side. So they were able to watch the ark come out of Jord., as they had watched it go in. (12) Fulfilling their pledge.^a **Moses spake**, Nu. xxxii. 20-33. (13) **plains of Jericho**, part of the Arabah.^b These plains, consisting of the higher terrace of the Jordan valley, are almost seven miles broad.

Passing over the flood (vs. 10).—1. How different was this haste to enter Canaan from their reluctance forty years before. They had learned obedience in the school of affliction. II. They hastened in the van to secure the safe passage of the rear. III. They hastened, yet marched in order. IV. They hastened, animated by hope, not as when passing through the sea impelled by fear. V. They hastened as conquerors, not as fugitives. VI. They hastened, being ready. Apply—To the river of death. May we all joyfully press forward, and all pass clean over.

Terraces and fords of the Jordan.—"The river runs between successive terraces, one, two, or three, according as the hills approach more or less near to its banks. It is crossed by three, or at most four, well-known fords. The first and second are marked by remains of Roman bridges, immediately below the Sea of Galilee, and again immediately above its confluence with the Jabbok; the third and fourth immediately above and below the present bathing place of the pilgrims opposite Jericho. . . . The actual stream of the Jordan, as it flows between these banks, is from sixty to a hundred feet wide, and varies from six to four feet in depth. Where it is widest the bottom is mud; where narrowest, rock or sand."^c

14-18. (14) **magnified**, Jos. iii. 7. This is a divine testimony to his appointment to succeed Mos. Confidence in a leader is from a human point of view, one of the most successful requisites for success in war. (15, 16) **Command the priests**, indic. Jos.' supreme authority. He acted under immediate Div. direction. **testimony**,^c sometimes covenant (17) **out of Jordan**, on to the western bank. (18) **flowed . . banks**, not flowed over as a flood, but filled all its banks full. Thus the history of the crossing is related in sections; (a) first briefly, iii. 14-17; (b) then more completely, iv. 1-11; (c) some supplementary notices, iv. 12-17; (d) finally, the conclusion, concerning the return of the water, till Jordan "flowed over all his banks," as it did before.

Experience the best schoolmaster.—We cannot learn trust and patience as theories any more than a soldier can learn drill and battle from books. He must go through his task; we must do the same with ours. Carlyle has said, "Experience is an excellent schoolmaster, but he does charge such dreadful wages." Beecher has somewhere written, "God sends experience to paint men's portraits. Does some longing youth look at the settled face of a Washington, whose lineaments have been transmitted to us by the artist's skill, and strive to wear as noble a mien? That look—the winds of the Alleghanies, the trials of the Jersey winter, the sufferings at Cambridge, the conflicts with Congress, wrought it out; and he who would gain it must pass

through as stern a school." Much more must the children of God, who would be "transformed into the image of His Son," get one by one those Divine lineaments graven into their spirits by *doing and bearing* the will of God. — *Hom. Com.*

19-24. (19) **first month**, Nisan. Notice the exactness of the narrative. **Gilgal**, the place so named afterwards.^a It continued long a place of rendezvous, and perhaps a sanctuary.^b It was some five miles fr. the river. (20) **those twelve stones**, which seem to have been invested with a reverence which came to be regarded at last as idolatrous (Hos. iv. 15; ix. 15; Amos. iv. 4; v. 5). **pitch**, set up, to form a heap, or rude pillar. (21) See vs. 6. (22, 23) Comp. Ex. xiv. 21. (24) Two objects were to be served by this monument — it was a testimony to surrounding heathen, and a memorial to God's people.

The passage of Jordan commemorated. — I. The mercy commemorated: the passage of Jordan. II. The means used to perpetuate the remembrance of it: two monuments were erected. These were to serve — 1. As evidences of God's power. Who can ever fail that trusteth in Him? 2. As memorials of love. We see what we may expect in the time of trouble, and in the hour of death, from God. Improvement: — Let us — (1) Remember God's mercies to us; (2) Transmit the knowledge of His goodness to the latest generations. — *Simeon.*

Patience in training children. — If we can be patient anywhere, surely we may be for our children's salvation. It is said that when Kepler, the immortal astronomer of Wurtemberg, who discovered the laws of the motions of the planets, lay dying, he was asked by a friend whether he did not suffer cruelly to be obliged to depart without seeing his discoveries appreciated. He answered, "My friend, God has waited five thousand years till one of His creatures discovered the admirable laws which He has given to the stars: why should I, then, not wait till justice is done to me?" We might all well labor on in the beautiful spirit of that reply. How long, in many cases, does God patiently wait for the salvation of the parents themselves; remembering that, they may well wait before Him for their children. But to earnest prayer, wise training, and holy faith, the reward cannot but come eventually. — *Marchant.*

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1-3. (1) **kings of the Amorites**, this verse stands in close connection with the last verse of the preceding chapter. All the peoples of the earth were "to know the Name of the Lord" and to fear Him. A first example of this is seen in the case of the Canaanite nations. **Canaanites**, chief of the nations dwelling on coast and low lands.^c The Amorites dwelt in the hill country of Judea. **heart melted**, prob. the difficulty of such a host crossing Jordan had been one of their confidences. Such fear is ever the beginning of misfortune. (2) **sharp knives**, made of flint. Such knives appear to have been long used for circumcision, and sacred purposes. A representation of the Egyptian flint knife from the museum at Berlin is given in Smith's *Bib. Dict.* and **circumcise**, for forty years in the wilderness the nation had been under judgment, and those born there had not received the covenant mark of circumcision.

A national panic. — I. The cause of this panic. "They heard." 1. The people of the region must have witnessed the event; and, filled with wonder, have spread the report of it; 2. Those who heard must have regarded this miracle as evidence of a present God; and, therefore, as the prelude of certain victory. II. The effects of the panic. Their heart melted with fear. They would feel that no resistance would ultimately avail. The moral effect would favor the Israelites.

The tide retarded. — "In the number of providential interpositions in answer to prayer," says Le Clerc, "may be placed what happened on the coast of Holland in the year 1672. The Dutch expected an attack from their enemies by sea, and public prayers were ordered for their deliverance. It came to pass, that when their enemies waited for the tide, in order to land, the tide was retarded, contrary to its usual course, for twelve hours; so that their enemies were obliged to defer the attempt to another opportunity, which they never found, because a storm arose afterwards and drove them from the coast." *Leighton.*

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"What millions died that Caesar might be great." — *Campbell.*

the memorial set up at Gilgal

a Jos. v. 9, 10.

b Ju. ii. 1; iii. 19; i Sa. vii. 16; x. 8; xl. 14, 15; xiii. 4, 7, 8, 12, 15; xv. 12, 21.

If the gospel does not bid you despair, never do you despair of yourself.

"The mistake we make is, that we measure by our own standard the patience of our Saviour." — *Duguet.*

"Those only deserve a monument who do not need one; that is, who have raised themselves a monument in the minds and memories of men." — *Hazlitt.*

"Monuments themselves memorials need." — *Crabbe.*

the circumcision at Gilgal

c Nu. xiii. 29.

"Clemency is a virtue by which God so attempts the chastisements and punishments of the creature, even at the very time when He indicates them, that by their weight and continuance they may not equal the magnitude of the sins committed; indeed, that they may not exceed the strength of the creature." — *Arminius.*

"Prayer is a supernatural work, and therefore the principle of it must be supernatural. He that hath nothing of the Spirit of God cannot pray at all: he may howl as a beast in his necessity or distress, or may speak words of prayer; but pray he cannot." — *Leighton.*

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the reproach of Egypt rolled away

a "Many think the true cause was a temporary suspension of the covenant with the unbelieving race who, being rejected of the Lord, were doomed to perish in the wilderness, and whose children had to bear the iniquity of their fathers." — *Jamieson*.

first pass- over in Canaan

manna

cases

b *Gesenius*. See time of barley harvest.

c *Le. xxiii. 10, 11, 14.*

d *Le. xvi. 35.*

If you have but a grain of grace it is infinitely more valuable than all your other possessions; just as a small diamond exceeds in worth a mountain of dross.

"Thankfulness is the tune of angels." — *Edmund Spenser*.

Generally the further off we place our aim, and the less we desire to be ourselves the witnesses of what we have labored for, the more wide and rich will be the measure of our success — *Anon*.

the captain of the Lord's host

e *Ge. xii. 7; xviii. 2.*

f *Ge. xxxii. 24.*

g *Phil. ii 7, 8.*

h *Comp. Nu. xxii. 31.*

4—9. (5) **born in this wilderness**, their varied movements may have led to the neglect.^a (6) **land . . . honey**, for this expression compare *Exod. iii. 8, 17; xiii. 5; Lev. xx. 24; Num. xiii. 27; xvi. 14; Deut. vi. 3*. "Milk and honey are productions of a land rich in grass and flowers. Both articles were abundantly produced in Canaan, even in a state of devastation. The land yielded great quantities of honey also, especially that from wild bees (*Judg. xiv. 8*)."—*Camb. B.* (8) **whole**, the wounds made in the process had healed up. The panic of the Canaanites prevented any attack during this period. (9) **reproach of Egypt**, either taunts uttered by Egypt on hearing of their sins and sufferings in wilderness: or more prob. ref. is to the degradation of bondage in Egypt, when they were without a country, and slaves. *Gilgal, Jos. iv. 19*. A new name was not given, but rather the old name received a new meaning and significance.

Blotting out the past.—Ah! how blessed are they that know how to shut the door of the past, and not open it again—for when we have shut it we usually have had enough of the hours we have passed through, and we had better write upon them, "Forgetting the things that are behind," unless it be some fairer joy, unless it be some better hope, that we fain would cherish. The mistakes, the sorrows, the weaknesses, the temptations, the defeats of past hours—let them go with the hours. Let us not turn back to find them.—*Beecher*.

10—12. (10) **encamped in Gilgal**, the camp became permanent, and probably in grateful memorial of the many associations connected with the place, the people made it for centuries the gathering place of the tribes. **kept the passover**, their reproach having been rolled away, the people of God would renew the festive remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt. (11) **old corn**, more correctly *produce*, deriv. of word^b indicates reference to the fruits of the land, just then ready for reaping. Another sug. is (*Mat. Henry*) that the inhabitants of country fled before them, leaving old corn in their storehouses. **morrow**, not after *even* of vs. 10, but after day of holy convocation, so the 16th. **unleavened cakes**, as used for passover. **parched**,^c the grains roasted without other preparation. (12) **manna ceased**,^d because necessity for it was no longer felt.

The special and the customary.—I. Manna, a special provision for a special exigency. 1. The exigency shows us that even under the guidance of God there is no exemption from trial. 2. The provision assures us that under the leadership of God all real wants will be supplied. II. The cessation of the miraculous supply teaches us—1. Not to expect to be furnished directly from God with what He enables us to procure by our own exertions; 2. To be thankful for a return to ordinary ways and means; 3. The form which God's interpositions assume. Varies according to the requirements of his people. — *Aldridge*.

Seeming loss and real gain.—It is common experience that the advent of spiritual blessings compensates the loss of temporal. Nothing at first appears more desolate than loss of fortune, loss of health, or loss of some principal bodily sense—like sight or hearing. But in a Milton intellectual vigor, patriotic ardor, and poetic sensibility attain their noblest elevation, though

"Cloud and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expunged and razed,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out."

It is the total loss of hearing, the result of a sudden accident, that turns the slater, John Kitto, into a most instructive and interesting Oriental scholar and writer. How often temporal loss has proved in a higher sense spiritual gain, all Christian biography testifies. — *Blairkie*.

13—15. (13) **by Jericho**, Jos. had advanced near to examine city and plan his attack. **a man**, see *Div. manifest*. to Ab.,^e and Jacob,^f God's appearing in the form of man was anticipative of the Incarnation.^g **sword drawn**, attitude of prep. for war.^h **Joshua went unto him**, this shows that the appearance was not a mere waking vision. (14) **captain**, Heb. *prince*, with idea of leader. "The prince of the angels of heaven had come to lead Israel in the

impending strife." **host of the Lord**, prob. ref. here is to angels, and is the assurance of mirac. help in overcoming Jericho. Comp. Ge. xxxii. 1, 2. **did worship**, as to one claiming respect, not as to God. (15) Jos. needed a deeper sense of the dignity of his visitor; he must feel the hallowing of Div. presence. Comp. Ex. iii. 5.

The captain of the Lord's host.—The march was over. The Jordan had been forded. Up, through the long steep jungle at the river's edge, the tribes had shorn their way and were now at last fairly encamped at Canaan. To their eyes, still aching with the glare of the desert, the scene that now opened was one of enchanting freshness and glory—

It was a scene divine,
A blending of all beauties, streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountains, vine.

But their warfare was not yet accomplished; not yet were they to enter into rest. . . . Right in the middle of their path, five miles onward, towering above the palm-groves, rose in its massive strength the fortified city of Jericho. It was the key of the country, and before they could open the country to take possession of the heritage their God had given them they had to take that key. . . . How was this to be done? . . . We may be sure that this hour of pause was to their leader an hour of prayer. . . . In this mood he went forward alone to reconnoitre the place. While he was there thinking and thinking, all at once there glimmered in the twilight over against him the figure of "a man with a drawn sword in his hand."—*C. Stanford.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1-5. (1) This verse is strictly parenthetical, and states the historical significance which gave occasion for this Divine intervention, *R. V.*, prints it as parenthesis. **straitly**, strictly; *lit. had shut (its gates) and was fast shut*. A fenced city with high walls, De. i. 28. (2) **Lord said**, the announcement of "the captain of the Lord's hosts," is here resumed. **given . . . hand**, that which God foreordains may be spoken of as accomplished. (3) **compass**, march round. (4) **trumpets**, *lit.* "jubilee trumpets of rams' horns." Le. xxv. 9. **seven**, this number regarded as symbol of the covenant.^a Observe the significance here of the number: *seven* priests; *seven* hours; *seven* days of compassing the walls; *seven* repetitions of it on the *seventh* day. (5) **shout**, "the well-known and terrible war-cry" peculiar to Israel.^b **every . . . him**, over the prostrate walls the Israelites were to advance into Jericho, and "each one straight forward," so that as far as possible, their order should be preserved.

The siege of Jericho (vs. 3).—It seemed good to Infinite Wisdom to appoint this method of besieging the city. I. To magnify His power, and show in a convincing manner, both to the Canaanites and to Israel, that Omnipotence alone had achieved the work. II. To try the faith and obedience of Joshua and the people by prescribing a course of conduct that seemed to human wisdom the height of folly. III. To put honor upon the ark as the appointed token of His presence, and to confirm still more fully that veneration and awe with which they had always been taught to regard it.—*G. Bush.*

An impossible task.—Such are many of the tasks assigned us. Our duties in this world are always on a scale which assumes we have omnipotent help within our reach: Abraham's charge to leave ancestral home: that of Moses to invade Egypt and liberate God's people: that of David to earn a right to the throne of Israel: that of Esther to save her people: that of the apostles to "heal the sick and cast out devils," and subsequently to "go and teach all nations:" that of all the saints in all ages. We all have tasks like the reduction of Jericho, utterly beyond our unaided strength. To enter through the strait gate; to keep the narrow way; to overcome in the conflict with principalities and powers in high places; to be steadfast unto death; to secure, by our testimony, our efforts, our prayers, the salvation of those who are perishing around us; to hope against hope; to gather meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light—oh, what impossible tasks are these? But we "can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth us," and instead of being dismayed at the impossibilities we should rather rejoice, for a *precept of impossibility is a promise of omnipotent help*. Shrink not from the Jericho you have to assail. God will give it into your hand.—*Pressensé.*

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"The more powerful the obstacle, the more glory we have in overcoming it; and the difficulties with which we are met are the maids of honor which set off virtue."

"Wisdom is not found with those who dwell at their ease; rather nature, when she adds brain," adds difficulty."—*Emerson.*

the siege of Jericho

^a "Seven in the signature of God's covenant with men."—*Trench.*

"Every carnal heart is a Jericho shut up. God sits down before it, and displays mercy and judgment in the sight of the walls thereof: it hardens itself in a wilful security, and saith, 'I shall never be moved.'"—*Bp. Hall.*

^b *Stanley. Comp. Ju. vii. 18, 20.*

"It is for active service soldiers are drilled, and trained, and fed, and armed. That is why you and I are in the world—not to prepare to go out of it some day, but to serve God in it now."—*Henry Drummond.*

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the city
compassed

a Nu. x. 25.

"Out of all earthly things there cometh out good and evil; the good through God, and the evil from the evil heart."—*Cole-ridge*.

"Earthly greatness is a nice thing, and requires so much chariness in the managing as the contentment of it cannot requite."—*Hall*.

"Faith is nothing else but the soul's venture. It ventures to Christ, in opposition to all legal terrors. It ventures upon Christ in opposition to our guiltiness. It ventures for Christ, in opposition to all difficulties and discouragements."—*W. Bridge*.

the compass-
ing of the
city repeated
seven times

b "A shout for mastery, a shout of faith, and a shout of prayer."—*Matt. Henry*.

"When we have Bible conversations, our lives, as rich diamonds, cast a sparkling lustre in the church of God, and are, in some, sense parallel with the life of Christ, as the transcript with the original."—*T. Watson*.

Jericho
taken

6-16. (6) and Joshua, in obedience to the commands thus received Joshua implicitly carries out the instruction given him and issues the needful orders to the host. (7) he said, *R. V.*, "they said." (8) blew, not continuously, but at intervals, deafening and alarming blasts. (9) rereward, as is usual in marching order, a few soldiers guarded the rear; this prob. the place of the tribe of Dan.^a (10) shall not shout, no sign of triumph was to be raised; but the Israelites, their priests, and the ark of their covenant were in solemn silence to encompass the city day by day, until they were commanded to raise the shout of victory. The people of Jericho knew only too well what this religious procession meant.—*Pul. Com.* (11) came into the camp, on the evening of the first day, and the six succeeding days they returned to their encampment at Gilgal to spend the night.

Working and waiting.—The conquest of Jericho a great victory of faith, Heb. xi. 30. We may learn—I. That faith will adopt the means appointed of God, even though science and custom may reject them as ill-adapted, or unusual. II. That faith will not only use the means appointed of God, but in the way prescribed by Him. III. The town of Mansoul to be taken in the Lord's name by the "foolishness of preaching." IV. When the gospel trumpet is blown as God directs, only He can make the walls of sin, and pride, and obstinate resistance fall down.

The courage of faith.—As Luther drew near the door which was about to admit him into the presence of his judges (the Diet of Worms), he met a valiant knight, the celebrated George of Freundsberg, who four years later, at the head of his German lansquenets, bent the knee with his soldiers on the field of Pavia, and then, charging to the left of the French army, drove it into the Ticino, and in a great measure decided the captivity of the king of France. The old general, seeing Luther pass, tapped him on the shoulder, and shaking his head, blanched in battles, said kindly, "Poor monk, poor monk! thou art now going to make a nobler stand than I or any other captains have ever made in the bloodiest of our battles. But if thy cause is just, and thou art sure of it, go forward in God's name and fear nothing. God will not forsake thee." A noble tribute of respect paid by the courage of the sword to the courage of the mind.—*D'Aubigné*.

12-16. (12) early, before the heat of the day. (13) Comp. vss. 4, 5, 8, 9. (14) six days, completing the week. (15) seventh day, prob. a Sabbath. On this day it is noted that they "rose early about the dawning of the day." This would be necessary in order to give time for encompassing the city seven times. Jericho appears, from all the notices of it in this book, to have been a city of considerable size and population; and each passage of the large host round it could hardly have taken less than an hour and a half. (16) shout,^b the cry of such a multitude must have been most impressive.

"Jericho captured."—I. God would have His people work. The work to be done by Israel was to be: 1. Universal; 2. Done in God's own appointed way; 3. Done daily; Done in faith. II. God would have His people wait. This delay must have sorely tried the faith and patience of the Israelites. God has His reasons for making us wait. It is for His own glory, we doubt not. We believe it will ultimately be for our profit. III. God would have His people win. The victory is very sure; it will be very complete; it may, also, be very sudden; and it will be very glorious."—*Spurgeon*.

The silence of humanity.—When the Lord fights for us, it best becomes us to let all men see that the battle is not ours, but His. As Mackintosh has said, "No one would think of bringing a lighted candle to add brightness to the sun at mid-day; and yet the man who would do so might well be accounted wise, in comparison with him who attempts to assist God by his hustling officiousness. . . . The only possible effect of human efforts is to raise a dust which obscures the view of God's salvation."

"God doth not need
Either man's work, or His own gifts: who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best: His state
Is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."—*Milton*.

17-21. (17) accursed, *R. V.*, "devoted," see idea illus. in Le. xxvii. 28, 29. Jericho was to be regarded as kind of first-fruits of their victory, and so

must be devoted wholly to God. See the principle of the Mos. system.^a (18) **accursed thing, etc.** R. V., "devoted thing, lest when ye have devoted it, ye take of the devoted thing; so should ye make the camp of Israel accursed^b and trouble it." A warning which Achan neglected to the destruction of himself and family. (20) **wall fell down,**^c no hand of man interposed to bring about this catastrophe, no merely natural causes precipitated the fall; "**by faith,**" as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews declares, "the walls of Jericho fell down" (Heb. xi. 30). When we examine the operation of faith in this instance, we shall see the point of the example to be in the refraining from action at the bidding of God.—*Camb. B.* (21) **all,** in this case not only the inhabitants, but the cattle also were destroyed.

The accursed thing.—Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in the beginning of the twelfth century, said, "If I should see the shame of sin on the one hand, and the pain of hell on the other, and must, of necessity, choose one, I would rather be thrust into hell without sin, than go into heaven with sin."

22-25. (22) **had said,** giving beforehand special instructions. (23) Though her house was on the town wall, it had not fallen with the rest. The walls of Jericho fell *by faith*, and she was saved *by faith*. **without the camp,** outside it; their presence, as heathen, would pollute it. They must remain a specified time, probably seven days, "without the camp." (24) **only the silver, etc.,** things indestructible by fire. (25) **dwelleth in Is.,** being admitted as proselyte. Her reception into the Jewish church, and her mention in the genealogy of Christ,^d were a pledge and earnest of the reception of the Gentile world, and of the grafting of the wild olive into the good olive-tree (Rom. xi. 24). **unto this day,** Jos. iv. 9.

Old friends in a new character (vs. 23).—I. Contrast the former with the present visit of these men. II. Consider some of the lessons taught by this history. 1. The reward of kindness; 2. Faithfulness in performance of a promise; 3. Divine recognition of faith. Heb. xi. 31.

Robbing ourselves by robbing God.—Our deeds and our worship are required not merely for the honor of God and the help of our fellows, but for the exercise of our spiritual faculties. As without exercise our limbs and our physical powers would fail and die, so it is with our faith, and compassion and love. Think of the heritage of unselfishness, and of loving God so as to cost us something. If we are giving nothing and doing nothing for the Saviour, we are robbing no one so much as ourselves. The fraudulent railway passenger may say to himself, "I have traveled all those miles and paid nothing." He forgets how much he has paid out of his self-respect and his integrity; he little thinks that he has been spending a vast amount of his manhood, and of his moral life. That man had better have opened a vein and given blood for his fare; he has cheated a railway company at the cost of draining away the life of his soul. The people who try to get to heaven by the process of avoiding all collections, and all forms of work, seem to reckon on having a very inexpensive journey: they may get to heaven; let us hope so; but they forget how very little of themselves will be left to enter in when they arrive. The man who goes on for forty years spending *himself* in order to save his belongings, may, when he dies, leave a great substance behind him; he will carry very little with him; so little, it may be, that the angels will not find enough of *him* left to take home at all. No man can withhold that which he ought to give, or do, for Christ, without being fined very heavily in his soul's life.

26, 27. (26) **adjured,** R. V., "charged them with an oath." **Cursed be the man,** a city, which was *cherem* or "devoted," could not be rebuilt, Deut. xiii. 16. Joshua therefore pronounces an imprecation on the foundation of Jericho. The words "have a rhythmical and antistrophical form: which was probably adopted for greater solemnity, and to impress them more deeply on the memories of the people."—*Wordsworth*. Poss. the curse was leveled against the fortifications, rather than the mere site. Comp. Jos. xviii. 21; Ju. iii. 13; 2 Sa. x. 5. **shall lay, etc.,** his eldest son shall die when he begins, his youngest when he finishes.^e (27) **noised, spread.**

Razed cities.—This course, of making a monument of a conquered and destroyed city or building by solemnly interdicting the restoration thereof, has not a few parallels in ancient history. Thus the Romans made a decree full of execration against any who should dare at any future time to rebuild Carthage, which had been their rival in empire, and the situation of which

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^a Ex. xxxiv. 19, 20.^b De. vii. 26.^c "It may be that the means were found in the natural agencies of earthquake, or volcanic convulsion, wh. mark the whole of the Jordan valley, fr. Genesareth, down to the Dead Sea."—*Stanley*.**Rahab spared**^d Matt. i. 5.^e "The loss of a friend often afflicts no less by the momentary shock than when it is brought back to our minds some time afterwards by things which remind us that we have laughed together, or shed tears together, that our hearts have trembled under the same breeze of gladness, or that we have bowed our heads under the same stroke of sorrow."—*Grant*.^f "How good God is and condescending to our littleness and infirmities! I am persuaded we cannot too much treat Him as a Friend, and the more we do so, the greater will be our reverence as well as our intimacy."**Joshua's fame is noised about**^g 1 Ki. xvi. 34.^h The celebrated Linnaeus always testified in his conversation, writings, and actions, the greatest sense of God's omniscience. He placed over the door of the hall in which he gave his lectures, "*Innocui*

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vivite! *N u m e n*
adeat!—Live guilt-
less, God observes
you.

Achan's sin; and defeat of Israel before Ai

a 1 Chr. ii. 7.

b Ge. xii. 8; xiii. 3.

c Ne. xi. 31.

d Is. x. 28.

e "The precise po-
sition of *Ai* is
unknown, but this
verse points out
its prob. site in the
wild entanglement
of hill and valley
at the head of the
ravines running up
fr. the valley of
the Jordan."—
Stanley.

f Jos. viii. 25.

"When once a
man has involved
himself deeply in
guilt he has no
safe ground to
stand upon. Every-
thing is unsound
and rotten under
his feet. He may
be hurried, when
he least intends it,
into enormities of
which he once
thought himself
utterly incapable."
—*Ep. Porteus*.

Joshua's prayer

g Ex. xxxii. 13;
Nu. xiv. 15, 16; De.
xxxii. 26, 27; Eze.
xxxvi. 22, 23.

"The slave who
digs in the mine
or labors at the
oar, can rejoice at
the prospect of
laying down his
burden together
with his life; but
to the slave of
guilt there arises
no hope from
death."—*Blair*.

God's answer to Joshua

was so advantageous as to create the fear that it might be restored. Similar imprecations were pronounced by Agamemnon against such as should rebuild Troy, and by Greece against those who should restore Sidene, "according to ancient custom," says Strabo, by whom the fact is recorded. — *Kitto*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1-5. (1) **trespass**, the word used here in the Septuagint version is very striking. It is the same as that employed in Acts, v. 1, 2, to describe the sin of Ananias and Sapphira. They "took for themselves, appropriated to themselves, sequestered from God," a portion of what had been devoted to Him at Jericho. **accursed**, *R. V.*, "devoted," in each case. **Achan, troubler**, spelt also *Achar*.^a **Carmi, Zabdi**, 1 Chr. ii. 6. **Zerah**, Ge. xxxviii. 29, 30, the genealogy here given is not complete, some names omitted. **took**, for his own use: the sin of sacrilege. (2) **Ai**, also *Hai*,^b *Aija*,^c *Aiath*,^d poss. the modern Tell-el-hajar, two miles E. S. E. fr. Bethel.^e **Bethaven**, Jos. xviii. 12; Ho. iv. 15, v. 8, x. 5. **Bethel**, the ancient *Luz*. Ge. xxviii. 19, modern *Beitin*. (3) **but few**, pop. about 12,000,^f and therefore could hardly muster 3,000 warriors. (4) **went up**, indic. hilly situation of Ai. (5) **Shebarim**, breakings; the openings of the passes; or the stone quarries. **going down**, marg. in *Morad*, the steep declivity of the wady.

The result of sin.—Through sin comes: I. Separation. It separates between, 1. Men, irrespective of character; 2. Good men and bad; 3. God and the wicked. II. Blindness. 1. God refuses His light to the ungodly; 2. Sin itself works blindness. III. Weakness. Christ says, "Without Me ye can do nothing." IV. Widespread suffering. Sin brings, 1. Loss and ruin; 2. Fear; 3. Shame; 4. Ultimately death. — *Marchant*.

The progress of sin.—In Sierra Leone, the white ants will sometimes occupy a house, and eat their way into all the woodwork, until every article in the house is hollow so that it will collapse into dust directly it is touched. It is so with this deceitful character, so honeycombed and eaten through, that though for years it may maintain its plausible appearance in the world, few people even suspecting the extent of the inward decay, on a sudden the end will come; there will be one touch of the finger of God, and the whole ill-compacted, worm-devoured thing will crumble into matchwood. "He shall be broken, and that without remedy." — *R. F. Horton*.

6-9. (6) **rent, etc.**, usual signs of grief and alarm, Le. x. 6; Job ii. 12; Joel ii. 12, 13. (7) **would to God, etc.**, *R. V.*, "would that we had been content." (8) **backs**, lit. *necks*. (9) **environ**, surround, encircle. **thy great name, i. e.**, "after the Canaanites have cut off our name what will become of Thy Name?"

Israel discomfited by the men of Ai (vs. 8).—I. The discomfiture of Israel. Their mode of proceeding to the attack of Ai was far from right; but their discomfiture was owing to another cause. II. Joshua's distress. 1. His conduct on this occasion was by no means unexceptional—(1) The manner in which he complained to God; 2. His distrust of God; 3. Yet on the whole there was much in it to be admired—(1) The concern he expressed for the loss of life; (2) His humiliation before God; (3) His tender regard for God's honor.—*Simeon*.

Sin a trouble.—Sin is always a trouble, though in many different ways. A robber bribed an unscrupulous lawyer to plead his cause, promising him a thousand crowns. The suit having been gained, the lawbreaker brought the money. Supper followed, and the night being stormy, the guest was invited to lodge there. In the middle of the night he found his way to the advocate's room, bound and gagged him, repocketed his thousand crowns, broke open a chest, and bidding the helpless host good night, marched off with goodly spoil.

10-15. (10) **get thee up**, Joshua might well infer that the people had incurred the Divine displeasure, but it was no time for unavailing remorse—he must be up and trying to detect and put away the sin. (11) **also stolen, and dissembled also**, the anger of God and the heinousness of Israel's sin are marked by the accumulation of clause upon clause, emphasis being given to each new item in the indictment by the repetition of "also." As a climax

they had even put the consecrated property purloined from God "among their own stuff," *i. e.* appropriated it to their own use.—*Bib. Com.* (12) **they were accursed**, as threatened, Jos. vi. 18. (13) **sanctify**, by clearing them fr. this guilt, and guilty one. (14) **Lord taketh**, most prob. by lot,^a (15) **burnt**, after stoning. vs. 25. Achan by his conduct had become *cherem* or *devoted*, and is so called in verse 13, and everything devoted to punishment for the reparation of the Divine honor was to be burnt. Comp. Lev. xx. 14; xxi. 9; Josh. vi. 24; 2 Kings, xxiii. 16. **wrought folly**,^b or wickedness, wh. in view of its conseq. is also foolishness.

The expiation of sin.—1. Prayer and humiliation are of no ultimate account without repentance. 2. Repentance avails nothing without sanctification. 3. Sanctification is impossible without abhorrence of sin really felt and unmistakably expressed.—*Marchant*.

The hardest commandment.—"As I stood one day by Mr. Jeffreys," says Mrs. Jeffreys in her Journal, "catechizing the children, I asked them which of the commandments was most difficult to observe? One, after a long pause, mentioned one, and another a different precept, till, at last, a boy about twelve years old said, 'The last is the hardest.' Mr. Jeffreys said, 'Why is it so, my boy?' He replied, 'Because, for one who is poor, to see another possessing a great deal of money, a great deal of clothes, and much cattle and rice, without wishing for some of them, is very hard; I think no person can keep this commandment.'"

16—21. (16) **early**, to show earnestness and zeal. (17) **took**, according to sign given by the lot. (18) **man by man**, putting one after another under the test. (19) **give . . glory**, *etc.*, declare the truth, whatever it may cost thee. Comp. express. as used Jno. ix. 24. The phrase assumes that the glory of God is always promoted by manifestation of the truth. (20) **indeed I have sinned**, this earnest way of speaking we may hope showed true repentance. (21) **Bab. garment**, *lit. the robe of Shinar*; the long robe usually worn by kings of all Asiatic nations; the Babylonians were the most noted for the weaving of cloth of divers colors. **shekels**, Ge. xxiii. 15, 16. **midst**, middle; this could hardly be done without knowledge and participation of his family.

The progress of sin.—I. It enters by the eye. II. It sinks into the heart. III. It actuates the hand. IV. It leads to secrecy and dissimulation. "I saw," *etc.* "I coveted," *etc.* "I took and hid them in the earth." Thus saith James: "When lust (evil desire) is conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and when sin is finished, it bringeth forth death."—*Clarke*.

The danger of avarice.—A servant of an Indian rajah was ordered to keep away from a cave near the rajah's residence, and to keep all others away. The servant began to consider the probable reason of his having been forbidden to enter the cave. He made up his mind that his master must have great treasure hid there, and resolved to get it. Taking a fellow-servant with him to secure the coveted prize, they rolled away the stone at the mouth of the cave, when a tremendous tiger sprang upon them and tore them to pieces.

22—26. (23) **laid . . Lord**, that is, they poured them out before the ark of Jehovah, where He was enthroned. (24) **and all Israel**, the clearance was to be as national as had been the sin. **valley of Achor**, *trouble*, now Wady-el-Kelt. **sons and . . daughters**, Achan had fallen by his own act under the ban (*cf.* vi. 18), and consequently he and his were treated as were communities thus devoted (*cf.* Deut. xiii. 15—17). It would appear too that Achan's family must have been accomplices in his sin; for the stolen spoil could hardly have been concealed in his tent without their being privy thereto.—*Bib. Com.* (26) **heap of stones**, making at once a grave,^c and a pillar of memorial.

The troubles of sin (vs. 25).—I. Sin is a very troublesome thing. Consider—1. The load of guilt by which it oppresses us; 2. The subterfuges resorted to to conceal our sins; 3. Its corrupt and restless influence on the temper and disposition. II. However artfully concealed, sin must be exposed. 1. The most secret sins are often revealed in this world; 2. Those sins that escape detection here will be manifested in the last day. III. When the sinner is exposed, he is left without any reasonable excuse. IV. Punishment treads upon the heels of sin.

Look first at home.—In the defeats and sufferings of men now, there may sometimes be cause to suspect that they are connected with transgression. But while defeat and suffering should lead us to examine ourselves, they

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a "Heb. word for lot (*gōral*, derived fr. *goor* or *garar*, to roll) suggests that small stones, prob. white and black ones, were used. These were prob. drawn fr. a chest."—*Spk. Com.*

b Ge. xxxiv. 7; De. xxii. 21.

"A notion prevailed among the Jews that detection of a criminal was performed by observing the shinings of the stones in the high priest's breast-plate."—*H. W. Phillott in Smith's Dicty.*

Achan's discovery and confession

"O cursed hunger of pernicious gold! what bands of faith can impious lucre hold!"—*Dryden*.

"Poverty wants some, luxury many, avarice all things."—*Cowley*.

Achan's punishment

c Ho. ii. 15.

d Jos. viii. 29; 2 Sa. xviii. 17.

"The Bank of France has an invisible 'studio' in a gallery behind the cashiers, so that at a signal from one of them, any suspected customer can instantly have his picture taken without his own knowledge. So sins are registered, whether the sinner is conscious of it or not."—*W. A. Dickson*.

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"They who once engage in iniquitous designs, miserably deceive themselves when they think that they will go so far and no further; one fault begets another, one crime renders another necessary." — *Southey*.

the attack on Ai renewed

"I do not think a braver gentleman, more active, valiant, or more valiant — young, more daring, or more bold, is now alive to grace this latter age with noble deeds." — *Shakespeare*.

A Jewish proverb says there are three men who get no pity — an unsecured creditor, a henpecked husband, and a man that does not try again.

"Deem not the irreversible past

As wholly wasted, wholly vain;

For, rising on its wrecks, at length

To nobler greatness we attain." — *Longfellow*.

the ambush about Ai

a Ju. xx. 29, 32.

"Popular glory is a perfect coquette; her lovers must toil, feel every inquietude, indulge every caprice, and perhaps at last be filited into the bargain. True glory, on the other hand, resembles a woman of sense; her admirers must play no tricks; they feel no great anxiety, for they are sure in the end of being rewarded in proportion to their merit." — *Goldsmith*.

"A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds." — *Bacon*.

should not lead us to make accusations against others. Let this course of treatment be recognized, and there would be no end to the recriminations of men against one another. It is related that Charles II. once said to John Milton, "Do not you think that your blindness is a judgment upon you for having written in defense of my father's murder?" "Sir," answered the poet, "it is true I have lost my eyes; but if all calamitous providences are to be considered as judgments, your majesty should remember that your royal father lost his head." — *Preacher's Com.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

1-3. (1) **Fear not**, the same encouraging address, and one much needed after all that had taken place, is now given as that recorded in i. 9. **all the people**, i. e. the soldiers; all were now necess. bec. fear had weakened the army. (2) **ambush**, stratagem was to be used. In all ages tactics are considered fair in war. God now intended to show how His blessing would rest on hum. instrumentalities. (3) **thirty thousand**, comp. vs. 12. Either there is a mistake in the number given in vs. 3, or the 5,000 were sent, out of the 30,000, to take position nearer the city, or the 5,000 were sent to reinforce the 30,000 the day after they had taken position.

Learning from experience. — I. This the second attack upon Ai; let us compare it with the former. 1. Then self-confident, now cautious; 2. Then self-prompted, now Divinely guided. II. Apply the lessons to the conflicts of life. 1. If we have suffered defeat, inquire into the cause; 2. Not sit down in inactivity or despair, but wisely prepare for a better attack.

"Try again." — Success, though denied to the first effort, often comes to the next, or at least to a subsequent one. Even apart from spiritual considerations, it is those who try oftenest who succeed best. Who has not admired the perseverance of Livingstone, undaunted by fever and famine, and the ferocity of savage chiefs; unmoved by his longings for home and dreams of plenty and comfort that mocked him when he awoke to physical wretchedness and want? Such perseverance gives a man the stamp of true nobility; we are almost tempted to fall down and worship. If failure be humiliating, it is redeemed by the very act and attitude of perseverance, and self-denial and scorn of ease which it involves. "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

4-8. (4) **lie in wait**, hide behind the hill, or amid the trees and caves. **behind the city**, west of Ai, vs. 9, a direction in wh. king of Ai expected no foes. (5) **approach**, by ordinary route. **flee**, so as to produce an excitement wh. would leave Ai defenceless. (6) **drawn**, by their anxiety to pursue fleeing Israel. (7) **seize upon**, this would be easy, as only wom. and childr. would be left in city. (8) **see, I have commanded you**, comp. the words of Jehovah to Joshua, i. 9, "Have not I commanded thee! Be strong and of a good courage," and of Absalom to his servants, 2 Sam. xiii. 28, "Have not I commanded you? Be courageous and be valiant."

Readiness (vs. 4). — Two great classes of men — the unready and the ready. The unready are those who are always taken by surprise, let what will happen. The ready are those who have a certain alertness of mind: possess watchfulness and a spirit of forethought. The people of God should be always ready — I. For every good word — of comfort, reproof, warning, exhortation. II. For every good work — of teaching, toiling, fighting for the truth. III. For prayer. IV. This readiness should be general. "Be ye all ready."

A last opportunity. — On a wild coast of Britain, there are tall and craggy cliffs which overhang the ocean. The people residing near make their livelihood by gathering the eggs of the rock-birds. An iron is fixed in the cliff above: a rope is attached, and the adventurer lowers himself until he arrives at the ledge of the rock. Once a man found the rock to overhang so much that he was obliged to swing himself to and fro so as to gain his foothold on the rock. He succeeded; but in doing so he lost the rope from his grasp. The rope swung to and fro, its vibrations becoming less and less, and each time more and more distant. The man stood, and, quick as thought, reasoned thus with himself: "That rope is my only chance of life. In a little while it will be forever beyond my reach. It is nearer now than it ever will be again. I must lay hold of it or die!" So saying, he sprang from the cliff as the rope was next approaching, caught it, and was safe!

9-13. (9) **abode, etc.**, settled in their hiding-place.^a (10) **numbered**, in military sense, wh. includes marshaling in order for marching and battle. **went up**, fr. Gilgal to Ai is about 15 miles. (11) **a valley**, the deep chasm of the wady *El-Murogede*. (12) **took**, had taken, *see on vs. 3*. (13) **midst of valley**, no doubt with a small body of men, who would seem to intend an attack like the previous one.^b

Washington on war. — Perhaps few facts would more forcibly illustrate the views which even reflecting military men take of the nature of war, than the following: Thomas Mullet, Esq., an English gentleman, being in America, called on General Washington, at his residence at Mount Vernon, soon after the close of the contest between that country and Great Britain. Washington asked him, in the course of conversation in his library, if he had met with an individual in that country who could write the history of the recent contest. Mr. M. replied that he knew of one, and only one, competent to the task. The general eagerly asked, "Who, sir, can he be?" Mr. M. replied, "Sir, Cæsar wrote his own Commentaries." The general bowed, and replied, "Cæsar could write his Commentaries; but, sir, I know the atrocities committed on both sides have been so great and many, that they cannot be faithfully recorded, and had better be buried in oblivion!"

14-17. (14) **saw**, indic. of another attack on the city. **time appointed**, perhaps should be *place*, somewhere suited for gathering together his army. **before the plain**, Heb. the *Arabah*, the tract of land stretching down to the Jordan valley. (15) **made as if**, turning their backs after a little show of fighting. (16) **people**, *i. e.* soldiers, (17) **or Bethel**, wh. was confederate with Ai, and had sent its entire army. **city open**, the very gates unprotected, having no thought of other foes.

Strategic movements (vs. 15). — I. In the history of Christianity there have been times when the forces of Immanuel's army have appeared to be in full retreat. II. At such times the enemy has boastfully said, "I will overtake," *etc.* III. Subsequent events have often shown that the leader of Israel was only heading a stratgetic movement as part of a preconcerted plan.

The reward of war. — The Duke of Marlborough observing a soldier leaning pensively on the butt-end of his musket, just after victory had declared itself in favor of the British arms at the battle of Blenheim, accosted him thus: "Why so pensive, my friend, after so glorious a victory?" "It may be glorious," replied the brave fellow, "but I am thinking that all the human blood I have spilled this day has only earned me fourpence."

18-21. (18) **stretch . . spear**, Jos. stood on the heights, at some chosen point of observation. A flag or streamer prob. hung from his spear. The ambush would set watchers to observe this signal. (19) **ambush**, poss. the 5,000 specially appointed entered the city, and the 25,000 fell on the rear of the Aites. (20) **no power to flee**, *lit.* "no hand," Comp. Judg. xviii. 10. They could not flee back to the city, for it was in flames. They could not advance northward because the Israelites had faced about and were coming to meet them. — *Pul. Com.* **people that fled**, soldiers forming the attacking party wh. ascended the valley. (21) The main host of wh. this company formed a part.

How Philip of Macedon took Prinassus. — Philip of Macedon won Prinassus by the following strategem. He attempted first to undermine the city, but found the ground so rocky as to resist the most vigorous and repeated attempts. He still, however persevered, and commanded his pioneers to make a more than ordinary bustle and noise below ground. In the night he caused earth to be secretly brought from a distance, and raised enormous mounds at the entrance of the mine, in order to inspire the besieged with the belief that the work went forward with astonishing rapidity. At length he informed the townsmen, that two acres of their wall were undermined, and stood upon wooden props, to which if he set fire and entered by a breach, they might expect no mercy. The Prinassians were deceived, and surrendered at discretion to an enemy, who could not with his utmost exertions have taken the town by real force.

22-27. (22) **midst of Is.**, quite surrounded. Between these two forces the men of Ai were crushed. (23) **king . . alive**, for public execution. (24) **inhab. . . field**, the men, or soldiers, all of whom had hurried to the fight.

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the night
march in
the valley

a "Bethel, though lying quite near in direction of west by north, cannot be seen from Tell-el-hajar; two rocky heights rise between both places, just as the laying of an ambush to west of Ai would require." — *Robinson*.

b "The king of Ai, in the morning, would see neither the ambush in his rear, nor the host among the hills away to the north, on his left." — *Spk. Com.*

the men of
Ai pursue,
leaving the
city unguarded

"Yet it may be more lofty courage dwells in one weak heart which braves an adverse faith, than his whose ardent soul indignant swells, warm'd by the fight or cheer'd through high debate." — *Hon. Mrs. Norton*.

the men in
ambush enter
the city

"Prudent men lock up their motives, letting familiars have a key to their hearts as to their garden." — *Shenstone*.

"A commander must use pretty cheats: dark stratagems devise." — *Alleyne's Cressey*.

The Spartan mothers used to caution their sons: "If your sword be too short, add a step to it."

the king of
Ai taken,
and Ai
destroyed

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a Ex. xvii. 11, 12.

A personal friend said to Mr. Lincoln, "Mr. President, do you really expect to end this war during your administration?" "Can't say, can't say, sir." "But, Mr. Lincoln, what do you mean to do?" "Peg away, sir; peg away; keep pegging away!" And "pegging away" did it.

"Wars be to the body politic what drums are to the individual. There are times when they may prevent sudden death, but if frequently resorted to only hasten the dissolution."—*Colton*.

altar of unhewn stones on Ebal

b Nu. xxv. 4

c De. xxi. 22, 23.

"He holds no parley with unmanly fears; where duty bids he confidently steers, faces a thousand dangers at her call, and, trusting in his God, surmounts them all."—*Couper*.

Ebal and Gerizim

d De. xxvii. 14.

"There is such fullness in that Book that oftentimes it says much by saying nothing; and not only its expression but its silences are teaching, like the dial in which the shadow as well as the light informs us."—*Boyle*.

(25) **men and women**, i. e. the adult population. (26) **drew . . back**, either a fig. of his earnestness in fully accomplishing the Div. will, or similar case to that at defeat of Amalek.^a (27) **spoil**, such of the property as could be saved from the fire.

Persevering zeal recommended (see vs. 26). — In this act of Joshua's we see — I. How our great Captain interests Himself for us. II. How we are to engage in combat for ourselves. With — 1. Determined purpose; 2. Confident expectation. Conclusion — (1) Think not lightly of the spiritual warfare; (2) Cease not to prosecute it till your victory is complete. — *Simeon*.

God's foes punished. — Of thirty Roman emperors, governors of provinces, and others high in office, who distinguished themselves by their zeal in persecuting the early Christians, one became speedily deranged, one was slain by his own son, one became blind, the eyes of one started out of his head, one was drowned, one was strangled, one died in captivity, one fell dead in a manner that will not bear recital, one died of so loathsome a disease that several of his physicians were put to death because they could not abide the stench that filled his room, two committed suicide, a third attempted it, but had to call for help to finish the work, five were assassinated by their own people or servants, five others died the most excruciating deaths, several of them having an untold complication of diseases, and eight were killed in battle or after being taken prisoner. Among these was Julian, the apostate. In the days of his prosperity he is said to have pointed his dagger to heaven, defying the Son of God. But when he was wounded in battle and saw that all was over with him, he exclaimed, "Thou has conquered, O thou Galilean." — *Wm. S. Plumer*.

28—31. (28) **for ever**, often used in O. T. for a *very long time*. **desolation**, scene of ruin. The place identified with Ai is still called *Tell*, a heap of stones. (29) **hanged**, gibbeted, put to death first.^b **take . . tree**, see law laid down by Mos.^c **heap of stones**, a huge cairn. Comp. Josh. vii. 26. Two words are used for "heap" in vs. 28, 29. The first (*Tel*) indicates the ruins of the city itself, the second (*Gal*) the cairn over the king's grave. (30) **Then Joshua built**, the passes being now secured, and the interior of the country rendered accessible, Joshua resolved to take advantage of the terror which the success of his arms had inspired in the hearts of the Canaanites, and to carry out the commands of Moses respecting the ratification of the Law with solemn ceremonies (Deut. xxvii. 2-8.). By a grand national act it was to be declared "in what character Israel meant to hold what it had received of God." — *Camb. Bib.* (31) **whole stones**, Ex. xx. 25. **burnt offerings**, Ge. xxii. 7. **peace off.**, Le. iii. 1.

Obedience for mercies. — God accounts those mercies forgotten which are not written with legible characters in our lives. That of Joshua is observable (chap. viii. 32). Upon their victory over the city of Ai an altar is built as a monument of that signal mercy. Now mark, what doth God command to be writ or engraved upon the stones thereof? One would have thought the history of that day's work should have been the sculpture; but it is the copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel, whereby Ai plainly showed the best way of remembering the mercy was not to forget the law. — *Gurney*.

32—35. (32) **wrote . . stones**, as enjoined, De. xxvii. 2-8, prob. stone pillars were erected beside the altar. (33) **the ark**, wh. was set in the middle; the people were assembled near, but one part *towards* Ebal or on the Ebal side; the other *towards* Gerizim; along the sides and base of each hill. (34) **read**, prob. caused Levites to read.^d **the blessings and cursings**, the twelve curses are directed against idolatry, Deut. xxvii. 15-26. The blessings are promised on many things. Deut. xxviii. 3-14. (35) This indic. that more than the usual *summary* was given on this occasion. It seems likely that these vs. (30-35) are not set in the proper context in our version; they come in better after ch. ix. 2.

The altar and the law. — I. Sacred rests should be mixed with all worldly work. II. With new possessions, their responsibilities should be recognized. III. Joshua's first building is an altar, not a fortress. IV. The wise man seeks to make religion intelligent. — *R. Glover*.

Reading the law at Gerizim and Ebal. — An objection has been raised, alleging that the distance between the two mountains is too great for the

human voice to traverse. . . . Having satisfied myself more than once during my stay at Nablûs of its feasibility, a party of us resolved to make the experiment. We had pitched our tent in the valley near the foot of Gerizim, on the line between the two mountains, where I have supposed the ark to have formerly stood. I clambered up Gerizim, and Mr. Williams up Ebal, Mr. Edwards remaining with the men at the tent. Having reached the lower spur, I found myself standing, as it were, upon a lofty pulpit, and my friend found himself similarly situated on Ebal. Having rested awhile, I opened my Bible, and read the command concerning the blessings in Hebrew, and every word was heard most distinctly by Mr. Edwards in the valley, as well as by Mr. Williams on Ebal. Mr. Williams then read the cursings in Welsh, and we all heard every word and syllable. Before we descended, Mr. Edwards requested us to sing, and gave out, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow," etc. I commenced it upon the tune Savoy, or the Old Hundredth; but I pitched the tune in a key too high for them to join me. I was determined, however, to sing it through; and if I ever sang well and with spirit, I did so then on Gerizim, and was heard most distinctly by all. And it was our impression, and still is, that if the whole area before and around us had been filled with the hundreds of thousands of Israel, every soul amongst them would have heard every note and word with perfect clearness. — *Mills's Nablûs*.

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"Having done the destructive work, do not imagine that the whole programme is complete; now begins the construction of the altar. And having made a place for prayer, do not imagine that the whole duty of man is perfected; next put up the law; battle, prayer, law; law, prayer, battle." — *Parker*.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1, 2. (1) And it came to pass, thus "that spring morning" did Israël "consecrate Palestine unto the Lord, and take sea and lake, mountain and valleys — the most hallowed spots in their history — as witnesses of their covenant." It was probably on this occasion that the Egyptian coffin, containing the embalmed body of Joseph (Gen. i. 25, 26), was laid by the two tribes of the house of Joseph "in the parcel of ground" near Shechem, "which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor" (Gen. xxxiii. 19). These important preliminaries having been carried out, the further prosecution of the campaign was possible. — *Camb. Bib.* this side, the western side. in the hills, etc., the hill country of central Canaan; the low country from Carmel to Gaza; and the shores of the Medit. (2) A common danger led to united action, though these nations contended among themselves.

Opposition transformed to glory. — This candle has fallen upon evil times. I have a bottle here full of black material which is to fall upon the flame of this candle. When I tell you that this bottle contains a quantity of steel filings, you will at once prophesy that the light will be put out. Let us see what will happen. Why, well, instead of putting the candle out, I am making it disport itself as a candle never did before. Here we have fireworks with a splendor of their own. Do you not think that often when Satan tries to throw dust on a Christian, he only makes him shine the brighter. He was bright before, now he coruscates. — *Spurgeon*.

3-6. (3) Gibeon, capital of Hivites; now *El-Gib*, 5 to 6 miles north-west of Jerus.; a head of the pass of *Beth-horon*, leading fr. Jerus. to Joppa, and the coast." (4) wilily, by stratagem, with insidious art: matching the device of Is. in capture of Ai; "they resolved to meet craft with craft." old sacks, etc., traveling necessities were so carried. wine bottles, made of skin: they wanted to indicate poverty and insignificance, as well as to indicate their residing at a distance. (5) elouted, patched. old garments, if behooved ambassadors to appear in clean and decent, if not in splendid, raiment. This was so essential, that the appearance of these Gibeonites with old and travel-stained clothes could only be explained, upon any common principle, by the assigned reason, that they had come direct from a long journey. — *Camb. Bib.* (6) Gilgal, probably the modern Jilgillah, a few miles from Bethel. Deut. xi. 30.

Cunning and discretion. — Cunning has only private, selfish aims, and sticks at nothing which may make them succeed: discretion has large and extended views, and, like a well-formed eye, commands a whole horizon. Cunning is a kind of short-sightedness, that discovers the minutest objects which are near at hand, but is not able to discern things at a distance. Discretion, the more it is discovered, gives a greater authority to the person who possesses it: cunning

the kings of Canaan form a league

True, you may not destroy grace by your inconsistencies, but you will greatly hinder its growth in your soul, and destroy your own enjoyment of it.

"Whatever be your gifts and graces, do not allow them to stand in the place of Christ."

the craft of the Gibeonites

α "Fr. its situation it would have been the next prey on wh. the Is. host would have sprung." — *Stanley*.

"In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their ends to interpret their speeches; and it is good to say little to them, and that which they least look for. In all

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negotiations of difficulty a man may not look to sow and reap at once; but must prepare business, and so ripen it by degrees." — Lord Bacon.

a "They represent themselves as not having yet heard of the aggression on Western Palestine, only of the bygone conquest of the Amorite kings beyond the Jordan." — Stanley.

"Fame to our ashes comes, alas! too late, and praise smells rank upon the coffin plate." — Martial.

Joshua deceived makes a peace with them

"When the Spirit of God ceases altogether to strive with you your day of grace is past and over. There is such a thing as the unpardonable sin, and wherever it occurs these three effects follow — there is henceforth no space, or place, or power of repentance."

"We have as much need of the Spirit of God to guide us into the right way as we have of the grace of God to deliver out of the wrong one."

"The Christian needs little besides Truth to guide him in the way he must tread." — Tertullian.

ning, when it is once detected, loses its force, and makes a man incapable of bringing about even those events which he might have done had he passed only for a plain man. Discretion is the perfection of reason, and a guide to us in all the duties of life: cunning is a kind of instinct, that only looks out after our immediate interests and welfare. Discretion is only found in men of strong sense and good understanding: cunning is often to be met with in brutes themselves, and in persons who are but the fewest removes from them. In short, cunning is only the mimic of discretion, and may pass upon weak men in the same manner as vivacity is often taken for wit, and gravity for wisdom.

7—10. (7) **how . . you?** for their orders *see* Ex. xxiii. 32, xxxiv. 12; De. vii. 2. (8) **who are ye?** to this is to be noticed that they made no direct answer. They adroitly evaded the question by dwelling on the fact that they were Joshua's "servants." (9) **because of the name, etc.**, pretending relig. motives. (10) Reference is only made to events occurring before passage of Jordan.^a This most of all threw Joshua off his guard. **Ashtaroth**, Jos. xii. 4, xiii. 12.

Fame — a goodly reputation. — Nor is the desire of fame so vain as some have imagined; fame being when belonging to the living, that which is more gravely called a steady and necessary reputation: and without it hereditary power or acquired greatness can never quietly govern the world. 'Tis to the dead a musical glory, in which God, the Author of excellent goodness, vouchsafes to take a continual share; for the remembered virtues of great men are chiefly such of His works (as mentioned by King David) as perpetually praise Him; and the good fame of the dead prevails by example much more than the reputation of the living, because the latter is always suspected by our envy, but the other is cheerfully allowed and religiously admired; for admiration, whose eyes are ever weak, stands still and at gaze upon great things acted afar off; but when they are near, walks slightly away as from familiar objects. Fame is to our sons a valid inheritance, and not unuseful to remote posterity; and to our reason 'tis a first, though but a little taste of eternity. — *Davenant*.

11—15. (11) **with you**, lit. *in your hand*. **league**, compact or treaty. (12) **hot**, as fr. the oven. (13) **rent**, with hard use during a long journey. (14) **the men, i. e. the elders. took . . victuals**, either to test the truth of their story; or, according to custom of Eastern nations, pledging peace by sharing food together. **asked not, etc.**, by Urim and Thummim. The Israelites relied on the evidence of their senses instead of the counsel of God. (15) Josh. at least accepted terms made by elders.

Unadvised (vs. 14). — Deceit has played no minor part in the history of the world. Many a strong fortress has yielded to it which long defied the power of strength. Many a noble cause has by it been lost; many a noble nature degraded. In this narrative we have an ill. of the folly of those who are deceived. Let us show the probable cause of their disastrous neglect: "they asked not, etc." Why? 1. Their sympathies were enlisted. Feeling blinded them to duty. Feeling is a little child whose hand is full of luscious fruit, but she must not go alone: reason must take her hand, or the robber may have what was designed for the beggar. 2. Their pride was flattered: "we are your servants." A very flattering portrait often leads the person for whom it is intended to praise the faithfulness and honesty of the artist. 3. Or they thought the case so plain, they needed not to ask counsel. There is no step we take in life too trivial to be made a matter of prayer. — *R. A. Griffin*.

The renewed soul a scene of conflict. — Every renewed soul is the scene and stage wherein the two mightiest contraries in the world — the spirit and the flesh, light and darkness, life and death, heaven and hell, good and evil, Michael and his angels, and the dragon with his — are perpetually combating hand to hand. And well it is for a Christian that the Holy Spirit is lusting in him against the flesh. God takes thy part, Christian: the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts is with thee, if thou dost not sin and grieve Him away. Follow but thy Leader: be prompt and ready to start at the Divine signal, when the Holy Ghost displays His ensigns; then march forth under those mighty and victorious banners, and thou shalt become invincible.

16-21. (16) end of three days, as in ch. iii. 2. neighbours, their city was within 20 miles of Gilgal. (17) third day, longer time than necessary, no occasion for a forced march. *Gibeon*, vs. 3. *Chephirah*,^a modern *Kefir*, Jos. xviii. 25, 26. *Beeroth*, modern *Bireh*, 8 miles N. of Jerusalem. *Kirjath-jearim*, city of woods, or forests; modern *Kuriet-el-Enab*, 9 miles fr. Jer. on road to Jaffa. Jos. xv. 60.^b (18) had sworn unto them, the remembrance of the league was kept up through the whole course of the subsequent history. A terrible trial befell the nation because Saul had massacred certain of the Gibeonites (2 Sa. xxi. 1, 2; 1 Sa. xxii. 18, 19), and David remained faithful to the vow which Joshua had made. *murmured*, etc., sparing the Gibeonites seemed unfaithfulness to Jehovah. (19) touch them, to kill them. (21) *hewers*, etc., lowest menial offices;^c called *Nethinims*, i. e. given, appropriated.

Binding nature of a vow (vs. 20). — It is plain — I. That the Israelites considered themselves bound by their oath, and exposed to the wrath of God if they violated it. II. That their adherence to their oath was acceptable to God — 1. Because he expressed no displeasure at the time; 2. From the nature of His subsequent dealings with them. He avenged the violation of this treaty by Saul. Learn: — 1. Make vows with the utmost caution; 2. Keep them with scrupulous fidelity; 3. How much have they to answer for who by craft exact improper pledges.

Drawers of water. — "Drawing water was the office of the meanest slaves." In illustration of this, the following lines from the *Iliad* may be quoted. Hector, in taking leave of his wife Andromache, says:—

"I see the trembling, weeping, captive led !

* * * * *

To bear the victor's hard commands, or bring
The weight of waters from Hyperia's spring."—*Iliad*, Bk. VI.

22-27. (22) beguiled, imposed on us. (23) *cursed*, or humiliated^d none of you, R. V., "there shall never fail to be of you bondmen." *bondmen*, devoted to God, not as Jericho, but to bond-service in His sanctuary. (24) *sore afraid*,^e fear had been their sole motive in seeking an alliance with Israel. Theirs was not the faith which had prompted Rahab to save the spies. (25) *in thine hand*, willing to submit to thy judgment. (26) *so did he*, as vs. 23. (27) *for the altar*, in connection with the altar. *place . . choose*, De. xii. 5.

Hewers of wood and drawers of water. — I was forcibly reminded of one item in the sentence of condemnation pronounced upon the Gibeonites — that they should be hewers of wood — by long files of women and children carrying on their heads heavy bundles of wood. It seemed to be hard work, especially to the young girls. It is the severest kind of drudgery: and my compassion has often been enlisted in behalf of the poor women and children, who daily bring loads of wood to Jerusalem from these very mountains of the Gibeonites. To carry water, also, is very laborious and fatiguing. The fountains are far off, in deep wadies with steep banks; and a thousand times have I seen the feeble and the young staggering up long and weary ways with large jars of water on their heads. It is the work of slaves, and of the very poor, whose condition is still worse. Among the pathetic lamentations of Jeremiah there is nothing more affecting than this: "They took the young men to grind, and the children fell under the wood."—*The Land and the Book*.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1-5. (1) *Adoni-zedec*, i. e. "Lord of righteousness." It is no longer Melchizedek.^f "My king righteousness." The alteration of the name marks a change of dynasties. *Jerusalem*, prob. meaning, *foundation of peace*; ancient names, *Salem*, *Jebus*; modern, El-Kuds. (3) *Hebron*, one of the most ancient cities in the world, rivaling even Damascus; twenty miles from Jerusalem on the south. Ge. xiii. 18; xxiii. 2; Jos. x. 36; xv. 54. *Jarmuth*, now Tarmuk, situated on hill called Tell Armuth; allotted to Judah.^g *Lachish*, not identified. poss. *Um Lakis*, 20 miles W. of Eleutheropolis. *Eglon*, near Lachish, modern Ajlan, 10 miles N. E. from Gaza. (4) *smite Gibeon*, the enterprise was directed primarily not against Joshua, but against Gibeon, which had made peace with him. (5) *encamped*, made regular siege.

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the subtilty
of Gibeon
discovered

^a Ezr. ii. 25; Ne. vii. 29.

^b 1 Sa. vi. 20, 21; vii. 2.

^c De. xxix. 11.

One lie must be
thatched with
another, or it will
soon rain through.
—Owen.

"To conceal anything from those to whom I am attached is not in my nature. I can never close my lips where I have opened my heart."
—Dickens.

"Guilt is like the moth of the summer evening; it will make for the light."
—Marchant.

the Gibeonites
made hewers
of wood, etc.

^d Ge. ix. 25.

^e Ex. xxiii. 32, 33; De. vii. 1, 2.

"Ere the base laws of servitude began, when wild in woods the noble savage ran."
—Dryden.

"Well fare their hearts who will not only wear out their shoes, but also their feet in God's service, and yet gain not a shoe latchet thereby."
—Thomas Fuller.

confederation
against
Gibeon

^f Ge. xiv. 18.
^g Jos. xv. 35; Ne. xi. 29.

"In these distracted times, when each man dreads the bloody stratagem of busy heads." — Otway.

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"There is something awful in the thought of that great inflexible will, firm as granite against the raging of man's foolish passions. By opposition, we can only bring ourselves into collision with it to our hurt, as the waves dash themselves to spray on the rock they cannot break." — *Pulpit Com.*

battle of Beth-horon

a "The battle of Gibeon is one of the most important in the history of the world; it is one of the few military engagements wh. belong equally to ecclesiastical and to civil history, which have decided equally the fortunes of the world and of the church." — *Stanley.*

b "Israel pursued the enemy in N W. direction, towards the pass of Beth-horon, and from thence through the pass down into the plain, where prob. Azekah and Makkedah lay." — *Lange*

"God's promises are not intended to slacken or supersede, but to quicken and encourage our endeavors." — *M. Henry.*

the sun and moon stand still

"Hell is the home of universal falsehood and distrust, deceived, distrusting and being dis-

The confederacy against Gibeon. — I. Its head. A bad king with a good name, Adoni-zedek, i. e. lord of righteousness. II. The purpose of its formation. War against deceiving Gibeon. Learn — 1. Title not always an index to character; 2. Deception involves men in trouble. Gibeon by deceiving Israel exposed to the anger of old allies.

Opposition to God made helpful. — God created the earth a vast level, barren plain, with not a green thing on it to be seen — not a flower, not a bush, not a tree on it. He came forth to view his new creation, and determined to adorn it with beauty; and He sent his angel to sow broadcast over the world the choicest seeds. Satan, seeing the seeds lying on the surface, said, "This is the work of the Almighty, I will destroy it." So he went to work and buried every seed beneath the ground, and summoned the rain to rot them. He smiled with pride at his success, but as he gazed the buried seed sprang up in forms of beauty, and made the seeming desert an Eden of loveliness. — *Persian fable.*

6-11. (6) **slack not**, the climax in the message is very noticeable; (1) slack not thy hand; (2) come up to us quickly; (3) save us; (4) help us. Compare the prayer of the persecuted Christians (Acts iv. 24-30). (7) **Gilgal**, Jos. iv. 19; with select portion of army Jos. made forced night march (8) This reassurance was needed bec. the league with Gibeon was depressing Joshua, and host to be attacked the most formidable Jos. had met.^a (9) **suddenly**, he marched the whole night, and in the morning, "when the sun rose behind him, he was already in the open ground at the foot of the heights of Gibeon, where the kings were encamped." (10) **discomfited them**, same word used 1 Sa. vii. 10, suggests its reference to the hailstorm. (10) **Beth-horon**, *house of caves*; there was an *Upper* and a *Nether Beth-horon*, and between the two a steep pass, still very rocky and rough.^b (11) **down to**, towards *Nether Beth-horon*. Fugitives outstripped the pursuers. **hailstones**, one of the fearful tempests, which from time to time sweep over the hills of Palestine, burst upon the disordered army, and hailstones of enormous size fell upon their shattered ranks.

The Lord fighting for Israel. — I. This event illustrates the resources of Providence. II. Those who contend with God forget that nature becomes an arsenal whose agencies and forces may be employed against them. III. Who had fought against God and prospered? (III. the Armada scattered by a tempest).

Hailstorm on the Bosphorus — "We had got perhaps a mile and a half on our way, when a cloud arising in the west gave promise of rain. In a few minutes we discovered something falling from the heavens with a heavy splash, and of a whitish appearance. We soon discovered it to be large balls of ice falling. Immediately we heard a sound like rumbling thunder or ten thousand carriages rolling furiously over the pavement. The whole Bosphorus was in a foam, as though heaven's artillery had been discharged upon us and our frail bark. Our umbrellas were torn into ribbons, and our fate seemed inevitable. Fortunately, we had a bullock's hide in the boat, and under it we crawled, saving ourselves from further injury. One of the oarsmen had his hand literally smashed, another was much injured in the shoulder. It was the most awful and terrific scene I ever witnessed. The scene lasted perhaps five minutes; but it was five minutes of the most awful feeling I ever experienced. When it passed over we found the surrounding hills covered with masses of ice, the trees stripped of their limbs and leaves, and all looking desolate. Many of the inhabitants of the villages had their bones broken, and some were killed outright. It is impossible to convey to you an idea of the scene. Imagine, however, the heavens suddenly frozen, and as suddenly broken into irregular masses of from half a pound to a pound in weight, and precipitated to the earth."

12-14. These *vs.* are an inserted extract fr. a poetical book, known as the Bk. of Jasher (*vs.* 13). (12) **Ajalon**, place of deer, or gazelles; now *Merj-Im-Omeir*. (13) **sun stood still**, the Scr. describes events in the natural world, not in scientific language, but acc. to the appearance. So we may believe in this case, whether the movements of the heavenly bodies (or of this earth) were actually arrested, but th. the daylight was extended, *as if* sun and moon stood still. In whatever way it was effected, there seems to have been "a supernatural extension of the period of light, to allow Joshua to finish his

work." Jasher,^a or of the *upright*, a poetical appellation of Israel. Probably a collection of national songs in honor of renowned and pious heroes. **about a whole day**, Edersheim would translate this, "and hasted not to go—like (as on) a complete day." (14) **hearkened**, in such a wonderful way.

The victory of faith.—Consider the life of faith in—I. The greatness of its emergencies. 1. Believing men do not escape emergencies. 2. These are God-given opportunities for faith. II. The boldness of its requests. 1. It cannot wait for precedents. 2. It cannot be limited by difficulties. III. Its prevalence with God. IV. The thoroughness of its victories over error.—*Marchant*.

The battle of Beth-horon.—In some respects this victory had a special significance. By some it has been compared to the battle of Marathon, not only on account of the suddenness with which the decisive blow was struck, but also on account of the importance of the interests involved. It was a battle for freedom, for purity, for true religion, in opposition to tyranny, idolatry and abominable sensuality; for all that is wholesome in human life, in opposition to all that is corrupt; for all that makes for peaceful progress, in opposition to all that entails degradation and mercy. The prospects of the whole world were brighter after that victory of Beth-horon.—*Blakie*.

15—19. (15) This *vs.* properly ends quotation fr. Jasher. Jos. did not return immediately, *vs.* 43. (16) Resumes narrative fr. *vs.* 11. (17) **Makkedah**,^b place of shepherds; only know that it, and *Azekah*, were in the low country of Judah. (18) **Joshua said**, the victory was not yet won. The conqueror would not be diverted from his object. The mouth of the cave was blocked with huge stones, and armed men were stationed to guard it, while the pursuit was still continued. (19) **smite the hindmost**, *lit. cut off the tail*; this haste was necess. bec. the day was passing, and the fugitives were making for the walled cities.

Vain concealments.—The five kings concealed in the cave may remind us first—I. Of the false security of the wicked. II. Of the safe keeping of the wicked. III. Of the ultimate exposure of the wicked and their punishment. Learn:—The only sure and safe refuge for the ungodly is the mercy of God in Christ.

Battle of Malplaquet.—In this celebrated battle, so glorious to the British arms, the Prince of Orange was the most daring of all the commanders engaged in the dreadful conflict. He led on the first nine battalions under a tremendous shower of grape and musketry. He had scarcely advanced a few paces, when the brave Oxenstiern was killed by his side, and several aides-de-camp and attendants successively dropped as he advanced. His own horse being killed, he rushed forward on foot; and as he passed the opening of the great flanking battery, whole ranks were swept away; yet he reached the entrenchment, and waving his hat, in an instant the breastwork was forced at the point of the bayonet by the Dutch guards and Highlanders. But before they could deploy, they were driven from the post by an impetuous charge from the troops of the French left, who had been rallied by Marshal Bouffiers. At this moment the corps under Dohna moved gallantly against the battery on the road, penetrated into the embrasures, and took some colors; but ere they reached the front of the breastwork, were mown down by the battery on the flank. A dreadful carnage took place among all the troops in this concerted attack; Spaar lay dead upon the field of battle; Hamilton was carried off wounded; and the lines beginning to waver, recoiled a few paces. Calling, up fresh spirit to recover from this repulse, the heroic Prince of Orange mounted another horse, that was also shot under him; still his energy remained unshaken; on foot he rallied the nearest troops; and seizing a standard from the regiment of Mey, marched almost alone to the entrenchment. He planted the colors upon the bank, and called aloud, "Follow me, my friends, here is your post!" His gallant troops followed their leader. Again the onset was renewed, but it was no longer possible to force the enemy; for the second line had closed up, and the whole breastwork bristled with bayonets, and blazed with fire. Although again repulsed, the Prince of Orange would not be dissuaded from returning once more to the charge; and at length actually carried the seemingly impregnable entrenchment.—*Percy Anec.*

20—24. (20) **fenced cities**, the fortifications of the cities of Palestine regularly fenced, consisted of one or more walls crowned with battlemented parapets, having towers at regular intervals (2 Chron. xxxii. 5; Jer. xxxi. 38), on

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trusted Heaven is the home of universal truth and confidence. The more we follow truth, the nearer we advance to God."—*Schenck*.

α 2 Sa. i. 18.

the five kings in the cave at Makkedah

b Am. ix. 2, 3; Ps. cxxxix. 7, 8; Is. ii. 19.

"Servants, dependents or courtiers in the East always follow their superiors. Should one of them cease to serve or follow his master or patron, having gained his end, another on seeing this asks, 'Where is your tail?' 'The tail has been long in my way I have cut it off.'"—*Roberts*.

"If the wicked flourish and thou suffer be not discouraged; they are fated for destruction, thou art dieted for health."—*Fuller*.

"Beware ambition; heaven is not reached with pride, but with submission."—*Middleton*. "Fatal ambition! say what wondrous charms delude mankind, to toil for thee in arms!"—*Rowe*.

the kings brought out of the cave

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a Ex. xl. 7.

b Ps. cx. 1; 1 Co. xv. 25.

"We are told that whenever the Persian monarch (Sapor) mounted on horseback he placed his foot on the neck of a Roman emperor." — *Gibbon*.

the five
kings are
hung

c Gal. iii. 13.

d De. xxi. 22, 23; Jos. viii. 29.

"It is in the time of trouble, when some, to whom we may have looked for consolation and encouragement, regard us with coldness, and others, perhaps, treat us with hostility, that the warmth of the friendly heart and the support of the friendly hand acquire increased value, and demand additional gratitude." — *Bishop Mant*.

battle of
Makkedah

e Jos. xv. 42; xxi. 13; 1 Chr. vi. 57.

f Jos. xv. 39; Is. xxxvii. 8.

"He is not worthy of the honeycomb that shuns the hive because the bees have stings." — *Shakespeare*.

"All thy virtue dictates, dare to do." — *Mason*.

"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;

Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all." — *Longfellow*.

which in later times engines of war were placed, and in time of war watch was kept night and day (Judg. ix. 46, 47; 2 Kings ix. 17; 2 Chron. xxvi. 9, 15). (21) **camp . . Makkedah**, where Jos. stayed, while detachments pursued the fugitives. **none moved his tongue**, proverbial expression, for all enemies were subdued.^a (22) **Then**, prob. next morning. **open the mouth**, *see vs. 18*. (23) **brought forth**, for more deliberate execution. (24) **put your feet**, this was according to the usage portrayed on the monuments of Assyria and Egypt. It was a symbol of complete subjection.^b

Moving the tongue. — When a person speaks of the fear to which his enemy is reduced, he says, "Ah! he dares not now to shake his tongue against me." "He hurt you! the fellow will not shake his tongue against you." *Feet on the necks of enemies*. — This in the East is a favorite way of triumphing over a fallen foe. In the history of the battles of the gods, or giants, particular mention is made of the closing scene, how the conquerors went and trampled on their enemies. When people are disputing, should one be a little pressed, and the other begin to triumph, the former will say, "I will tread upon thy neck, and after that beat thee." A low-caste man insulting one who is high, is sure to hear some one say to the offended individual, "Put your feet on his neck." (*See on Isa. xviii. 2, 7*). — *Roberts*.

25—27. (25) So glorious a conquest must be taken as pledge of further victories. (26) **slew them**, this was usual before hanging. Exposure of a corpse thus on a tree was counted supreme indignity.^c (27) **took them down**, according to Mosaic law.^d

Words of encouragement. — I. Joshua could not have so encouraged Israel if God had not previously encouraged him. II. Joshua having been encouraged himself, did his utmost to encourage others. III. The encouragement he offered was the voice of his own experience, and an echo of the comfortable works of God.

Encouragement of a brave chief. — There is a touching fact related in the history of a Highland chief, of the noble house of McGregor, who fell, wounded by two balls, at the battle of Prestonpans. Seeing their chief fall, the clan wavered, and gave the enemy an advantage. The old chieftain, beholding this effect of his disaster, raised himself up on his elbow, while the blood gushed in streams from his wounds, and cried aloud — "I am not dead, my children; I am looking at you to see you do your duty." These words revived the sinking courage of his brave Highlanders. There was a charm in the fact that they still fought under the eye of their chief. It roused them to put forth their mightiest energies; and they did all that human strength could do to stem and turn the dreadful tide of battle. And is there not a more powerful charm for thee, O Christian, in the fact that you contend, in the battle-field of life, under the eye of your Saviour? Wherever you are — however oppressed by foes — however exhausted by the stern strife with evil — the eye of Christ is fixed most lovingly upon thee.

28—32. Jos. proceeds to take possession of the cities of the district, wh. are now undefended. (28) **that . . day**, the victory of Beth-horon did not stand alone. It involved other consequences in its train. It inaugurated a campaign, which may have lasted some weeks or even months, during which the whole of southern Canaan was swept into the hands of Israel. (28) **as he did, etc.**, Jos. vi. 21. (29) **Libnah**,^e *whiteness*, site not certainly identified; either *Arak-el-Menshiyeh* or *Tell-es-Safieh*. (30) **none remain**, *i. e.* alive. (31) **Lachish**,^f vs. 3. (32) **second day**, indicating that they made show of resistance.

Utter destruction (vs. 28). — "He utterly destroyed them;" God, through Joshua's instrumentality, gave no quarter, so to speak, to the offending Canaanites. Regard this as — I. A just expression of God's hatred of sin. II. A fit and righteous punishment of glaring iniquity. III. A distinctly expressed warning to others. IV. A type and foreshadowing of the great destruction which shall surely come upon the wicked.

Scattering and yet increasing. — A farmer once was so angry at seeing Canada thistles taking root and blossoming on his farm, that he took them as they were ripening, tore them to atoms, and stamped them into the ground with great violence and indignation. The only result was that he spread the thistles all over his farm. — *Peloubet*. *Delay in punishment*. — "Look at my grain," said a scoffing farmer to a clergyman neighbor. "I ploughed on Sun-

day; I planted on Sunday; I harrowed on Sunday; I harvested on Sunday, and I never had a better crop. What do you say to that?" "I only say," said the minister, "that the Lord doesn't settle all his accounts on the first of October."—*S. S. Times*.

33-36. (33) **Gezer**,^a a steep place, on W. border of tribe of Ephraim; it was not effectually subdued at this time. **smote him**, Joshua seems to have been content with repulsing his attack, slaying the king, and inflicting a severe defeat upon his people. Gezer itself lay too far northward of his present line of operations to justify its capture. (34) **Eglon**,^b vs. 3. He now marches eastward from Lachish to Eglon on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza; and destroys it. (35) **that day**, showing the town was small, and offered little resistance. (36) **went up**, fr. the plain to the hill country. **Hebron**,^c vs. 3; Ge. xiii. 18.

The victorious campaign.—I. What could withstand Joshua? Not great distances, fenced cities, numerous and united enemies. II. Joshua type of Jesus: who or what can withstand Him? III. We, like Joshua, have a life of conflict before us, but may come off more than conquerors through Him who fighteth for us.

Earnestness in religious warfare.—Want of thoroughness in warfare is still our besetting sin. We play at missions; we trifle with the awful drunkenness and sensuality around us; we look on, and we see rural districts gradually depopulated; and we wring our hands at the mass of poverty, vice and misery in our great crowded cities. Who can tell the evil done by want of faith, by languor, by unwillingness to be disturbed in our quiet, self-indulged life, by our fear of rousing against us the scorn and rage of the world? If only the church had more faith, and, as the fruit of faith, more courage and more enterprise, what help from heaven might not come to her! True, she would not see the enemy crushed by hailstones, nor the sun standing in Gibeon, nor the moon in the valley of Ajalon; but she would see grander sights; she would see men of spiritual might raised up in her ranks; she would see tides of strong spiritual influence overwhelming her enemies.—*Blakie*.

37-43. (37) **utterly**, prob. as being a leading and important place. (38) **Debir**, or *Kirjath-sephir*;^a *Kirjath-sannah*.^c (38) See second account of its capture.^f (40) **all the country, etc.**, *R. V.*, "all the land, the hill country, and the South, and the lowland, and the slopes." The entire region is comprehensively surveyed, and then treated with special detail: (a) the hills; (b) the South; (c) the vale; (d) the springs. **springs**, or slopes; undulating ground between the lowlands and the hills.^g (41) **Kadesh-barnea**, Nu. xiii. 26, *i. e.* from the wilderness in which Kadesh-barnea lay. **Gaza**, limit of the present conquest on the W. **Goshen**, not identified, xv. 51; evidently in S. part of territory of Judah. **even unto Gibeon**, this marks the extent of the conquest on the east. (42) **at one time**, during this first expedition. (43) **returned**, comp. vs. 15.

Divine sovereignty.—I. God has an indisputable right to dispense His favors to what persons and in what proportions He pleases. As sole proprietor of the universe it is His to dispose of—1. Worldly goods; 2. Bodily constitution and health; 3. Mental qualifications; 4. Spiritual privileges. II. He has an equal right to resume or to transfer His favors. III. He may justly punish every voluntary transgression of His righteous and equitable laws. IV. In executing His righteous purposes, God may employ what agency or instrumentality He pleases. Learn—(1) Reverence; (2) Dependence; (3) Humility.

Jewish wars of extermination.—De Quincy has called attention to the fact that in these wars of extermination, if rightly viewed, there resided a true and transcendent spirit of mercy, since they maintained the unity of God against polytheism, and, by trampling on cruel idolatries, indirectly opened the channels for benign principles of morality through endless generations of men. There was a wisdom which looked far into the future, though the present severity seemed to approach, or actually amount to, cruelty. But yet, on consideration, we shall observe many indications of a relenting kindness and a tenderness of love in the Mosaic ordinances.

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Lachish and Eglon captured

^a Jos. xvi. 3, 10; Ju. i. 29; 1 Ki. ix. 15, 17; 1 Chr. vii. 28.

^b Jos. xv. 21, 39.

^c Nu. xiii. 22; Ju. i. 10; Jos. xiv. 13-15; xv. 13, 14.

The great difference between men, the feeble and the powerful, is energy and invincible determination, a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory.—*Sir. T. F. Buxton*.

"There are few die well that die in battle."—*Shakespeare*.

Hebron and Debir taken

^d Jos. xv. 15; Ju. ii. 11.

^e Jos. xv. 49.

^f Jos. xv. 15, 17.

^g De. iii. 17, marg.

"Life's shadows are to be chased by the light of eternity's day, and its tumult hushed by the repose of eternity's harmony."—*Lee*.

"He's truly vallant that can wisely suffer the worst that man can breathe, and make his wrongs his outsidies, to wear them like his raiment, carelessly; and ne'er prefer his injuries to his heart, to bring it into danger."—*Dryden*.

B. C. 1450.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

confederacy
of the kings
of the north

a Ju. iv. 2, 17; 1 Sa. xii. 9. According to Josephus it lay on the range of hills which stretches itself on W. of Sea of Merom, now the Jebel Safed. Porter found here a place, *Hafur*; Robinson found a hill, *Tell-Khureibeh*, wh. he would identify with Hazor. — *Lange*.

b "Site of Dor is identified by travelers as the modern *Tantura*, or *Dandora*, a name wh. is itself only a corruption of the ancient *Dor*." — *Spk. Com.*
1 Sa. xxviii. 7.

c Jos. xiii. 26; xv. 38; 1 Sa. xxii. 3.

they are
defeated at
the waters
of Merom

d Ps. xx. 7, 8; 2 Sa. viii. 4.

e Jos. xiii. 6.

f Jos. x. 9.

"When the babe puts his little soft hands into yours, his hand is as strong as yours, since it is yours that guides it, so when we put our hand into God's we are by His grace as strong as He is, since He leads, and we only follow." — *Beecher*.

Hazor is
taken and
burnt

g Nu. xxxiii. 52, 53; De. vii. 2.

"Just as the traveler, whom we see on yonder mountain height, began his ascent from the plain, so the greatest man of whom

1-5. Confederacy of the kings of northern part of Canaan. (1) *Jabin*, the *intelligent*, prob. a hereditary and royal title, like Pharaoh, Cæsar, etc. *Hazor*,^a was an important, and apparently almost impregnable, stronghold of the Canaanites of the north, situated in the mountains. north of the waters of Merom. We find it afterwards fortified by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 15), and its inhabitants were carried away captive by Tiglath-pileser (2 Kings xv. 29). *Madon*, xii. 19. *Shimron*, xii. 20; xix. 15. *Achshaph*, xix. 25. The three places here mentioned, Madon, Shimron and Achshaph, were probably in the neighborhood of Hazor, but their sites cannot be determined. (2) *mountains*, the mount. district of Galilee. *plains*, the N. part of Arabah, or Jordan valley. *Chinneroth*, = Gennesaret, borders of Dor,^b highlands of Dor; a royal town below Carmel, 6 miles fr. Cesarea. (3) *Canaanite*, iii. 10. *Herrmon*, De. iii. 9. *Mizpeh*, or *Mizpah*, a plain stretching southwestwards fr. Hermon. Other places were so named.^c (4) *chariots*, tipped with iron, xviii. 18. (5) *Merom*, the upper waters, now *Lake Huleh*.

Evil companions. The following beautiful allegory is translated from the German:—Sophronius, a wise teacher, would not suffer even his grown-up sons and daughters to associate with those whose conduct was not pure and upright. "Dear father," said the gentle Eulalia to him one day, when he forbade her, in company with her brother, to visit the volatile Lucinda—"Dear father, you must think us very childish if you imagine that we should be exposed to danger by it." The father took, in silence, a dead coal from the hearth, and reached it to his daughter. "It will not burn you, my child, take it." Eulalia did so, and behold! her beautiful white hand was soiled and blackened, and as it chanced, her white dress also. "We cannot be too careful in handling coals," said Eulalia in vexation. "Yes, truly," said the father; "you see, my child, the coals, even if they do not burn, blacken; so it is with the company of the vicious."

6-9. (6) *hough*,^d cut tendons of hind hoofs, so render hopelessly lame. (7) *suddenly*, swiftness of Joshua's marches introduces a new style of warfare; huge armies move slowly, requiring to keep near their base of operations. Comp. the tactics of the first Napoleon. (8) *great Zidon*, chief city of Phœnicia. *Misrephoth-maim*, *burnings of waters*, near Zidon, and prob. the Zarephath or Sarepta of Script.^e (9) *burnt*, etc.^f showing chariots were only iron-tipped.

The victory at Merom.—I. Increased number of enemies. God leads His people on to more difficult conflicts. 1. For severer discipline; 2. For greater trust; 3. For higher victories. II. The gracious encouragement from Jehovah. This was—1. Unsolicited; 2. Suited to the new cause for fear; 3. Emphatic and definite; 4. A promise of help from God only. III. The complete fulfilment of the Divine assurance. — *Marchant*.

Prayer and victory.—During the awful moments of preparation for the battle of Camperdown, Admiral Duncan called all his officers up on deck, and in their presence prostrated himself before the Lord of Hosts, committing himself and them, with the cause they maintained, to His sovereign protection, his family to His care, his soul and body to the disposal of His Providence. Rising then from his knees, he gave command to make an attack, and achieved one of the most splendid victories in the annals of England.

10-14. (10) *turned back*, Joshua pursued the flying hosts far over the western hills before he "turned back," and took Hazor, and because of its prominence as the chief city of these petty northern kingdoms, burned it with fire. *smote* . . with sword,^g prob. beheaded; comp. x. 26. (13) *still in their strength*, R. V., "stood on their mounds." Hills or mounds were the ordinary sites for cities in Canaan. Matt. v. 14. (14) *spoil*, of household and royal property. This was not devoted as at Jericho, but divided as at Ai.

God and human suffering.—The suffering you see around you hurts God more than it hurts you, or the man upon whom it falls. But He hates things that most men think little of, and will send any suffering upon them, rather than have them continue indifferent to them. Men may say, "We don't want suffering, we don't want to be good." But God says, "I know my own obligations, and you shall not be contemptible wretches if there be any

resource in the Godhead." The God who strikes is the God whose Son wept over Jerusalem.—*George Macdonald. Extirpation of the Canaanites.*—Infidels say that it seems wholly inconsistent with what we should suppose to be the merciful character of God, that He should thus command whole nations to be destroyed by the sword. But when we hear that pestilence has depopulated crowded cities, or that Napoleon has swept the continent of Europe, and left but the wrecks of smoking homes and the bones of slaughtered citizens to be the mementos of his march, we do not say that this is a proof that there is no God in heaven, nor any moral government of the inhabitants of the earth; and yet, if the destruction of the nations of the Canaanites immediately by God is a proof that the Bible which records it is not the inspiration of God, then the destruction of nations by the sword of the conqueror or by the breath of pestilence must be a proof that there is no God, or that creation is not the work of God, nor Providence a part of the general government of God. When we see juries in our own country bringing in a verdict of guilty, the judge pronouncing sentence of death, and that sentence executed, we do not complain that there is anything wrong or unjust in the act. Now these Canaanites are declared and proved to have polluted and stained the land with abominable crimes; they had time and were urged to repent of them, and thus escape destruction; and when they were cut off by the sword of Heaven, it was merely the holy judge pronouncing sentence on flagrant criminals and the righteous governor executing that sentence to the letter. We are not to regard the extirpation of the Canaanites as an act of arbitrary or private revenge, but as the execution of the sentence of retributive justice, and such as had perhaps as great mercy to the innocent as equity to the guilty.—*Cumming.*

15—20. (15, 16) **Joshua took**, the sacred writer pauses to survey and sum up the conquests of the Israelitish leader. **the hills**, the country is contemplated under a sevenfold division, (i.) the cities; (ii.) the south country; (iii.) the land of Goshen (comp. x. 41); (iv.) the valley; (v.) the plain; (vi.) the mountain of Israel; (vii.) the valley of the same. (17) **Mount Halak**,^a *smooth mountain*, the southern limit of Jos.'s conquests. **Seir**, Ge. xiv. 6. **Baal-gad**, *lord of fortune*, or good luck, prob. mod. *Paneas*. Under Herod Philip. "Cæsarea Philippi." (18) **a long time**, five years, some say seven. (19) **save the Hivites**, ix. 3. (20) **harden their hearts**, comp. Ex. iv. 21.

Joshua a type of Christ.—1. Joshua and Jesus same name: in Acts vii. 45, and Heb. iv. 8, "Jesus" means not Christ, but Joshua. 2. Joshua completed what Moses began. So Jesus, John i. 17; Gal. iii. 24. 3. Joshua the leader and captain. So Jesus, Isa. lv. 4; Heb. ii. 10. 4. Joshua conquered Israel's enemies. So Jesus ours, Heb. ii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, 57. 5. Joshua gave Israel the promised land. So Jesus to us, John x. 28; xiv. 2; xvii. 24.

Of all bad things war is the worst.—

"How, still, from age to age,
Prevails the universal lust of death
And vulgar slaughter; war of all bad things
Worst, and man's crowning crime, save when for faith
Or freedom waged; but when for greed of ground
Or mere dominion, cursed of man and God.—*Bailey*

21—23. (21) **Anakims**,^b gigantic race of S. Palestine, De. i. 28. **Hebron**, x. 3. **Debir**, x. 33. **Anab**, a city in hill country of Judah, S. of Hebron. (22) **Gaza, Gath, Ashdod**,^c cities of district of Philistia; some took refuge in the country of the Philistines, and settled there, from whom Goliath, and other giants, descended. (23) **gave it**,^d *etc.*, as hereafter-recounted.

The desolation caused by war.—

"Her vine, the merry cheerer of the heart,
Unpruned dies: her hedges even-pleach'd,
Like prisoners wildly overgrown with hair,
Put forth disorder'd twigs: her fallow leas
The darnel hemlock, and rank fumitory,
Doth root upon; while that the coulter rusts,
That should deracinate such savagery:
The even mead, that erst brought sweetly forth
The freckled crowslip, burnet, and green clover,

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our world can boast is but one of ourselves standing on higher ground, and, in virtue of his wider intelligence, his nobler thoughts, his loftier character, his purer inspiration or his more manly doings, claiming the empire as his right."—*Ferguson.*

"Ambition, thou powerful source of good and ill."—*Young.*

the conquest of the whole land completed

a "Prob. identical with the 'ascent of Akabbim' (Jos. xv. 8; Nu. xxxiv. 4), which Robinson believes he has discovered in a remarkable line of cliffs that run across the entire Ghor, a few miles S. of the Dead Sea."—*Lange.*

the Anakim are cut off

b Nu. xiii. 22, 28, 33; Jos. xiv. 12; xv. 13-15.

c Nu. xxxiii. 55; Jos. xiii. 13; 1 S. xvii. 4; 2 S. xxi. 22.
d Nu. xxvi. 52, 53; xxxiv. 2-18; De. xxxiv. 1-4.

"Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and

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some have greatness thrust upon them." — *Shakespeare*.

Wanting the scythe, all uncorrected, rank,
Conceives by idleness; and nothing teems
But hateful docks, rough thistles, kecksies, burs,
Losing both beauty and utility.
And as our vineyards, fallows, meads, and hedges,
Defective in their natures, grow to wildness." — *Shakespeare*.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

list of
conquered
kings of
Canaan

Sihon

a De. iii. 17,

"All our endeavors after greatness proceed from nothing but a desire of being surrounded by a multitude of persons and affairs that may hinder us from looking into ourselves, which is a view we cannot bear." — *Pascal*.

"There is none made so great but he may both need the help and service, and stand in fear of the power and unkindness, even of the meanest of mortals." — *Seneca*.

Og, King
of Bashan

b De. i. 4.

"Mount Halak was in the parallel of Beersheba, and Baal-gad is identical with Banias, four miles east of Dan. These, then, were the limits of what we call 'the land of possession.' The 'land of promise' was much larger." — *Porter*.

supple-
mentary list
of conquered
kings

1-3. (1) **Now these**, this chapter may be termed an official summary suitable to a public record of the whole territory conquered by Moses and by Joshua. **other side**, E. side of Jordan. **Arnon**, Nu. xxi. 13-15. Southern border of Is. territory E. of Jordan. **Hermon**, boundary on N. E., De. iii. 8, 9. **plain**, from the Sea of Galilee to the Ælamitic Gulf, along the east bank of the Jordan. (2) **Sihon, etc.**, Nu. xxi. 21-30. **Arroer, which, etc.**, R. V., "Arroer wh. is on the edge of the valley of Arnon, and the city th. is in the middle of the valley, and half Gilead." Deut. ii. 36. **Gilead**, prop. mountain region bet. *Arnon* and *Jabbok*, but sometimes put for whole district E. of Jordan. (3) **from the plain**,^a R. V., "and the Arabah," the eastern part of the Jordan valley. **Beth-jeshimoth**, Nu. xxxiii. 49. **Ashdodth-pisgah**, R. V., "the slopes of Pisgah." De. iii. 17; iv. 49.

War illustrated.—A Scotch writer, in illustrating the history of wars, says: "The history of every war is very like a scene I once saw in Nithsdale. Two boys from different schools met one fine day upon the ice. They eyed each other with rather jealous and indignant looks, and with defiance on each brow. 'What are ye glowrin' at, Billy?' 'What's that to you! I'll look where I have a mind, an' hinder me if you daur.' A hearty blow was the return to this, and then a battle began. It being Saturday, all the boys of both schools were on the ice; and the fight instantly became general and desperate. I asked one of the party what they were pelting the others for. 'Oh, naething at a', man; we just want to gie them a good thrashing.' After fighting till they were quite exhausted, one of the principal heroes stepped forth between, covered with blood, and his clothes in tatters, and addressed the belligerent parties thus: 'Weel, I'll tell ye what we'll do wi' ye: if ye'll let us alane, we'll let ye alane.' There was no more of it: the war was at an end, and the boys scampered away to their play. I thought at the time, and have often thought since, that that trivial affray was the best epitome of war in general that I have ever seen. Kings and ministers of state are just a set of grown-up children, exactly like the children I speak of, with only this material difference, that instead of fighting out the needless quarrels they have raised, they sit in safety and look on, send out their innocent but servile subjects to battle, and then, after a waste of blood and treasure, are glad to make the boy's conditions, 'If ye'll let us alane, we'll let ye alane.'"

4-8. (4) **Ashtaroeth**,^b prob. as Ge. xiv. 5. The residence of Og. It is now called Tel Asherah. **Edrei**, Nu. xxi. 33. Here, "in the Thermopylæ of his kingdom," Og was slain. (5) **Salcah**, De. iii. 10. **Geshurites**, **Maachathites**, De. iii. 14. **half Gilead**, comp. vs. 2. (6) **Comp. Nu. xxxii. 29; De. iii. 12, 13.** (7) **Baal-gad**, . . **Halak**, Jos. xi. 17. (8) **Comp. Jos. xi. 16.**

Ashtaroeth.—"Statues of Astarte"—a city probably so called from the worship of Astarte here. It was one of the chief places in the dominions of King Og, and was afterwards in the territory of the Eastern Manassites (Jos. ix. 10; xii. 12-31). It is said to have been assigned to the Gershonite Levites (1 Chron. vi. 71); but elsewhere (Jos. xxi. 27) Beeshterah is mentioned; this, however, is probably only a variation of the name. Ashtaroeth is also called Astaroth (De. i. 4). *Ashteroth-Karnaim.*—Ashteroth of the two horns; horned Astarte—a place which was the abode of the Rephaim in the time of Chedor-laomer (Ge. xiv. 5), is often supposed to be identical with Ashtaroeth; but there are reasons for questioning this. Ashteroth-Karnaim is doubtless the Carnaim, or Carnion, of Maccabean history.—*J. Ayre*.

9-24. The list of kings is given in the order of their conquest; the *fresh* names only need be noticed. (13) **Geder**, mod. Jedur, Jos. xv. 58; 1 Chr. xii. 7; situate in hill district S. of Judah. (15) **Adullam**, Ge. xxxviii. 1 (not same as in 1 Sa. xxii. 1). (17) **Tappuah**, xv. 34. **Hepher**, unknown (not as

in xix. 13). (18) **Aphek**, near Hebron. **Lasharon**, prob. *Sharon*. (21) **Taanach**, in tribe of Manasseh. It was a city of the Levites (Josh. xxi. 25), and was famous for the victory of Barak (Judg. v. 19). **Megiddo**, locally in territory of Issachar, but assigned to Manasseh.^a (22) **Kedesh**, or **Kedesh-Naphtali**, xix. 37. **Jokneam**, in territory of Zebulun, xix. 11, mod. *Kaimon*. (24) **Tirzah**, mod. *Tulluzah*, 3 miles N. E. of Nablous.^b A city of proverbial beauty. It was to Shechem afterwards "what Windsor is to London," and became the residence of Jeroboam and his successors (1 Kings xiv. 17).

Christ the best King.—At a missionary meeting on the island of Rarotonga, one of the Hervey group in the Pacific Ocean, an old man, a candidate for church fellowship, said, "I have lived during the reign of four kings: in the first we were continually at war, and a fearful season it was; watching and hiding with fear were all our engagements. During the reign of the second we were overtaken with a severe famine, and all expected to perish; then we ate rats and grass, and this wood and that wood. During the third we were conquered, and became the peck and prey of the other two settlements of the island; then if a man went to fish he rarely ever returned, or if a woman went any distance to fetch food she was rarely ever seen again. But during the reign of this third king we were visited by another King, a great King, a good King, a powerful King, a King of love, Jesus the Lord from heaven. He has gained the victory. He has conquered our hearts; therefore we now have peace and plenty in this world, and hope soon to dwell with Him in heaven."

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-6. (1) **old**, prob. about ninety years; not able to complete his conquest, so bidden to proceed to division of land at once. This is usually regarded as the second part of the book of Joshua; it describes the division of the land and rests no doubt on definite records which lay before the writer. **remaineth . . . possessed**, Jerusalem, Gezer and Bethshean, strong fortresses still remained to be occupied. (2) **borders**, territory. **Geshuri**, a district S. of Philistia. (3) **Sihor**, or **Shihor**,^c the black stream; not the Nile; known now as the Wady El-Arish, Nu. xxxiv. 5. **Ekrone**, one of five divisions of Philistia, named after chief towns, Gaza, Ashdod, Askalon, Gath, and Ekron. **Avites**,^d R. V., "Avvim," add first sentence of vs. 4, "*Avites on the south*," where they settled. (4) **Canaanites**, the mountainous district of Upper Galilee. **Mearah**, cave, or the cave-district. **Aphek**, as xix. 30, not as xii. 18, mod. *Afka*, a city in the extreme north of Asher. (5) **Giblites**, people of *Gebal*, 40 miles N. of Sidon.^e **Hamath**, Nu. xiii. 21. The extreme northern boundary point of Palestine, to which the kingdom of David and Solomon originally extended. (6) **Misrephoth**, xi. 8.

Progress in religion.—I am come—I. To remind you that there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed; much of your religion is unattained, unoccupied, unenjoyed. Take a survey of your religion. II. To call upon you to arise, and make fresh and continued progress. III. To give you some advice with regard to your future efforts. If you would advance—1. Shake off indolence; 2. Beware of diversion; 3. Guard against despondency; 4. Be afraid of presumption; 5. Review the beginning of your religious course; 6. Look forward and survey the close of all.—*W. Jay*.

"*Yet more*."—When Francis Xavier was in Rome, preparing to go on his great mission to the heathen, he was heard by his friend Rodriguez uttering in his sleep the words, "Yet more, O my God, yet more!" In his dreams there had come to him a vision of his future career, of his sufferings, weariness, hunger, thirst, the storms to be battled, and the fiercer storms of heathen rage, the continents to be traveled, the rivers and seas to be crossed, dangers and death on every hand. But along with these he saw the nations that he would bring to Christ, islands, continents, empires, that would by his voice hear the gospel of the kingdom; and he exclaimed, "Yet more, O my God, yet more!" More toil, more suffering, and more souls brought into eternal life.—*H. C. Fish*. *Old and stricken in years*.—When Rev. John Eliot, from advanced age and infirmities, was laid aside from his former employments, he sometimes said, with an air peculiar to himself, "I wonder for what the Lord Jesus lets me live. He knows that now I can do nothing for Him." Speaking of his labors among the American Indians, he expressed himself thus: "There is a cloud, a dark cloud, on the work of the gospel among the poor

B. C. 1452.

a Jos. xvii. 11.

b 1 Ki. xiv. 17; xv. 21, 33; Song, vi. 4.

"Edward, the Black Prince, having conquered and taken prisoner King John of France, nobly condescended to wait on his royal captive the same night at supper. Christ, having first subdued His people by His grace waits on them afterwards to the end of their lives."—*Whitecross*.

B. C. 1445.

land yet to be possessed

c The brook of Egypt, Rhinokolura flows before, i. e. eastwardly or north-eastwardly, fr. Egypt while the Nile takes its course through the middle of that country."—*Lange*.

d Jos. xviii. 28.

e 1 Ki. v. 18; Eze. xxvii. 9

"Multitudes feel under the sermons they hear, even weep at the sufferings of Jesus, and yet remain in their sins. Why? Because the emotion is simply a natural one, what they might experience in thinking of the execution of Sir Thomas Moore, or the beheading of Lord William Russell—human sympathy with human suffering, and nothing more; it is purely religious sentimentality."—*Henry Gill*.

B. c. 1445.

Indians. The Lord revive and prosper that work, and grant that it may live when I am dead. It is a work which I have been doing much about. But what have I said? I recall that word, My doings! Alas! they have been poor and small, and I will be the man that shall cast the first stone at them." He died in 1690, aged eighty-six.

inheritance of two tribes and a half

"If a king should promise one a living whilst he lived, it would lessen his carelessness for earthly things. How much more should God's promise make us careless for worldly things, seeing He is the King of all kings!"—*Cawdry*.

"The noblest end of life is to live for the service of God. And everything is in His service by which we can be or give a blessing to another."

inheritance of Reuben

Balaam slain

"Yes, there's a patent of nobility above the meanness of our common state; with what they do the vulgar natures buy their titles, and with what they are, the great!"—*Schiller*.

"The rank is but the guinea stamp—the man's the gold for a' that."—*Burns*.

"Every step of progress which the world has made has been from scaffold to scaffold, and from stake to stake."—*Wendell Phillips*.

inheritance of Gad

a Jos. xx. 8

7—14. (7) divide, even the yet unconquered parts; he was to do it in faith. Here we have a more definite statement of the division of the land among the tribes. (8) with whom, *i. e.* the other half tribe of Manasseh. (9) Medeba . . Dibon, Nu. xxi. 30. (10, 11) See xii. 2, 3. (12) kingdom of Og, "with respect to the two tribes and a half beyond the Jordan, nothing is more striking at the first glance than their wide extent, compared with the narrow space into which the western tribes were compressed . . . it is certainly a domain which, taken in its entire superficiality, would not yield in extent to the whole region on the west of the Jordan."—*Ewald's History of Israel*. (14) none inheritance, on arrangement for Levites, De. x. 8, 9; xviii. 3, 4.

The inheritance of Levi.—The tribe of Levi—I. Received no inheritance of land. 1. Those who devote themselves to the service of God must be prepared to make earthly sacrifices; 2. Earthly possessions distract our attention from heavenly service; 3. They who have the care of souls should be free from earthly cares. II. Had its temporal wants adequately provided for. III. Found its true inheritance in God.—*W. F. Adeney*.

Wealth without power.—Cornelius A. Lapide beautifully relates how Thomas Aquinas once came to Pope Innocent IV. at Rome, and was shown through all the sumptuously furnished rooms of the Papal palace. He became almost as much fatigued and dazed as was the queen of Sheba, when she had been dazzled with the riches of Solomon's kingdom. "See, Thomas," said Innocent, "see, the church can no more say as she did in those first days, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "True, holy father," replied Thomas, "but neither can she say to the impotent, 'rise up and walk.'"

15—23. The southern part of territory E, of Jordan was allotted to Reuben, middle part to Gad, and northern part to Manasseh. For all three the Jordan valley formed the W. border. Arnon was boundary on S., Mount Hermon boundary on N. (16) coast, *R. V.*, "border." (17) Bamoth-baal, Nu. xxi. 19. It was the site of the old heathen worship of Baal. Beth-baal-meon, Nu. xxxii. 38; these names of Amorite occupation. (18) Jahaza, Nu. xxi. 23. Here the decisive battle was fought between the Israelites and Sihon, king of the Amorites. Kedemoth, De. ii. 26. Mephaath, Jos. xxi. 37. (19) Kirjathaim, *etc.*, Nu. xxxii. 37, 38. Zareth-Shahar, unknown. (20) Beth-peor, Nu. xxiii. 28. A place dedicated to the God Baal-peor. Ashdath, De. iii. 17. Beth-jeshimoth, Nu. xxxiii. 49. (21) Evi, *etc.*, Nu. xxxi. 8. dukes, or vassals. (22) Balaam, Nu. xxxi. 8. (23) border, used in two senses in *vs.* for boundary, and for territory.

Temptation and an evil heart.—Years ago, in Cheshire, some new plants, quite unknown before in the neighborhood, sprang up beside the canals by which the salt was carried, and in pools around the salt works. The people did not know what to make of this phenomenon. At last, some one who had lived by the seaside recognized the plants as identical in kind with those which haunt the ledges of the rocks just above the flow of the tide, but within wash of the spray. Then the thing was clear. The germs of the plants had been from year to year borne by the wind, or carried by birds to that place, but the conditions under which they could grow had not arisen. By and by the same conditions which prevailed on the sea coast were fulfilled, and the germs which formerly had died took root and grew. Thus the seeds of temptation are scattered far and wide. Most temptations, sooner or later, fall into the heart of every man. It depends on the state of the heart into which they fall whether they spring up and grow into destroying sins, or whether they die in the very beginnings of life. Balaam received his temptation, and forthwith, in such fruitful soil, the seed grew apace.—*Marchant*.

24—28. (25) Jazer, Nu. xxi. 32. Gilead, *i. e.* of the southern part of Gilead, which belonged to the kingdom of Sihon, for the other half, on the north of the Jabbok, which was governed by king Og, was allotted to the half tribe of Manasseh. Aroer, not same as *vs.* 16. Rabbah, De. iii. 11. (26) Ramath-mizpeh, = *Ramoth-Gilead*,^a De. iv. 43. Betonim,

unknown. **Mahanaim**, Ge. xxxii. 2. (27) **Beth-aram**, comp. Nu. xxxii. 36. **Succoth**, ("Booths"), in the Jordan valley, between Peniel and Shechem (Gen. xxxii. 30, xxxiii. 18). It is famous (a) in the history of Jacob's return from Padan-aram; of (b) Gideon's pursuit of Zebah and Zalmunna (Judg. vii. 5-17); (c) as the spot at which the brass foundries were placed for casting the metal-work of the temple (1 Kings vii. 46; 2 Chron. iv. 17). — *Camb. Bib.* **Chinnereth**, = *Gennesaret*, which border of Gad just touched. (28) **villages**, indic. that some of prev. names apply to small places.

The rights and duties of property. — Those whose fortune it is to possess land and rank in this country cannot be too often or too earnestly reminded of the fact that the possession of such advantages constitutes, in every case whatever, a retaining fee on the part of the nation. Neither God, nor nature, nor society, contemplates the existence of an idler as that which ought to be. The country gentleman, the peer, and the prince, have their professions fixed on them; let them surrender the fee if they mean to shrink from the work; let the sinecure be a sine-salary. The mighty majority must, in all times and places, earn their living literally by the sweat of their brow, and the only principle on which any are exempted from the literal application of the great primary condition of our human existence is, that there are services essential to the intellectual, moral, political, and religious well-being and advancement of the whole, as a whole, which could not be effectually secured for them were not some exempted. — *Washington Irving.*

29-31. The possession of the half tribe of Manasseh. (30) **Bashan**, northern part of country E. of Jordan. **towns of Jair**, Nu. xxxii. 41. (31) **Machir**, Nu. xxxii. 39; one half of his family settled W. of Jordan. (32) **plains of Moab**, this distribution had been made during the lifetime of Moses in the plains of Moab, opposite the city of Jericho. (Num. xxii. 1; xxxiv. 15). (33) **the Lord God, etc.**, as Nu. xviii. 20.

God for all. — No one claims propriety in the ocean to the exclusion of others. It is for all nations and people to use for their interest; nor is there any fear of exhausting its resources, were the whole world of humanity to make draughts upon it. It rolls its waves against every shore, and sends its tides into every land, as if to invite the inhabitants to its riches and facilities, and as if to show it was the property of all. So with the living God. No man can claim Him to the shutting out of others. He is the God of all; for their knowledge, their love, their obedience, their felicity; and should every intelligent being on the earth draw from His treasury of good to the endless satisfaction of his nature, there would still be an infinite plenitude left. And to convince all that He is their God. He gives to all life, breath, and all things. He fans them with His influence; draws them by His love; sends hosts of holy agents to bring them to Himself. By ten thousand attractions of love and mercy. He invites the whole world to plunge in His fulness and be satisfied. — *Bate.*

B. C. 1444.

"Property communicates a charm to whatever is the object of it. It endears to the child its plaything, to the peasant his cottage, to the landholder his estate. It supplies the place of prospects and scenery. Instead of coveting the beauty of distant situations, it teaches every man to find it in his own. It gives boldness and grandeur to plains and fens, tinge and coloring to clays and fallows." — *Paley.*

inheritance of half tribe of Manasseh
—
Levi

"The goodness of the Essence of God is that according to which it is essentially in itself the Supreme and very good; from a participation in which all other things have an existence and are good; and to which all other things are to be referred as to their supreme end; for this reason it is called communicable" (Matt. xix. 17; Jas. i. 17). — *Arminius.*

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1-5. (1) **Eleazar**,^a third son of Aaron, placed at head of Levites after death of his brothers Nadab and Abihu. (2) **By lot**,^b Nu. xxvi. 52-56; xxxiii. 54. The use of lots was especially characteristic of the ancient world. (3) **had given**, before the crossing of Jordan, so they had no part in this lot. (4) **two tribes**, this is said to explain the number, *nine and a half*, for which settlement in Canaan was to be provided. Omitting Levi, Reuben, and Gad, etc., only eight and a half would be left, but Joseph reckoned as two, Ephraim and Manasseh. **with their suburbs**, i. e. "pasture-ground" within the precincts of the cities, or certain districts round them in which their cattle might graze.

God for all. — The sun does not shine for a few trees and flowers, but for the wide world's joy. The lowly pine on the mountain top waves its sombre boughs, and cries, "Thou art my sun;" and the little meadow-violet lifts its cup of blue, and whispers with its perfumed breath, "Thou art my sun;" and the grain in a thousand fields rustles in the wind, and makes answer, "Thou art my sun." So God sits effulgent in heaven, not for a favored few, but for the universe of life; and there is no creature so poor or so low that he may not look up with childlike confidence, and say, "My Father, Thou art mine." — *Beecher.*

inheritance to be decided by lot

^a Ex. vi. 23-25; xxviii. 1; Nu. iii. 32; xx. 28; xxvi. 1; xxvii. 18-23.

^b Perhaps two urns were employed, one containing a description of the several districts, the other the names of the tribes, and portion of each tribe would then be determined by a simultaneous drawing from the two urns. — *Spk. Com.*

B. C. 1444.

Caleb claims his inheritance

a Jos. iv. 19, 20.
 b 1Sa vii. 16; x. 8; xi. 14, 15, etc.
 c Nu. xiii. 8; xiv. 24, 30; xxvi. 65.
 d "The spot on wh. Caleb set his heart was the fertile valley of Hebron. . . there was the cave of Machpelah. . . it was a winding valley, whose terraces were covered with the rich verdure and golden clusters of the Syrian vine, so rarely seen in Egypt, so beautiful a vesture of the bare hills of Palestine." — Stanley.

e Jos. xi. 17.

f The Anakim had been expelled by Jos., but had only withdrawn to Philistia. Thence they had, as must be inferred from the text here, returned and reoccupied Hebron." — *Spk. Com.*

"I have been twenty years in the ministry of the gospel, and I do not believe I could enumerate three persons over fifty years of age whom I have heard ask the solemn question, 'What shall I do to be saved?'" — *Bedell.*

Hebron is given to him

"One's age should be tranquil as one's childhood should be playful; hard work, at either extremity of human existence seems to me out of place; the morning and the evening should be alike

6-9. (6) in Gilgal,^a still settlement of the camp, and for some time the sanctuary.^b Caleb.^c thing that the Lord said, Nu. xiv. 24; De. i. 36. Kadesh-barnea, Nu. xiii. 26. Next to Sinai, the most important resting place of the children of Israel. (7) espy out the land, Nu. xiii. 6, 17-33. (8) brethren, all his fellow-spies except Joshua. melt, by a discouraging report. (9) Moses sware, the oath of the great Lawgiver is not mentioned either in Num. xiv. 23, or Deut. i. 35. Caleb probably quotes an express declaration of Moses, not recorded in the Pentateuch, but familiar to Joshua, in whose hearing it may have been first related by Moses. the land, etc.,^d prob. the bunch of grapes brought back was fr. this district. wholly followed, kept faith, and energetically urged obed. to God.

The spirit of Caleb. — 1. An honest spirit, forming a true estimate of its own virtues and capacities. 2. A brave spirit, gathering from the memory of the past an incentive to new endeavor. 3. A devout spirit, leaning on God for the fulfilment of His own promise. — *J. Waite.*

Religion in old age. — "I am on the bright side of seventy," said an aged man of God; "the bright side, because nearer to everlasting glory." "Nature fails," said another, "but I am happy." "My work is done," said the Countess of Huntingdon, when eighty-four years old: "I have nothing to do but to go to my Father." To a humble Christian it was remarked, "I fear you are near another world." "Fear it, sir!" he replied, "I know I am; but, blessed be the Lord! I do not fear it: I hope it."

10-12. (10) forty and five years, the promise was made in autumn of second year after the Exodus. This calculation makes Joshua seven years subduing Canaan.^e (11) as strong, God had fulfilled His promise, and not only prolonged his life forty-five years, but had preserved his strength in such full vigor, that, now in his eighty-fifth year, he felt as strong and as well able to engage in war, as when he was forty years old. (12) this mountain, the hill district round Hebron, where the spies had seen the Anakim. Caleb had not been frightened out of faith by the sight, so he asked to be one to subdue them, Nu. xiii. 28-33.^f

Caleb's reflection on the goodness and faithfulness of God to him. — Consider, as suggested by the text, that — I. It is God that keepeth us alive. We are apt to forget and neglect the due improvement of this fact. II. The aged have peculiar reason to make this acknowledgment. Like Caleb, they have been wandering in a wilderness, they have seen all their early companions die. III. It is a great satisfaction to aged saints to reflect on their obedience to God, and the accomplishment of His promises to them. IV. The experience which aged saints have had of God's goodness and faithfulness is a strong encouragement to them to hope and trust in Him. — *Job Orton.*

Growing old. — A person being in company with some of his gay acquaintance, one of them observed to him that his hair began to be sprinkled with gray. "I wish you had not made that remark," replied he, "as it puts me in mind of my growing old; a subject of which I cannot bear to think. I had rather be the most miserable hack horse in this world than be an angel in heaven." How dreadful must have been the testimony of this man's conscience! Alas, why should he not have sought that pardon which gives peace of conscience, and enables the Christian to desire to depart, that he may be with Christ!

13-15. (13) blessed him, the Hebrew leader cheerfully granted the request of his old companion in the work of espial, and emphatically prayed for a successful issue to all his efforts against his gigantic foes. (14) unto this day, time when history of Jos. was completed. (15) Kirjath-arba, reason to think Caleb only restored orig. name, the one familiar to the patriarchs. Ge. xxiii. 2. had rest, this formula is repeated here to furnish a point of transition to the history of the peaceful distribution of the country.

A heroic choice. — There is nothing we admire more in military annals than a soldier volunteering for the most hazardous and difficult of posts. In the spiritual warfare, too, we do not want instances of the same spirit. We think of Livingstone begging the directors of the London Missionary Society, wherever they sent him, to be sure that it was "Forward;" turning aside from all previous mission stations, and the comparative ease they afforded, to grapple with the barbarian where he had never begun to be tamed; his eyes thirsting for unknown scenes and untried dangers, because he scorned to

build on the foundation of others, and thirsted for "fresh woods and pastures new." We think of him persevering in his task from year to year in the same lofty spirit; disregarding the misery of protracted pain, the intense longings of his weary heart for home, the repulsive society of savages and cannibals, the vexations, disappointments, and obstacles that seemed to multiply every day, the treachery of so-called friends whom he had helped to raise, the indifference of a careless world, and of a languid church; but ever girding himself with fresh energy for the task which he had undertaken. — *Blakie*.

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

1-6. (1) **the lot**, a description of the boundaries of the lot. **Edom, Nu. xxxiv. 3.** The south border of Judah was identical with that of the whole of the promised land. **Zin**, not to be confounded with the wilderness of Sin, near Sinai, Ex. xvi. 1. (2) **bay, etc.**, tongue, the southern shallow end of Dead Sea. (3) **Comp. Nu. xxxiv. 3, 4. fetched a compass, R. V.**, "turned about." **Karkaa**, not otherwise mentioned. (4) **river of Egypt, Wady-el-Arish.** (5) **end of Jordan**, where it falls into Dead Sea. **bay of the sea**, northern end. (6) **Beth-hogla**, poss. threshing floor of Atad, Ge. i. 10, 11. **Beth-arabah**, comp. v. 61, xviii. 23. Between Beth-hogla and the highland on the west of the Jordan valley. It is mentioned below (xv. 61) as one of the six cities of Judah in the sunken valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. **stone of Bohan**, comp. xviii. 17. It must have lain somewhere to the west or southwest of Beth-arabah.

The mountain region of Palestine.—The mountainous parts of the Holy Land are so far from being inhospitable, unfruitful, or the refuse of the land of Canaan, that in the division of this country the mountain of Hebron was granted to Caleb as a particular favor: "Now, therefore, give me this mountain of which the Lord spake in that day." In the time of Asa, the "hill country of Judah" mustered five hundred and eighty thousand men of valor; an argument beyond dispute that the land was able to maintain them. Even in the present times, though cultivation and improvement are exceedingly neglected, while the plains and valleys, although as fruitful as ever, lie almost entirely desolate, every little hill is crowded with inhabitants. If this part of the Holy Land was composed, as some object, only of naked rocks and precipices, why is it better peopled than the plains of Esdraelon, Rama, Acre, or Zabulon, which are all of them extremely fertile and delightful? It cannot be urged that the inhabitants live with more safety on the hills and mountains than on the plains, as there are neither walls nor fortifications to secure their villages and encampments; and except in the range of Lebanon, and some other mountains, few or no places of difficult access; so that both of them are equally exposed to the insults of an enemy. But the reason is obvious; they find among these mountainous rocks and precipices, sufficient convenience for themselves, and much greater for their cattle. Here they have bread to the full, while their flocks and herds browse upon richer herbage, and both man and beast quench their thirst from springs of excellent water, which is but too much wanted, especially in the summer season, through all the plains of Syria. — *Paxton*.

7-12. (7) **Debir**, not the royal Canaanitish city conquered (Josh. x. 29, 38), but somewhere behind Jericho. **Achor**, vii. 26. **Gilgal**, not the place where the Israelites first encamped. It is called Geliloth, ch. xviii. 17. **going up to Adummim, R. V.**, "over against the ascent of Adummim,"^a **river, Wady-Kelt.** **En-shemesh**, spring 2 miles fr. Jerus. **En-rogel**, in bed of Kidron, just below junction of valleys Hinnom and Jehoshaphat. (8) **Hinnom**, ravine by Jerus., scene of idol. sacrifices.^b **the same is Jerusalem**, as Bethel was in earlier times called "Luz," and Bethlehem "Ephrath," so Jerusalem was called Jebus. **Judg xix. 11. 1 Chron. xi. 4.** (9) **Nephtoh**, mod. *Ain Lifta*, 2½ miles N. W. fr. Jerus. **Kirjath**, ix. 17. (10) **Seir**, not the range of Edom. **Beth-shemesh**, 1 Sa. vi. 9. **Timnah**, not same as in vs. 57, or xix. 50; xxiv. 39. (11) **Ekron**, xiii. 3. **Jabneel**, 3 miles from coast, and 12 S. of Joppa.

The vine in the land of Judah.—Many parts of Judah were adapted for the growth of corn; witness Bethlehem. "the house of bread." But the cultivation of the vine was pre-eminent the feature of the tribe. "Here more than

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cool and peaceful; at midday the sun may burn, and men may labor under it." — *Dr. Arnold*.

inheritance of Judah

vs. 1. The lot came forth, up, or out (Jos. xix. 1, 10, 17) of the bosom, lap (Pr. xvi. 33), pot, or some other vessel in use for that purpose; for the manner of this lottery is not expressed; but that it was solemnly done with fasting and prayer premised is probable (Jud. xx. 26; Ac. i. 24); and that it was ordered by a Divine Providence is certain, and hence it was that Judah's lot came first, and fell out in the best part of the land, to show that God had a purpose to exalt that tribe above the rest." — *Trapp*.

"What are the aims which are at the same time duties? They are the perfecting of ourselves, the happiness of others." — *Kant*.

^a From St. Jerome we learn that a partic. part of this road was called the red or bloody way, so much blood had there been shed." — *Trench*.

^b 2 Chr. xxviii. 3; xxxiii. 6.

"The labor of the body relieves us from the fatigues

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of the mind, and this it is which forms the happiness of the poor." — *Roche foucauld.*

Caleb's portion and conquest

vs. 14. Caleb drove, "Nos quoque militemus. Heaven is not to be had sine sanguine et sudore, without pains, patience, violence." — *Trapp.*

Caleb makes provision for his daughter

a. Ju. i. 13.

"All brave men love; for he only is brave who has affections to fight for, whether in the daily battle of life or in physical contests." — *Hawthorne.*

"Wisdom without innocency is knavery; innocency without wisdom is foolery; be therefore as wise as serpents and innocent as doves. The subtlety of the serpent instructs the innocency of the dove; the innocency of the dove corrects the subtlety of the serpent. What God hath joined together let not man separate." — *Quarles.*

"Some men so dislike the dust kicked up by the generation they belong to, that, being unable to pass, they lag behind it." — *Eare.*

elsewhere in Palestine are to be seen on the sides of the hills the vineyards, marked by their watch-towers and walls, seated on their ancient terraces, the earliest and latest symbol of Judah. The elevation of the hills and tablelands of Judah is the true climate of the vine. He 'bound his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.' It was from the Judæan valley of Eshcol, 'the torrent of the cluster,' that the spies cut down the gigantic cluster of grapes. 'A vineyard on a "hill of olives"' with the 'fence,' and 'the stones gathered out,' and the tower in 'the midst of it,' is the natural figure which both in the prophetic and evangelical records represents the kingdom of Judah." — *Blakie.*

13-15. (13) And unto Caleb, this section, from vs. 13-19, is repeated with slight alterations almost *verbatim* in Judg. i. 10-20. The two sections are probably derived from a common source. *Arba*, see name of Hebron, "Kirjath-arba." (14) *Sheshai*, etc., prob. names of 3 families of Anakim, not merely of individuals. (15) *Kirjath-sepher*, comp. vs. 49, *book-city*, apparently a seat of learning.

Youth in age.—Be you young until you die, so far as energy, persistence, ambition, and augmentation of resources are concerned. There are some things that curl over easily in the autumn. Their leaves become sere and yellow, and fall to the ground before there are any signs of frost in the air. I do not like such vegetables; I do not have them in my garden. Others carry their green leaves clean down into freezing before they give up. These I like. And I like to see men that can look at God's frosts and not be blighted, but remain green and succulent and growing, even into the edges of winter. — *Beecher.*

16-19. (16) The city was doubtless strongly situated and defended. (17) brother,^a said of Othniel, son of Kenaz, = Kennizzite, so *Achsah* was his niece. (18) *came unto him*, *i. e.* as she proceeded to the home of Othniel at Debir to become his wife. "When the parties live in different villages, the bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, all well mounted and armed, and escorted with music, repair to the house of the bride, and escort her to her new home." See the picture of such a procession in Van Lennep's *Bible Lands and Customs*, p. 550. a field, some well known field, bec. of its abundant springs. *lighted off*, word used indic. suddenness and excitement. She herself would ask what she could not persuade her husband to. (19) south land, so likely to be dry. upper . . . nether, that is, a sloping district with springs on the higher and lower levels.

Achsah's dowry (vs. 19).—From this story we may learn — I. That a moderate desire for the comforts and conveniences of this life is no breach of the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet." II. That mutual consultation and joint agreement between husbands and wives is the surest omen of success. III. That parents should never think that lost which is bestowed upon their children for their advantage. — *Henry.*

The request of Achsah.—After surveying the exterior of the mosque (of Hebron), we rode over the hills south of Hebron to visit the probable scene of the romantic transaction between Caleb and his daughter Achsah. A wide valley, unusually green, amidst the barren hills of the "south country" suddenly breaks down into an almost precipitous and still greener ravine. On the south side of this ravine is a village called Dura, possibly the Adoraim, of the Book of Chronicles (2 Chron. xi. 9); on the north, at the summit of a steeper and more rugged ascent, is Dewir Dan, which recalls the name of Debir, the fortress which Othniel stormed on the condition of winning Achsah for his bride. "Give me," she said to her father, as she rode on her ass beside him, "a field" — "a blessing," a rich field, such as that which lies spread in the green basin which she and Caleb would first encounter in their ride from Hebron. "For thou hast given me a south land" — these dry, rocky hills which extend as far as the eye can reach, till they melt into the hazy platform of the desert. "Give me also the 'bubbings' (*gulloth*) of water, the upper and the lower bubbings." It is an expressive word, which seems to be used for "tumbling, falling, waves," and is thus especially applicable to the rare sight of the clear rivulet that rising in green meadow above mentioned (Ain Nunkar), falls and flows continuously down to the bottom of the ravine, and by its upper and nether streams gives verdure to the

whole. The identification is not, perhaps, absolutely certain, but the scene lends itself to the incident in every particular. — *Stanley*.

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20-29. The catalogue of cities is divided, according to natural features of the district, into those in the south (Negeb); those in the lowland; those in the highlands; and those in the wilderness. (20) **inheritance**, "The wells of Beersheba were enough for the Patriarchs, the Amalekites, and the Kenites, but they were not enough for the daughter of Judah and the house of the mighty Caleb." (21) Enumeration begins with E. of Negeb; places omitted in these notes are not identified. **Kabzeel**, birthplace of Benaiah.^a (22) **Dimonah**, = *Dibon*, Ne. xi. 25. (23) **Kedesh**, Nu. xxxiv. 4. **Hazor**, prob. should be Hazor-Ithnan. (24) **Ziph**, comp. vs. 55. **Bealoth**, = Bealoth-beer, on the road toward Hebron. (25) **Hazor, Hadattah**, or New Hazor. **Kerioth-Hezron**, to be joined; word *Kerioth* indic. military occupation.^b (26) **Moladah**, Ne. xi. 25, 26, mod. Malatha. (27) **Hazor-shual**, village of jackals, xix. 3. **Beer-sheba**, Ge. xxi. 28-32. Visited by Abraham who dug the well (Gen. xxi. 31); the place where Samuel's sons judged Israel (1 Sam. viii. 2); constituting, with Dan in the north, the established formula for the whole of the promised land—"Dan to Beersheba." (29) **Baalath**, xix. 3, mod. *Deir-el-Belah*, near Gaza.

the cities of Judah

a 2Sa. xxiii. 20.

b Home of Judas, Mat. x. 4.

c 1 Chr. iv. 28; Ne. xl. 27.

"I bless God for cities. Cities have been as lamps of life along the pathway of humanity and religion. Within them science has given birth to her noblest discoveries. Behind their walls freedom has fought her noblest battles. They have stood on the surface of the earth like great breakwaters, rolling back or turning aside the swelling tide of oppression. Cities, indeed, have been the cradles of human liberty. They have been the active centres of almost all Church and State reformation."—*Guthrie*.

City life. — I dread nothing more than to hear young men saying, "I am going to the city." If they ask me, as they often do when I am traveling about the country, what chances there are for a lawyer in the city, I say, "Just the chance that a fly has on a spider's web; go down and be eaten up!" If they ask me what chances there are for a mechanic in the city, I say, "Good! good! there death carries on a wholesale and retail business! The mechanic art flourishes finely! Coffin-making is admirable! Men are dying ten times as fast as anywhere else!" If a man's bones are made of flint; if his muscles are made of leather; if he can work sixteen or eighteen hours a day and not wink, and then sleep scarcely winking; if, in other words, he is built for mere toughness, then he can go into the city, and go through the ordeal which business men and professional men are obliged to go through who succeed. The conditions of city life may be made healthy, so far as the physical constitution is concerned; but there is connected with the business of the city so much competition, so much rivalry, so much necessity for industry, that I think it is a perpetual, chronic, wholesale violation of natural law. There are ten men that can succeed in the country, where there is one that can succeed in the city. — *Beecher*.

30-40. (30) **Eltolad**,^d xix. 4. **Chesil**, name of stars we call Orion, so prob. seat of idolatrous worship; site 15 m. S. W. of Beersheba. **Hormah**, Nu. xiv. 45. (31) **Ziklag**, 1 Sa. xxvii. 6. = "Wilderness of destruction." (32) **Ain Rimmon**, one name, Ne. xi. 29, 10 m. N. of Beersheba. (33) **valley**, lowlands, bounded S. by *Negeb*, N. by plain of *Sharon*, W. by *Medit.*, E. by highland district. **Eshtaol**, Ju. xiii. 25; **Zoreah**, Ju. xiii. 2. The native place of Samson. (34) **Enam**, Ge. xxxviii. 14. (35) **Jarmuth**, x. 3. **Adullam**, xii. 15. **Socoh**, 1 Sa. xvii. 1. **Azekah**, x. 10. The beautiful vale, "the valley of Elah," between Azekah, and Socoh, was celebrated for the combat between David and Goliath. (36) **Sharaim**, 1 Sa. xvii. 52. **Gederah**, xii. 13. (38) **Mizpeh**, xi. 3. (39) **Lachish, etc.**, x. 3.

d 1 Chr. iv. 29.

e "Sozomen appears to be speaking of this place when he mentions a Bethel in the territory of Gaza, populous, and famous for an ancient and splendid temple." — *Splk. Com.*

Cities. — A city is in one respect like a high mountain; the latter is an epitome of the physical globe; but its sides are belted by products of every zone, from the tropical luxuriance that clusters around its base to its arctic summit far up in the sky. So is the city an epitome of the social world. All the belts of civilization intersect along its avenues. It contains the products of every moral zone. It is cosmopolitan not only in a national but a spiritual sense. — *Chapin*.

"Our large trading cities bear to me very nearly the aspect of monastic establishments, in which the roar of the mill-wheel and the crane take the place of other devotional music, and in which the worship of mammon and Moloch is conducted with a tender reverence and an exact propriety; the merchant rising to his

41-47. (41) **Makkedah**, x. 10. A royal city of the Canaanites. (42) **Libnah**, x. 29. **Ether** and **Ashan**, xix. 7. (44) **Keilah**, 1 Sa. xxiii. 1, 5, 12. *Keilah*, to the north of *Nezib*, the modern *Kila*; this was the town (a) which David rescued from the attack of the Philistines (1 Sam. xxiii. 7); (b) which became the repository of the sacred ephod after the massacre of the priests at Nob (1 Sam. xxiii. 6); (c) which David left, warned of the intention of the inhabitants to deliver him to Saul (1 Sam. xxiii. 13). — *Camb. Bib.* — **Achizib**, Ge. xxxviii. 5. **Maresha**, 2 Chr. xiv. 9-13. (45) **Ekron**, xiii. 3.

Social and moral influence of cities. — If the history of cities and of their

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mammon matins with the self-denial of an anchorite, and ex-piating the frivolities into which he may be beguiled in the course of the day by late attendance at mammon vespers."—*Ruskin*.

a Is. xxi. 11.

"There is such a difference between the pursuits of men in great cities, that one part of the inhabitants lives to little other purpose than to wonder at the rest. Some have hopes and fears, and wishes and aversions, which never enter into the thoughts of others; and inquiry is laboriously exerted to gain that which those who possess it are ready to throw away."—*Johnson*.

the Jebusites

"General Providence is the general provision made in the properties and laws of both matter and mind for the accomplishment of His designs. It regards both matter and mind; not only as real existences, but as possessing inherent properties and laws, which, however, are not self-existent and self-sufficient, but require the upholding or sustaining power of God."—*Finney*.

influence on their respective territories be deducted from the history of humanity, the narrative remaining would be, as we suspect, of no very attractive description. In such case, the kind of picture which human society must everywhere have presented would be such as we see in the condition, from the earliest time, of the wandering hordes of Mongolians and Tartars, spread over the vast flats of Central Asia. In those regions scarcely anything has been "made" by man. But this most happy circumstance, as it seems to be accounted, this total absence of anything reminding you of human skill and industry, has never been found to realize our poetic ideas of pastoral beauty and innocence. It has called forth enough of the squalid and of the ferocious, but little of the refined, the powerful or the generous. If anything be certain, it would seem to be certain that man is constituted to realize his destiny from his association with man, more than from any contact with places. The great agency in calling forth his capabilities, whether for good or for evil, is that of his fellows. The picturesque, accordingly, may be with the country, but the intellectual speaking generally, must be with the town.—*R. Vaughan*.

48-57. (48) **mountains**, highland district bet. *Negeb* and *Jerusalem*, having the wilderness on the E. **Jattir**, xxi. 14. Probably the modern "*Attir*," 10 miles south of Hebron. (49) **Kirjath-sannah**, x. 38. (50) **Anab**, xi. 21. A town of the Anakim. **Eshtemo**, xxi. 14. (52) **Dumah**,^a now *Daumeh* near Hebron. (54) **Kirjath-arba**, xiv. 15. (55) **Maon**, 1 Sa. xxiii. 24. **Carmel**, as 1 Sa. xxv. 2; 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. (56) **Jezreel**, not the famous town of Ahab, but as 1 Sa. xxv. 43. (57) **Gibeah**, name often repeated.

The city in the early morning.—

The city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning
Never did sun more beautifully steep,
In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill.
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep;
The river glideth at its own sweet will.
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep,
And all that mighty heart is lying still.—*Wordsworth*.

58-63. (58) **Beth-zur**, 2 Chr. xi. 7; Ne. iii. 16. One of the strongest fortresses at one time in all Judæa. **Gedor**, now *Jedur*, bet. *Jerus.* and *Gaza*. (60) **Kirjath-baal**, ix. 17. = *Kirjath-jearim*. (61) **wilderness**, extending from N. boundary of Judah along the shore of Dead Sea, to the *Negeb*, and bounded on W. by the highland district. **Beth-arabah**, vs. 6. (62) **En-gedi**, 1 Sa. xxiv. 29. (63) **Jebusites**, they were a strong mountain-tribe, and as long as the "Upper City" remained in their hands they practically had possession of the whole. The children of Judah, as also the children of Benjamin, took and burnt the "Lower City," but relinquished the attempt to capture the "Upper City." (See *Judg.* i. 8, 21).

The Jebusites.—They were descended from Canaan the youngest son of Ham (*Ge.* x. 16), and are named last in the various catalogues, possibly because they were but a small clan, or occupied a circumscribed territory (*Ge.* xv. 21; *Ex.* iii. 8, 17). Their chief abodes were *Jerusalem* and the surrounding district, together with the mountain-country afterwards belonging to Judah; where they were near neighbors to the Amorites and the Hittites. Although defeated, and their king slain (*Jos.* x. 1, 5, 26) and their city subsequently burnt by the tribe of Judah (*Jud.* i. 8) it was not entirely destroyed; for we are told that the Benjamites to whom it was assigned (*Jos.* xviii. 28) could not clear it of its Jebusite occupants (*Jud.* i. 21, comp. with vs. 63 above), and it appears to have afterwards had an exclusively Jebusite population (*Jud.* xix. 10-12). Indeed it was not till the reign of David that these were altogether conquered and dispossessed of the stronghold of Zion (2 *Sam.* v. 6-8; 1 *Ch.* xi. 4-6), and even still some of them remained (2 *Sam.* xxiv. 16, 18; 1 *Ch.* xxi. 15, 18, 26). Solomon made the remnant tributary (1 *K.* ix. 20), and some seem to have been recognisable after the captivity (*Ezra* ix. 1).—*Ayre*.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1-4. (1) **Joseph**,^a includ. both *Ephraim* and *half Manasseh*. **water of Jericho**, the boundary ran to the "water of Jericho," *i. e.* to the one brook which is found in the neighborhood of Jericho. It rises at the fountain "Ain es Sultan,"^b the waters of which were healed by Elisha and which flows into the Jordan. **throughout mount Beth-el**, right up to. *Beth-el*, vii. 2. (2) **Luz**, it seems impossible to determine exactly whether Bethel and Luz were the same town, Luz being the Canaanite and Bethel the Hel'ew name, or whether they were distinct places close to one another. *Ge.* xxviii. 19. **Archi**, or of the Archite.^c **Ataroth**, mod. *Atara*. (3) **Beth-horon**, x. 10. **Gezer**, x. 33.

Providence rightly places us. — The fish of the sea might say, "How could I display the wisdom of God if I could sing, or mount a tree like a bird;" but a dolphin in a tree would be a very grotesque affair, and there would be no wisdom of God to admire in trouts singing in the groves; but when the fish cuts the wave with agile fin, all who have observed it say how wonderfully it is adapted to its habitat, how exactly its every bone is fitted for its mode of life. Brother, it is just so with you. If you begin to say, "I cannot glorify God where I am, and as I am," I answer, neither could you anywhere if not where you are. Providence, which arranged your surroundings, appointed them so that, all things being considered, you are in the position in which you can best display the wisdom and the grace of God. — *Spurgeon*.

5-10. (5) Note precedence of *Ephraim*.^d And the border, the border given is not traced out with the same completeness as that given above of the tribe of Judah. No mention, it will be observed, is made of the northern boundary line of the tribes descended from Joseph, although the eastern and western boundaries are implied, *viz.* the Jordan and the Mediterranean. **the upper**, it was near the one in *vs.* 3. (6) **on the north side**, northward. (7) **Naarath**, see 1 Chr. vii. 28; five miles from Jericho. (8) **Tappuah**, xii. 17; xvii. 7. **river Kanah**, the brook of reeds, mod. *Nahr-el-Kassah*, wh. flows into *Medit.* between Joppa and Cesarea. (9) **separate**, *R. V.*, "together with the cities which were separated for the children of Ephraim in the midst of the inheritance." (10) **drave not out**, neglecting the Divine command.^e

Influence of companions. — It is said to be a property of the tree-frog that it acquires the color of whatever it adheres to for a short time. Thus, when found on growing corn, it is commonly of a dark green; if found on a white oak, it has the color peculiar to the tree. Just so it is with men: they generally resemble those with whom they associate. — *Bibl. Treas.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-6. (1) **Machir**, *Ge.* 1. 23. The eldest son of the patriarch *Manasseh*, **man of war**, Nu. xxxii. 32, 33. (2) **Abiezer**, Nu. xxvi. 30. (3) **Zelophehad**, Nu. xxvi. 33. (4) **commanded Moses**, Nu. xxvii. 4, 8-11. (5) **ten portions** male posterity branched into five families, the sixth son divided into five daughters, who took a portion each. (6) **land of Gilead**, across the Jordan.

Reliance on Providence. — To make our reliance upon Providence both pious and rational, we should, in every great enterprise we take in hand, prepare all things with that care, diligence and activity, as if there were no such thing as Providence for us to depend upon; and again when we have done all this, we should as wholly and humbly rely upon it as if we had made no preparations at all. — *South*.

7-13. (7) **Asher**, not the tribe so called, but a place somewhere towards the eastern end of the boundary line. **En-tappuah**, xvi. 8. (8) **Tappuah** was one of the single cities referred to, xvi. 8. (9) **Kanah**, xvi. 8 **these cities**, names have been in some way omitted, or lost. The single cities of Ephraim were on the south side of the river; the territory on the N. side was wholly given to *Manasseh*. (10) **met together**, or "struck upon" *Asher* in the north and on *Issachar* in the east. Thus the two tribes were bounded on the *east* by *Issachar*; on the *north* by *Asher*; on the *west* by the

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inheritance
of Joseph

a "The inheritance of the two tribes includes a fruitful and pleasant country." — *Lange*.

b 2 Ki. ii. 19.

c 2 Sa. xv. 32.

God's providences often resemble pieces of tapestry before they are put together; here is a head, there is a limb, yonder is a hand or a foot, or something else. When the whole is complete it is a perfect specimen of beauty.

inheritance
of Ephraimd *Ge.* xlviii. 20.e *De.* xx. 16.

"As a little poison infecteth a great deal of meat and drink, as a few sick of the plague may infect a whole house or town, even so the company of the wicked infecteth the godly." — *Cawdray*.

inheritance
of Manassehdaughters
of Zelophehad

"If we could thoroughly understand anything, that would be enough to prove it undivine. The greatest thing man is capable of is trust in God." — *Geo. Macdonald*.

coast of
Manasseh

God's special superintending providence puts an end to the idea of chance or mere accident. "Known unto God are all

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His works from the beginning of the world."

a "The northern border is only indicated in general terms, perhaps because the Israelites were not yet completely masters of this part of the country, so had not precisely determined it."—*Spk Com.*

the children of Joseph claim more than their portion

b For spirit of this tribe of Joseph see Ju. viii. 1; xii. 1; 2 Sa xix. 41; 2 Chr. xxviii. 9.

"The whole course and series of Divine providence towards the saints is like a music book, in every leaf whereof there is a song ready pricked for them to learn and sing to the praise of their God; no passage of their life of which they can say, 'In this I received no mercy for which I should bless God.'"—*Gurnall*.

"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter, is the unvaried language of God in His providence. He will have credit at every step. He will not assign reasons, because He will exercise faith"—*Cecil*.

tabernacle set up in Shiloh

rest of land described and divided

c "It was twenty or twenty-five miles N. of Jerus., twelve miles N. of Bethel, ten S. of Shechem, and embosomed in a rugged and romantic glen."—*Jamieson*.

d 1 Sa. iv. 1-11; see also De. xii. 5.

sea; and on the south by Benjamin and Dan.^a (11) Beth-shean, 1 Sa. xxxi. 10. See a picture of it in Thomson's "Land and the Book," p. 454. Ibleam, Ju. i. 27. Dor, xi. 2. Taanach . . Megiddo, xii. 21. (12) could not, indic. failing faith. (13) tribute, such subjection involved future perils.

Enemies left undisturbed.—I had moved into a new house; and, in looking over it I noticed a very clean-looking cask, headed up at both ends. I debated within myself whether I should have it taken out of the cellar, and opened, but concluded to leave it undisturbed, as it would be quite a piece of work to get it upstairs. For two or three years the innocent looking cask stood quietly in my cellar; then most unaccountably moths began to fill the house. They increased rapidly and threatened to ruin everything I had. I suspected the carpets, and had them cleaned. I suspected my furniture, and had it newly upholstered. At last the thought of the cask flashed upon me. It was brought up, its head was knocked in, and thousands of moths poured out. Now, I believe that in the same way, some innocent looking habit or indulgence, lies at the root of most of the failure in this higher life.—*Secret of a Happy Life*.

14-18. (14) children of Joseph, the descendants of Joseph, i. e. the patriarchs of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. They expected two full lots. (15) If . . great, there is kind of delicate irony in Joshua's reply. "Yes, it is true that thou art a numerous people, and hast great strength, and oughtest to have more than one share. But if thou wouldst have it, procure it for thyself! Rely on thine own power and resources!"^a wood country, they might clear it for occupation: prob. the range between Gilboa and Carmel. Perizzites, Ge. xiii. 7. giants, Ge. xiv. 5. (16) chariots of iron, like those of Egypt, Ex. xiv. 7. (17) not have one lot, bec. by driving out the Canaanites they might double it. (18) The limit of their lot is made to depend on their own prowess.

Greed and grumbling.—I. A little heart sometimes spoils great powers. II. True kindness often declines to do for men what they can do for themselves. III. Greatness should dwell upon its duties rather than upon its claims.—*R. Glover*.

Chariots of iron.—The warriors of primitive times were carried to the field in chariots, drawn for the most part by two horses. The custom of riding and fighting upon horses was not introduced into Greece and the regions of Asia bordering on the Hellespont till some time after the Trojan war; for Homer, whose authority in such cases is indisputable, always conducts his heroes to battle in chariots, never on horseback. In what age the chariot was first used in battle cannot now be ascertained; but by the help of the sacred volume, we can trace the practice to a very remote antiquity, for the aboriginal inhabitants of Canaan appear, from the number of armed chariots which they possessed, when Joshua invaded their country, to have been trained to that mode of warfare long before. "And the children of Joseph said, the hill is not enough for us; and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, both they who are of Beth-shean and her towns, and they who are of the valley of Jezreel." This by no means intimates that the chariots were made of iron, but only that they were armed with it. They had a kind of scythe, of about two cubits long, fastened to long axle-trees on both wheels; these being swiftly driven through a body of men made great slaughter, mowing them down like grass or corn.—*Paxton*.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1-7. (1) Shiloh, Ju. xxi. 19, mod. *Seilun*; ^a tabernacle remained there some 300 years. "It was a central point for all Israel, equidistant from north and south, easily accessible to the trans-Jordanic tribes, and in the heart of that hill country which Joshua first subdued, and which remained, to the end of Israel's history, the district least exposed to the attacks of Canaanitish or foreign invaders."—*Tristram's Land of Israel*. (2) remained, after arrangement for two and one-half tribes E. of Jordan, and for other two and one-half as ch. xv.-xvii. (3) slack, partial possession was followed by indifference, partly due to settlement of other tribes in their territories. These seven tribes appear to have been backward and indolent not only in conquering the land

still unsubdued, but even in sharing it out amongst them. (4) **each tribe**, of the seven mentioned. **describe it**, numbering the cities and general features so that it might be fairly allotted. (5) **in their coast**, within their territories. (6) **describe . . parts**, they were to suggest the tribal divisions. (7) **no part**, xiii. 14.

Sloth and lukewarmness reprov'd (vs. 3). — I. The force of the reproof as applied to the Israelites. They were reprov'd for — 1. Indolence; 2. Undue satisfaction they took in their present comforts; 3. The light thoughts which they entertained of their promised inheritance. II. The justice of it as applied to ourselves. Consider how slack we are in — 1. Reading the Scriptures; 2. Prayer; 3. The mortification of sin; 4. Pressing forward for the prize of our high calling. III. The considerations which are proper to stir us up to diligence. — *Simeon*.

The true value of possession. — One's own — what a charm there is in the words! how long it takes boy and man to find out their worth! how fast most of us hold on to them! faster and more jealously the nearer we are to the general home, into which we can take nothing, but must go naked as we came into the world. When shall we learn that he who multiplieth possessions multiplieth troubles, and that the one single use of things which we call our own, is that they may be his who hath need of them. — *Hughes*.

8—10. (8) **charged them**, gave instructions. (9) **in a book**,^a making an exact inventory. (10) **Joshua cast lots**, after their return the Hebrew leader proceeded to a formal apportionment of the land by the sacred lot. This mode of assignment, it has been remarked, "places the conquest of Palestine, even in that remote and barbarous age, in a favorable contrast with the arbitrary caprice, by which the lands of England were granted away to the Norman chiefs." — *Stanley's Lectures*. **before the Lord**, prob. at door of tabernacle.

Providence towards the church. — It is not the nations, but the church, that God has cherished as the apple of His eye. The three great nationalities, Jewish, Greek, and Roman, that stood together over the cradle of our religion, perished not till they had ceased to be of service to Christ. Charlemagne, Charles V., Cromwell, and Napoleon were all soldiers of the church, whether conscious of it or not, whether willingly or not. Here we find a key of the history of other ages and nations; a thread that will lead us out of every labyrinth of the present and the future. Towards Calvary, for thousands of years, all the lines of history converged. And now for other thousands of years, to the end of time, from Calvary will the lines diverge, "till the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and He shall reign for ever and ever." — *Hitchcock*.

11—15. (11) **between, etc.**,^b De. xxxiii. 12. Their boundaries lay between the sons of Judah on the south and the sons of Joseph on the north. (12) **Comp. xvi. 1—3**, wh. gives border of Ephraim. **Beth-aven**, vii. 2. (13) **Luz**, Ge. xxviii. 19. **descended**, we understand the appropriateness of this word when we remember that Bethel lay 3,000 feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea. **Ataroth-adar**, as in xvi. 2; not as in xvi. 7. (14) **compassed, etc.**, or *turned on the west side, southwards*, the boundary line of Benj., at the lower Beth-horon, bends southwardly toward *Kirjath-baal*,^c (15) **Nephtoah**, *Ain Lifta*, xv. 9.

The mystery of Providence. — I looked upon the wrong or back side of a piece of arras (or tapestry): it seemed to me as a continued nonsense. There was neither head nor foot therein, confusion itself had as much method in it — a company of thrums and threads, with many pieces and patches of several sorts, sizes, and colors; all which signified nothing to my understanding. But then, looking on the reverse, or right side thereof, all put together did spell excellent proportions, and figures of men and cities; so that, indeed, it was a history not written with a pen but wrought with a needle. If men look upon some of God's providential dealings with a mere eye of reason, they will hardly find any sense therein, such their muddle and disorder. But alas! the wrong side is objected to our eyes, while the right side is presented to the high God of heaven, who knoweth that an admirable order doth result out of this confusion; and what is presented to Him at present may, hereafter, be so showed to us as to convince our judgments in the truth thereof." — *T. Fuller*.

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"The path of all excellence lies in the following of advancing ideas, which rise as we approach them, and which are perpetually calling us from loftier heights." — *S. S. Harris*.

"Westward the course of empire takes its way." — *Bishop Berkeley*.

lots cast for land

a "No light task to undertake. It required learning and intelligence, which they or their instructors, brought with them out of Egypt. Josephus says the survey was performed by men expert in geometry." — *Jamieson*.

inheritance of Benjamin

b "Territory of Benj. was in general mountainous, in part very desert, but in part also as in neighborhood of Jericho and Jerusalem, a well-cultivated, fruitful land." — *Lange*.

c Jos. ix. 17.

"Give me the eye which can see God in all; the hand which can serve Him with all; and the heart which can bless Him for all." — *Secker*.

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"Forbear, fond man; that heaven thou dar'st accuse, just, though mysterious, leads us on unerring through ways unmarked, from guilt to punishment." — *Eurydice*.

cities of Benjamin

God does nothing hastily. He allows time to the sea to ebb and flow, to the moon to wax and wane. Our wisdom is to abide His pleasure. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

"Melancthon, when he used sometimes to be anxious and troubled, would chide away his fears by saying, 'Let Philip cease to rule the world.'"

— *Bowser*.
If God has a gracious end in view, He never wants means to bring it about.

Ramah is now a poor village on a hill six miles north of Jerusalem; it is called *er-Ram*.

inheritance of Simeon

vs. 1. *Within, etc.*, the reason whereof see vs. 9, and Judah yielded, as being *raticionis municipium*. — *Trapp*.

"If virtue promises happiness, prosperity, and peace, then progress in virtue is certainly progress in both of these, for to whatever point the perfection of anything brings us, progress is always an approach towards it." — *Epictetus*.

inheritance of Zebulun

16-20. (16) **Jebusi**, — Jerusalem. **En-rogel**, xv. 7. (17) **Comp**, xv. 5-9. (18) **Arabah**, or the plain. (19) **Beth-hoglah**, xv. 6. (20) **Jordan**, this river is the general boundary on the E.

Wisdom of Providence.—All the events of life are precious to one that has this simple connection with Christ of faith and love. No wind can blow wrong, no event be mistimed, no result disastrous. If God but cares for our inward and eternal life, if by all the experiences of this life He is reducing it and preparing for its disclosure, nothing can befall us but prosperity. Every sorrow shall be but the setting of some luminous jewel of joy. Our very mourning shall be but the enamel around the diamond; our very hardships but the metallic rim that holds the opal, glancing with strange interior fires. — *Beecher*.

21-28. (21) **valley of Keziz**, or *Emek Keziz*; there is a Wady-el-Keziz a little distance E. of Jerusalem. (22) **Zemaraim**, or two wooded hills, mod. **Sumrah**, see Ge. x. 18. (23) **Avim**, poss. same as *Ai*. **Ophrah**, 1 Sa. xiii. 17; not same as in Ju. vi. 11. (24) Sites not known. (25) **Gibeon**, ix. 3. **Ramah**, not the Ramah of Samuel or Ramathaim. It was the place where Jeremiah was set free (Jer. xxx. 15). **Beeroth**, ix. 17. It was in alliance with Gibeon. (26) **Mizpeh**, a name applied to different places; this the one mentioned 1 Sa. vii. 5-16. (28) **Zelah**, 2 Sa. xxi. 14. **Gibeah**, Ju. xix. 14. **Kirjath**, not the town of this name in territory of Judah. **inheritance** . . **Benjamin**, a situation highly favorable. It formed almost a parallelogram, of about 26 miles in length by 13 in breadth.

Ramah.—The oriental geographers speak of Ramah as the metropolis of Palestine; and every appearance of its ruins even now confirms the opinion of its having been once a considerable city. Its situation, as lying immediately in the high road from Jaffa to Jerusalem, made it necessarily a place of great resort; and from the fruitfulness of the country around it, it must have been equally important as a military station or a depot for supplies, and as a magazine for the collection of such articles of commerce as were exported from the coast. The inhabitants are estimated at little more than five thousand persons, of whom about one-third are Christians of the Greek and Catholic communion, and the remaining two-thirds Mohammedans, chiefly Arabs; the men of power and the military being Turks, and no Jews residing there. The principal occupation of the people is husbandry, for which the surrounding country is highly favorable, and the staple commodities produced by them are corn, olives, oil, and cotton, with some soap and coarse cloth made in the town. — *Thomson*.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1-9. (1) **within the inheritance, etc.**, it was taken out of a portion of Judah. Judah discovered that the tract allotted to him was too large and too much exposed to marauders on the west and south even for his great powers. (2-7) **Comp**, xv. 26-32, 42. (2) **and Sheba**, R. V., "or Sheba." (8) **Baalath-beer**, the *Bealoth* of xv. 24. (9) **too much**, prob. in proportion to that wh. could be given to other tribes.

Man and God's Providence.—There is a striking passage in which a great philosopher, the famous Bishop Berkeley, describes the thought which occurred to him of the inscrutable schemes of Providence, as he saw in St. Paul's Cathedral a fly moving on one of the pillars. He says: "It requires some comprehension in the eye of an intelligent spectator to take in at one view the various parts of the building in order to observe their symmetry and design. But to the fly, whose prospect was confined to a little part of one of the stones of a single pillar, the joint beauty of the whole or the distant use of its parts was inconspicuous. To that limited view, the small irregularities on the surface of the hewn stone seemed to be so many deformed rocks and precipices." That fly on the pillar of which the philosopher spoke, is the likeness of each human being as he creeps along the vast pillars which support the universe. — *Dean Stanley*.

10-16. (10) **Sarid**, though important as starting the boundary, this place is not identified. Believed to be in the plain of Esdraelon. (11) **sea**, of Galilee, border of Zebulun nowhere touched the Med. **Jokneam**, xii. 22.

(12) **Chisloth-tabor**, flanks of Tabor, *vs.* 18, (13) **Gittah-hepher**, or *Gath-hepher*, 2 Ki. xiv. 25. From Japhia the border ran still in an easterly direction, "toward the rising of the sun," to Gittah-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, and went out unto Rimmon, which stretches to Neah." (14) "Makes a turn round Neah towards the N." **Jiphtah-el**, *mod.* *Jefat*, *Rom.* Jotapata. (15) **Beth-lehem**, *mod.* village, *Beit-lahin*. Not to be confounded with Beth-lehem-Ephratah in Judah. 12 cities, names are not all given here.

Providence in our life. —

Thou cam'st not to thy place by accident, —
It is the very place God meant for thee;
And shouldst thou there small scope for action see,
Do not for this give room for discontent;
Nor let the time thou owest to God be spent
In idly dreaming how thou mightest be,
In what concerns thy spiritual life, more free
From outward hindrance or impediment.
For presently this hindrance thou shalt find,
That without which all goodness were a task
So slight that virtue never could grow strong;
And wouldst thou do one duty to his mind,
The Imposer's — over-burdened thou shalt ask,
And own thy need of grace to help, ere long. — *Trench.*

17-23. (17) **Issachar**, territory is marked by prev. allotments to Zebulun and Manasseh. (18) **Jezeel**,^a xvii. 16. Observe in this verse that the description of the boundaries of this tribe, though begun, is not continued. Instead, the names of the cities are given, which were included in it. **Shunem**,^b 1 Sa. xxviii. 4. (20) **Kishion**, xxi. 28. (21) **Remeth**, *see* *Jarmuth* of xxi. 29. **En-gannim**, xxi. 29, *mod.* *Jenin*. (22) **Tabor**, *poss.* not the mountain, but a town of this name, 1 Chr. vi. 77. **Beth-shemesh**, not the same as the town mentioned in xv. 10, or xix. 38.

The Christian's inheritance. — Poor Christians, what though you have little in hand, yet you have much in hope; though you have little in possession, yet you have much in reversion. He that hath but little in present possession, yet if he hath a fair estate in reversion, he comforts himself, and solaces his spirit in the thoughts of it, that there will come a day when he shall live like a man, when he shall live bravely and sweetly, and this makes him sing care and sorrow away. Poor Christian, do you do so! You have a fine, a fair estate in reversion, though you have but little in possession; therefore, bear up bravely and live comfortably. — *T. Brookes.*

24-31. (24) **Asher**, whose W. border was *Medit. sea.* (25) **Helkath**, xxi. 31. (26) **Misheal**, xxi. 30. **Carmel**, xii. 22. **Shihor-libnath**, black or muddy river, *prob.* *Nahr Belka*, 8 miles below Dor. (27) **Cabul**, 4 to 5 miles W. of Jotapata; 10 miles S. E. of Acre. (28) **great Zidon**, in Phœnicia. It is to be noted that both the fortified city of Tyre and great Zidon were included in Asher's inheritance, but no effort was made by the Israelites to obtain possession of these Phœnician cities. (29) **Ramah**, 12 miles S. E. of Tyre. **Achzib**, *mod.* *Zib*, 8 or 9 miles N. of Acre. (30) **Aphek**, xiii. 4.

Views of Providence. — Our views of Providence are now partial and superficial. We judge too much by the appearance and present effect of things; but in the future life we shall enjoy a clearer understanding of them, and see more into the reasons and connections of them. We are now something like a person who should pass judgment upon the interior of a watch, when he had never seen one, nor had any perfect instructions in it; then, we shall be like the same person, having the interior exposed to his view and fully explained in all its parts and relations by one who is intimately conversant with the whole. Now we see Providence as men see a magnificent stained glass window of a church from the churchyard, then as one who gazes upon it from the interior of the building. — *J. Bate.*

32-39. (33) **Allon to Zaanannim**, *R. V.* "from the oak in Zaanannim, and Adami-Nekeb." **Jordan**, bet. seas of Gennesaret and Merom, and above Merom. (34) **westward**, from the Jordan on the east, the southern border of Naphtali turned westward to Aznoth-tabor, not identified, but probably a

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vs. 16. *Gittah-hepher*, Jonas the prophet's birth-place (2 K. xiv. 25), and therefore the better thought of by God (*Ps* lxxxvii. 6); the word means *wine press of the well*; it is now called el-Meshhad, a vill. two ms. E. of Sefurieh. *vs.* 14. *Jiphtah-el*, wh. *God opens*. It is *prob.* that in this vall. stood Jotapater, so noted in the war Vespasian.

inheritance of Issachar

^a "Jezeel and its famous and fertile plain, was the choicest part of the territory." — *Spk. Com.*

^b 1 Ki. i. 3; 2 Ki. iv. 8; Song, vi. 13.

inheritance of Asher

"A man on the summit of a lofty mountain commands a wider landscape, and sees things that on the plains below would have been quite invisible. So many things unknown, incomprehensible to us on the plains of earth, will be all visible on the mount of heaven." — *Guthrie.*

inheritance of Naphtali

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"It is good for us to have our well-meant views frequently perplexed and overturned, else we might grow headstrong and fancy ourselves wise enough to be the Lord's privy counsellors; yea, able to out-counsel Him. We had rather sit with Jesus at the council board, than follow Him with a string on our nose, to turn us round, or turn us back, at His pleasure." — *Berri*

inheritance of Dan

"You cannot produce the great man before his time, and you cannot make him die before his time; you cannot displace nor advance him, nor put him back; you cannot continue his existence and replace him, for he existed only because he had his work to do; he existed no longer, because there is no longer anything for him to do; and to continue him is to continue a useless part." — *Cousin*.

"I am not covetous for gold; but if it be a sin to covet honor, I am the most offending soul alive." — *Shakespeare*.

Israel gives Joshua an inheritance

a "Called also Tunnah-heres (Jud. ii. 9); that is, 'the fig of the sun,' because, belike, the sun had been there worshipped; like another He liopolis. Here he built the city; he restored the old ruinous city, repaired and beautified it, that there he might end his his days." — *Trapp*.

border town on the line which separated this tribe from Issachar, and "struck," or coincided with, Zebulun on the south and Asher on the west. The site of *Hukkok* is unknown. **Judah upon Jordan**, the 60 cities, *Havoth Jair*, E. of Jordan, were reckoned to Judah (1 Chr. ii. 23). (35) **fenced**, note the expression and the number of them in this locality. "It was no doubt good policy to protect the northern frontier by a belt of fortresses, as the south was protected by the fenced cities of Judah." — *Spk. Com.* (36) **Hazor**, xi. 1. "The position," says Capt. Wilson, "is one of great strength and overhangs the lake." (38) **Migdal-el**, poss. *Magdala* of Matt. xv. 39.

Seiyed Yehûda. — Who was this Lord Yehûda and what place is this? It marks some very ancient site; and I believe it is that "Judah on Jordan, toward the sun-rising," which Joshua mentions as the extreme N. E. point in the boundary of Naphtali. If this identification be correct, it solves one of the greatest geographical puzzles of the Bible. It always seemed to me impossible that the border of Naphtali could touch that of Judah anywhere, certainly not "upon Jordan toward the sun-rising." But here we have an important ancient site, called Judah, on this most eastern branch of the Jordan, at a point which must have marked the utmost border of the tribe eastward, if we admit that it came up to it, and I see no valid objection against this admission. — *Thompson*.

40-48. (40) **Dan**, situate bet. allotment of Benjamin and Medit. sea, with Judah on S. and Ephraim N. Comp. borders of these tribes, xv. (42) **Shaalabbin**, "the place of foxes;" comp. the story of Samson. Judg. xv. 4. **Shaalbim**, 1 Ki. iv. 9. **Ajalon**, x. 12. (43) **Ekron**, xiii. 3. (44) **Eltekeh**, etc., Levitical cities, as xxi. 23. **Baalath**, as xv. 11. (46) **border before Japho**, the whole district extended to the suburbs opposite to Japho or Joppa. (47) **went out**, or was extended; for the reason see Ju. i. 34, 35. "Squeezed into the narrow strip between the mountains and the sea, its energies were great beyond its numbers." — *Stanley*. **Leshem**, *Laish*, N. of territory of Naphtali, Ju. xviii. 7.

True great men. — The great men of the earth are the shadowy men, who, having lived and died, now live again and forever through their undying thoughts. Thus living, though their footfalls are heard no more, their voices are louder than the thunder, and unceasing as the flow of tides or air. Moses was not half living when he was alive. His real life has been since he died. The prophets seemed almost useless in their time. They did little for themselves or for the church of that day; but when you look at the life they have lived since, you shall find they have been God's pilots, guiding the church through all peril. From their black bosoms they sent forth the blast of His lightning and the roar of His thunder; and to-day, if the church needs rebuke and denunciation, it is they who must hurl it. I could have killed old Jeremiah, if I could have got at his ribs; but I should like to see the archer that could hit him now. Martin Luther was mighty when he lived; but the shadowy Luther is mightier than a regiment of fleshly Lutherans. When he was on earth, he in some sense asked the Pope leave to be, and the emperor and the elector leave to be; he asked the stream and the wheat to give him sustenance for a day; but now that his body is dead — now that that rubbish is out of the way — he asks no leave of Pope, or elector, or emperor, but is the monarch of thought, and the noblest defender of the faith to the end of time. — *Beecher*.

49-51. (49) **to Joshua**, after all the tribes had been provided for, a modest inheritance was assigned to their noble-hearted leader, who with unselfish generosity was contented with far less than many others would have claimed under similar circumstances. (50) **Timnath-serah**, comp. xiv. 6, 9; and Ja. ii. 9; the name means the portion that remains. "Of all sites I have seen," says Lieut. Conder, "none is so striking as that of Joshua's home, surrounded as it is with deep valleys and wild, rugged hills." (15) Comp. Nu. xxxiv. 17.

The inheritance of Joshua (vs. 50). — We have the greatest of all Joshua's conquests described in this verse: "He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city." Many a city — of prodigious strength and renown — had he taken in his time. This little city, which he received as a gift, was more glorious to him than them all. We shall see this, if we consider — 1. His lofty position. In some points he was greater than Moses. And yet look at the time when he received his inheritance. The first in station, he was last

in time! II. His advanced age. Older by twenty years than all save Caleb, and yet content to wait till the last. And then his choice falls on a little city without note. III. His great services to Israel. When William conquered England, he considered the whole land to be his. The whole of Canaan belonged to Joshua by a much better right; yet he appropriated none to himself.

The perseverance of great men.—It is not tools that make the workman, but the trained skill and perseverance of the man himself. Indeed, it is proverbial that the bad workman never yet had a good tool. Some one asked Opie by what wonderful process he mixed his colors. "I mix them with my brains, sir," was his reply. It is the same with every workman who would excel. A pan of water and two thermometers were the tools by which Dr. Black discovered latent heat; and a prism, a lens, and a sheet of pasteboard enabled Newton to unfold the composition of light and the origin of color. An eminent foreign *savant* once called upon Dr. Wollaston, and requested to be shown over his laboratories, in which science had been enriched by so many important discoveries; when the doctor took him into a little study, and, pointing to an old teatray on the table, containing a few watch-glasses, test-papers, a small balance, and a blow pipe, said, "There is all the laboratory I have." A burnt stick and a barn door served Wilkie in lieu of pencil and canvas; and Benjamin West made his first brushes out of the cat's tail. Watt made his first model of the condensing steam engine out of an anatomist's old syringe; whilst Rittenhouse, the astronomer, first calculated eclipses on his plough handle.

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"A man's genius is always, in the beginning of life, as much unknown to himself as to others, and it is only after frequent trials, attended with success, that he dares think himself equal to the undertakings in which those who have succeeded have fixed the admiration of mankind."—*Hume*.

Conscious growth is better than angelic flattery. A little boy said to me once, "I try to be good, and I know I try." So may you always say, "I try to advance, and I know I move."

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1-6. (2) **cities of refuge**, Ex. xxi. 13; Nu. xxxv. 6-28. (3) **unawares**, De. iv. 42. Indicates the tone of Jewish law, thus disting. bet. accidental and wilful homicide. In contradistinction to the customs of the Greeks and Romans and even of the Middle Ages, which made places of sanctuary available to *criminals of every kind*, the Jewish lawgiver reserved them for unintentional acts of murder, and for these alone. **avenger of blood**, the nearest surviving relative. He was called the "Goel" and inherited the property of the deceased. (4) **declare his cause**, make testimony that this deed was done unwittingly. This sufficed to secure admission. (5) **pursue after him**, even to the city, claiming that he should be delivered up to death. (6) **stand . . . judgment**, "before the local court," submitting to a trial in wh. both accusation and defense might be heard. **death of high priest**, Nu. xxxv. 25.

Cities of refuge.—(A Sunday-school address). Explain purpose for wh. appointed; distinction between deliberate and unpremeditated murder; uncivilized nations have idea of blood revenge, nearest relative being the avenger of blood. These cities of Judea were conveniently situated, could be reached in half a day from any part of land. On hills, in full view, with good roads to them, and sign-posts to point the way. Fr. this ill. Christ, the Great Refuge. 1. As sinners we want a refuge; 2. God has Himself provided one for us; 3. God makes the way to His refuge plain; God expects us to flee towards His refuge. Hymn—"Jesus, refuge of my soul."—*Hive*.

7-9. (7) **Kedesh**, Jos. xii. 22. **Shechem**, Ge. xii. 6. **Kirjath-arba**, Ge. xxiii. 2. (8) **assigned**, had previously assigned, De. iv. 43; refer to this passage also for **Bezer**, **Ramoth**, and **Golan**. The cities selected were three on either side of the Jordan, almost equally remote from each other. It requires only to look at the map to see how wisely these spots were marked out, so as to make a "city of refuge" easy of access from all parts of the land.—*Camb. Bib.* (9) **not die, etc.**, the avenger otherwise being at liberty to kill him wherever he might be found.

The sacredness of human life.—God's care for human life, which—1. Is fashioned in the likeness of God; 2. Is capable of vast progress; 3. Has on earth only its beginning; 4. The taking of it involves much suffering. II. God's mercy for him who might slay his fellow unintentionally. III. God's purpose that even the murderer should have a hearing. The delay would—1. Afford the murderer time for repentance; 2. Tend to exercise a salutary influence on the avenger; 3. Beneficial to all the nation. IV. God's command that the wilful murderer should be put to death.—*Marchant*.

cities of refuge

a "We find vengeance for blood, not only among the Hebrews, Arabs, Persians, but also among the Greeks, with the Germanic and Slavic peoples, in the infancy of their development, as now among savage nations."—*Lange*.

"Be assured those will be thy worst enemies, not to whom thou hast done evil, but who have done evil to thee; and those will be thy best friends, not to whom thou hast done good, but who have done good to thee."—*Lavater*.

situation

"Make no enemies; he is insignificant indeed, who can do thee no harm."—*Colton*.

"A Christian should not discover that he has enemies by any other way than by doing more good to them than to others."—*Bp. Wilson*.

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"Everybody has enemies. To have an enemy is quite another thing. One must be somebody in order to have an enemy. One must be a force before he can be resisted by another force."—*Mme. Swetchine.*

"The best sort of revenge is not to be like him who did the injury."—*Antonius.*

cities of the
Levites
—
summary

a Nu. iii. 32; xx. 28; xxvi. 1; xxvii. 18-23; Jos. xiv. 1; xxiv. 33.

b Ju. xxi. 12.

c *Lat suburbium*, fr. sub. and urba, a city.

d Nu. xviii. 1, 2, 7.

e "It appears that the two surviving sons of Aaron, Eleazar and Ithamar, had together twenty-four sons, heads of priestly families."

f Ex. vi. 18; Nu. iii. 19; xxvi. 57.

g "This was a provision, the admirable wisdom and propriety of which was fully manifested on the schism that took place in the reign of Rehoboam."—*Jamieson.*

The Spaniard and the Moor.—A Spanish cavalier having killed a Moorish gentleman at Grenada, in a duel, instantly fled. He was vigorously pursued, but availing himself of a sudden turn of the road, he leaped, unperceived, over a garden wall. The proprietor, who was also a Moor, happened to be walking in the garden, and the Spaniard fell upon his knees before him, acquainted him with his case, and in the most pathetic manner implored concealment. The Moor listened to him with compassion, and generously promised his assistance. He then locked him in a summer house, and left him, with an assurance that when night approached he would provide for his escape. A few hours afterwards, the dead body of his son was brought to him, and the description of the murderer exactly agreed with the appearance of the Spaniard whom he had then in custody. He concealed the horror which he felt; and, retiring to his chamber, remained there till midnight. Then going privately into the garden, he opened the door of the summer house, and thus accosted the cavalier: "Christian! the youth whom you have murdered was my only son. Your crime merits the severest punishment. But I have solemnly pledged my word for your security: and I disdain to violate even a rash engagement with a cruel enemy." He conducted the Spaniard to the stables, and furnished him with one of his swiftest mules. "Fly," said he, "whilst the darkness of night conceals you—your hands are polluted with blood; but God is just and I humbly thank Him that my faith is unspotted, and that I have rejoined judgment unto Him."—*Preacher's Lantern.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-8. (1) **heads of the fathers**, the most venerable men of the three Levitical families of *Gershon*, *Kohath*, and *Merari*. The prophecy which threatened (Gen. xlix. 7) to "scatter them in Israel" was to be fulfilled for the benefit of the whole people. Instead of a portion for himself, Levi, as we have been repeatedly informed (ch. xiii. 33; xiv. 3; xviii. 7), was to have "the Lord God of Israel for his inheritance." Since, therefore their cities were to be assigned them within the limits of the other tribes, it was impossible to apportion them until the other tribes had been provided for.—*Pul. Com.* **Eleazar**,^a closely associated with Joshua in his life work. (2) **Shiloh**, called "the camp,"^b only designed to be temporary resting place for the ark. **commanded**, they reminded them of the command of Jehovah respecting themselves, which is found in Num. xxxv., and where directions had been given that 48 cities (Num. xxxv. 6, 7), with outlying suburbs of meadow land for the pasturage of their flocks and herds, should be assigned them. **suburbs**,^c portions of the country close round the cities. "These were, however, not fields for agriculture, but pastures for cattle." (4) The priestly office ran in this line.^d **thirteen cities**, a large allotment.^e (5) **the rest, etc.**, descendts. of Izhar, Hebron and Uzziel.^f (6) **Gershon**, firstborn son of Levi. Ex. vi. 16. (7) These cities were mostly E. of Jordan. (8) Cities not taken by Jos., but given by the people.

God's promises are sure.—In the West I met a man in the cars who was marking a lot of notes he had in his hand with the letters B., G., P., and so on; and I asked him what it was for. He said some of them were bad, the parties were bankrupt, and he never expected to collect them. Some were good, though the men were slow to pay; while some were only possibly good, and he marked them to calculate his chances. Now some people are just like this man, with God's promises; some they expect will be kept, and some they do not; some are barely possible. I advise you all to make all God's promises good; for He keeps every promise He makes.—*Dwight L. Moody.*

9-12. (9, 10) The situation of these cities should be observed; they were all close round the spot in which the ark of God was permanently to rest.^g The list given divides itself into two parts: (a) The nine cities which the sons of Aaron received in the country of Simeon and Judah; (b) the four cities which they received in the country of Benjamin. (11) **Arba**, Ge. xxiii. 2. (12) **fields, etc.**, in this case limiting the suburbs so as not to interfere with Caleb's possession, Jos. xiv. 14; 1 Chr. vi. 56. "The Levites, probably, only received as many houses in the cities assigned them as their numerical strength required, and it was these which remained in their hands as an inalienable possession."—*Keil's Com.*

The Levites dispersed among the other tribes. — If the Levites had clustered like a swarm of bees around the sacred establishment, loss would have been sustained alike by themselves and by the people. It was desirable that they should be dispersed over the whole country. The men that stood nearest to God, and who were a standing testimony to the superiority of the spiritual over the secular, who were Divine witnesses, indeed, to the higher part of man's nature, as well as to God's pre-eminent claims, must have failed egregiously of their mission had they been confined to a single city or to the territory of a single tribe. Jacob had foretold both of Simeon and Levi that they would be "divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel." In the case of Levi, the scattering was overruled for good. Designed to point God-wards and heaven-wards, the mission of Levi was to remind the people over the whole country that they were not mere earth-worms, created to grub and burrow in the ground, but beings with a nobler destiny, whose highest honor it was to be in communion with God. — *Blaukie.*

13-19. (13) *a . . .* refuge, cities of refuge were all Levitical cities. Libnah, Jos. x. 29. (14) Jattir, Jos. xv. 48. Eshtemoa, Jos. xv. 50. (15) Holon, Jos. xv. 51. (16) Debir, or *Kirjath-Sepher*. Jos. x. 38, 39; xv. 15, 49. The four cities mentioned in vss. 14 and 15 were in the mountain district of Judah. (16) Ain, Jos. xv. 32. A Simeonite city. Jutta, Jos. xv. 55. Beth-shemesh, Jos. xv. 10. (17) Gibeon, Jos. ix. 3-27. Gaba, or *Gaba*, Jos. xviii. 24. (18) Anathoth, 1 Chr. vi. 60. Almon, Alemeth of 1 Chr. vi. 60. The cities mentioned in vss. 17 and 18 were four priestly cities in the tribe of Benjamin. (19) priests, as disting. fr. Levites.

The influence of religion. — Just as the sun gleams over the palace and into the cottage, flushing alike with its splendor the council chamber of the monarch and the kitchen of the peasant; as the all-pervasive light fills the vast dome of the sky and the tiny cup of the flower, so religion illumines at once the heaven of our hopes and the earth of our cares. Secularities become hallowed; toil brightens with the smile of God; business becomes crystalline; light from God comes through it to us, glances from us to go through it to God. — *S. Coley.*

20-26. families of . . . Kohath, *i. e.* those who were not of the priestly order, received four cities in Ephraim, four in Dan, and two in western Manasseh. (21) Shechem, Ge. xii. 6; xxxiii. 18-20. Gezer, Jos. x. 33; xii. 12; xvi. 3, 10. (22) Kibzaim, poss. *Jokneam* of 1 Chr. vi. 68. Beth-horon, two places of the name. Jos. xvi. 3, 5. Perhaps both are included, as they were in the same neighborhood. (23) Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Jos. xix. 44. (24) Aijalon, Gath-rimmon, Jos. xix. 42, 45. (25) Tanach, *Taanach*, Jos. xii. 21. Gath-rimmon, perhaps repeated inadvertently from the preceding verse, instead of Bileam, 1 Chr. vi. 70. (26) remained, the number was seriously lessened after the revolt of Korah.^b

Religion the basis of society. — We know, and what is better we feel, inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort. We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by constitution a religious animal; that atheism is against not only our reason, but our instincts, and that it cannot prevail long. But if in the moment of rest, and in a drunken delirium from the hot spirit drawn out of the alembic of hell, we should uncover our nakedness, by throwing off that Christian religion, which has hitherto been our boast and comfort, and one great source of civilization among us, and among many other nations, we are apprehensive that some uncouth, pernicious, and degrading superstition might take place of it. — *Burke.*

27-33. (27) unto the children of Gershon, were assigned thirteen cities, two in eastern Manasseh, four in Issachar, four in Asher, and three in Naphtali. Golan, De. iv. 43. Beeshterah, or Ashteroth, as 1 Chr. vi. 71. (28) Kishon, Jos. xix. 20. Kedesh is substituted, 1 Chr. vi. 72. Dabareh, or *Daberath*. (29) Jarmuth, not as Jos. x. 3-5, prob. *Remeth*. Jos. xix. 21, and *Ramoth*, 1 Chr. vi. 73. En-gannim, Jos. xix. 21. (30) Mishal, Jos. xix. 26. Abdon, prob. *Hebron* of Jos. xix. 28. (31) Helkath, Jos. xix. 25, *Hukok*, as 1 Chr. vi. 75. Rehob, Jos. xix. 23, 30. (32) Kedesh in Galilee, Jos. xii. 22. Hammoth-dor, Jos. xix. 25. Kartan, prob. *Rakkath* of xix. 35, and *Kirjathaim* of 1 Chr. vi. 76.

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"When a man is told that the whole of religion is summed up in the love of God and the love of man, he is ready to cry out like Charoba, in Gebir, at the first sight of the sea, 'Is this the mighty ocean? Is this all?' Yes, all! but how small a part of it do your eyes survey! Only trust yourself to it; launch out upon it; sail abroad over it; you will find it has no end; it will carry you round the world." — *Hare.*

a 1 Ki. ii. 26; Je. i. 1; xi. 21, 23; Ezer. ii. 23; Ne. vii. 27; Is. x. 30.

A hidden light soon becomes dim, and if it be entirely covered up, will expire for want of air. So it is with hidden religion. It must go out. There cannot be a Christian whose light in some aspects does not shine.

b Nu. xvi.

It has been said that men carry on a kind of coasting trade with religion. In the voyage of life they profess to be in search of heaven, but take care not to venture so far into their approximations to it as entirely to lose sight of the earth; and should their frail vessel be in danger of shipwreck, they will gladly throw their darling vices overboard, as other mariners their treasures, only to fish them up again when the storm is over.

"Too many of us are like the little girl, who, at the close of her evening prayer one day, said, 'Now, good-bye, God; good-bye, Jesus Christ; I'm going to Boston to-morrow.' — C. D. Foss.

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"All who have been great and good without Christianity would have been greater and better with it. If there be among the sons of men, a single exception to this maxim, the divine Socrates may be allowed to put in the strongest claim. It was his high ambition to deserve, by deeds and not by creeds, an unrevealed heaven, and by works, not by faith to enter an unpromised land."—*Colton.*

the promise fulfilled

a Ge. xlii. 15; xv. 18. xxvi. 3; xxviii. 3, 4, 13; Ex. iii. 17.

b Jos. xi. 23; He. iv. 9, 10; De. vii. 24; Ps. lxxviii. 55.

c Jos. xxiii. 14; Ps. xvi. 5, 6.

the tribes of Reuben dismissed

d Jos. i. 12-15.

"How shall we rest in God? By giving ourselves wholly to Him. If you give yourself by halves you cannot find full rest. There will ever be a lurking disquiet in that half which is withheld."

The nearer the soul is to God, the less its perturbations; as the point nearest the centre of a circle is subject to the least motion."

the altar of witness

Artificial religion.—When Archdeacon Hare first visited Rome, some of his Protestant friends, it is said, who knew his love of art and the personal sympathy which he had with the Eternal City, trembled for the effect it might produce upon his mind. These fears were groundless. Rome was all, and more than all he had imagined. But the splendid vision left him a stronger Protestant than it found him. "I saw the Pope," he used to say, "apparently kneeling in prayer for mankind; but the legs that kneeled were artificial: he was in his chair. That sight was enough to counteract all the æsthetical impressions of the worship, if they had been a hundred times stronger than they were." Thus it is with all mere ritualism and other formalism—the legs which kneel are artificial.

34-42. (34) children of Merari, received twelve cities, four in Zebulun, four in Reuben, four in Gad. Jokneam, as Jos. xii. 22. Kartah, poss. *Kat tath*, Jos. xix. 15. (35) Dimnah, prob. *Rimmon*. Nahalal, village 4 miles from Nazareth, in plain of Esdraelon. (36) Bezer, De. iv. 43. Jahazah, Jos. xiii. 18. (37) Kedemoth and Mephaath, Jos. xiii. 18. (40-42) This number of cities seems a large proportion, but the cities were scarcely more than villages in size.

Proxy religion.—A certain man who would never go to church, when he heard the bell would say to his wife, "Go thou to church, and pray for thee and me." One night, he dreamed that both he and his wife were dead, and they knocked together at heaven's gate for entrance. St. Peter (by the legend) is the porter, and suffered the wife to enter in, but kept the husband out, answering him, "She is gone in both for herself and thee. As thy wife went to church for thee, so she must go to heaven for thee."

43-45. (43) all the land,^a by the distribution of the land amongst the tribes, the promise which Joshua had received after the death of Moses (Josh. i. 2) had been fulfilled, as also that which centuries before He had made to Abraham, the ancestor of the Elect Nation (see Gen. xii. 7). (44) rest,^b from wandering rather than rest from toil. (45) all came to pass,^c no limitation on side of God's provision, but some on the side of the people's faith.

Preciousness of the promises.—The promises of God are to the believer an inexhaustible mine of wealth. Happy is it for him if he knows how to search out their secret veins, and enrich himself with their hidden treasures. They are an armory, containing all manner of offensive and defensive weapons. Blessed is he who has learned to enter into the sacred arsenal, to put on the breastplate and the helmet, and to lay his hand to the spear and to the sword. There is a surgery in which the believer will find all manner of restoratives and blessed elixirs; nor lacks there an ointment for every wound, a cordial for every faintness, a remedy for every disease. Blessed is he who is well skilled in heavenly pharmacy, and knoweth how to lay hold on the healing virtues of the promises of God.—*Spurgeon.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

1-6. (1) Reubenites, etc., not the whole tribe, but the contingent of armed men who aided in the invasion.^d (2) kept, etc., Nu. xxxii. 20. (3) these many days, the time had prob. reached to seven years. (4) land of your possession, Nu. xxxii. 23; Jos. xiii. 8. (5) diligent heed, this counsel was necessary, bec. their separation would put them in peril of forgetting Jehovah. (6) blessed them, in the name of the Lord; and thanking them for valuable and faithful service.

Rest.—Rest is a sweet word to a weary soul; all seek it, none but believers find it. "We which have believed, do enter into rest." Not they shall, but they do enter into rest. There is a sweet calm upon the troubled soul after believing, an ease or rest of the mind, which is an unspeakable mercy to a poor weary soul. Christ is to it as the ark was to the dove, when she wandered over the watery world, and found not a place to rest the sole of her foot. Faith centres the unquiet spirit of man in Christ, brings it to repose itself and its burden on Him. It is the soul's dropping anchor in a storm which stays and settles it.—*Flavel.*

7-10. (7) Now to the one half, the repetition here of what has been already described (Josh. xvii. 5, etc.), may seem to us superfluous. But "it

agrees with the fulness, abundant in repetitions, of the ancient Hebrew style of narrative."—*Keil*. "A modern author will refer his readers to what he has stated elsewhere. The Jewish historian scarcely ever quotes or reminds, but repeats so much as may be necessary to make his account of the transaction in hand fully intelligible by itself."—*Spk. Com.* (8) **divide the spoil**, Nu. xxxi. 25-29; 1 Sa. xxx. 24. (9) **out of Shiloh**, showing that they staid with Jos. till after the sanctuary was moved from Gilgal. **Gilead**, used generally for country E. of Jordan. (10) **borders . . Canaan**, much diff. of opinion as to wh. side of the river this altar was placed.^a **a great altar**, intended to be clearly visible from the opposite bank.

Refraining from appearance of evil.—A Christian is called to refrain from some things which, though actually right, yet will not bear a good appearance to all men. I once judged it my duty to refuse a considerable sum of money which I might lawfully and fairly have received, because I considered that my account of the matter could not be stated to some, to whom a different representation would be made. A man who intends to stand immaculate, and, like Samuel, to come forward and say, "Whose ox, or whose ass, have I taken?" must count the cost. I knew that my character to me was worth more than that sum of money.—*Cecil*.

11-14. (11) **heard**, news of the steps taken by the trans-Jordanic tribes so suddenly and without any consultation, reached the ears of their brethren, and gave rise to "great searchings of heart." **over against, etc.**, R. V., "in the forefront of the land of Canaan, in the region about Jordan, on the side that pertaineth to the children of Israel." (12) **whole congregation**, more valiant to keep *others* free fr. idolatry than to keep themselves. **gathered, etc.**, they had begun to disperse to their several districts; this news created general excitement. (13) **Phinehas**, Ex. vi. 25; Nu. xxv. 7; xxxi. 6. (14) **chief house**, marg. *house of the father*.^b

Misunderstood deeds.—Thousands of noble acts have been and still are being misinterpreted. The world is full of monuments which have never been understood, and the very inscriptions on which have been perpetually misread. The motives of the human mind are often written in symbols as puzzling as the old cuneiform records, but the pedantry of the ignorant pronounces the vision to be quite "plain upon the tables," and forthwith the so-called readers "run" to make their report. Even when the Lord Himself is anointed, and is well-pleased with the spiritual beauty of the deed, some indignant murderer is pretty certain to be standing by, who, as though there could be no room for a second opinion, will unhesitatingly look upon the expended ointment and call it "this waste."—*Marchant*.

15-20. (15, 16) **an altar**, wh. they supposed was intended to be a place of sacrifice, but really was only designed for a memorial. (17) **iniquity of Peor**, i. e. of Baal-Peor. He makes allusion to the apostasy in the staying of which he himself had borne so memorable a part, and many have suspected that there were still some amongst them who were hankering after the licentious orgies of Baal worship.^d We shall find Joshua himself alluding to the same propensity (Josh. xxiv. 14-23). (19) **unclean**, seemed so to them as separated by Jordan fr. the sanctuary. (20) **Achan**, ch. vii. In this case, too, indiv. sin brought terrible conseq. on the whole people.

Misunderstanding among good people.—Consider the incident—I. In relation to the trans-Jordanic tribes. 1. We should avoid the appearance of evil. 2. We must expect sometimes to be misunderstood; 3. We may find a refuge from the misunderstanding of men in the knowledge and sympathy of God. II. In relation to the ten tribes. 1. Zeal for God's honor is always commendable. 2. We should be cautious in judging others adversely; 3. First inquire, then act; 4. Errors of judgment should be recognized frankly.—*Adeney*.

Rebuking with authority.—When the late Rev. Mr. K—— was settled in his congregation of S——, they could not furnish him with a manse, or even with lodgings. In these circumstances, a Captain P——, in the neighborhood, though a stranger to religion, generously took him into his family. But our young clergyman soon found himself in very unpleasant circumstances, owing to the captain's practice of profane swearing. Satisfied of his duty, however, he determined to perform it at all hazards. Accordingly, one day at table, after a very liberal volley of oaths from the captain, he observed, calmly, "Captain, you have certainly on the present occasion

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a Advocates of E. bank, *Josephus*, *Maurer*, *Bp. Wordsworth*, *Lange*, etc.; of W. bank, *Spk. Com.*, etc.

"An ingenious web of probabilities is the surest screen a wise man can place between himself and the truth."—*G. Eliot*.

the deputation to Reuben

b The qualities of the deputies evinced the deep solicitude that was felt on the occasion to maintain the purity of the Divine worship throughout Israel."—*Jamieson*. "Never put much confidence in such as put no confidence in others. A man prone to suspect evil is mostly looking in his neighbor for what he sees in himself. As to the pure all things are pure, even so to the impure all things are impure."—*Hare*.

the message delivered

c Nu. xxv. 4, 10-15.

d Jos. xxiv. 14-23

"Many suppose those against whom they are prejudiced to be very unlovely, because they have never come near enough to know them. William Jay tells that, walking one day in an English fog, he saw a huge and terrible monster approaching him. Coming nearer, it was a gigantic and terrible man; nearer still, and it was his brother John."—*Broadus*. "Surmise is the gossamer that malice blows on fair reputations; the corroding dew that destroys the choicest blossom. Surmise is primarily the squirt of

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suspicion, and suspicion is established before it is confirmed. — *Zimmerman*.

Austin defines covetousness as a dishonest and insatiable desire for gain, and in one of his epistles compares it to hell, which devours all and yet never hath enough, a bottomless pit and endless misery.

Reuben's reply

a Includes the three names of God, El, Elohim, and Jehovah.

b "There is no word of reproach or recrimination in their vindication of themselves. — *Spk Com.*

c "This anxiety was not unfounded, in so far as in the promises only Canaan was spoken of, therefore only the land W. of Jordan." — *Lange*.

"He who when called upon to speak a disagreeable truth tells it boldly and has done, is both bolder and milder than he who nibbles in a low voice and never ceases nibbling." — *Lavater*.

purpose of the altar stated

d Ge. xxxi. 47-49.

"Reprove not in their wrath incensed men; good counsel comes clean out of season then; but when his fury is appeased and past, he will conceive his fault, and mend at last. When he is cool and calm then utter it; no man gives physic in the midst o' th' fit." — *Randolph*.

Without consistency there is no moral strength.

made use of a number of very improper terms." The captain, who was rather a choleric man, was instantly in a blaze. "Pray, sir, what improper terms have I used?" "Surely, captain, you must know," replied the clergyman, with greater coolness, "and having already put me to the pain of hearing them, you cannot be in earnest in imposing upon me the additional pain of repeating them." "You are right, sir," resumed the captain, "you are right. Support your character, and we will respect you. We have a parcel of clergymen around us here, who seem quite uneasy till they get us to understand that we may use any freedoms we please before them, and we despise them." The captain never afterwards repeated the offense in his presence, and always treated Mr. K — with marked respect.

21-25. (22) Lord God of gods,^a repeated twice in earnest protestation,^b save us not this day, direct appeal to immediate judgment of God. (23) Mention of the diff. kinds of sacrifice is intended to repudiate all *worshipping* intentions in connection with it. (24) *your children*,^c dwelling in Jehovah's acknowledged land. *our children*, separated by the river, and gradually becoming alienated. (25) *Jordan a border*, the natural boundary of the whole country on E. side.

How to meet unjust accusations (vs. 22).—1. *The unworthy accusation.*—These tribes had behaved so honorably and well, they ought not to have been so easily suspected. "Twas well for them to go at once and inquire, but they might have gone more kindly. We should be very valiant for God, but very slow to accuse our brethren. 2. *The soft answer.*—The tribes might well have been indignant. They give model of patience, and illus. of the power of patience. "Not easily provoked." "Thinketh no evil." — *Hive*.

A happy reproof.—When only nineteen, Mdle. Wagner was walking round one of the squares in the immediate vicinity of her residence in company with a friend much older than herself, when the ladies became painfully conscious that they were followed by two fops, who took good care that their admiration of the younger one should reach her ears. Piqued at her indifference alike to their proximity and their remarks, they pushed rudely by at an accelerated pace, and soon after turned back again, so as to meet her face to face. As they drew near, she heard one of them, in animated dispute with his companion, say, "She is, I tell you!" and the other, "She is not!" The first speaker drew up directly in front of her, put up his glass, and then pronounced his verdict: "She is painted, by God!" She stopped, haughtily scanned him from head to foot, and with a face aflame with indignation retorted on him, "Yes, sir! I am painted (then pointing solemnly to heaven) — by God!" The young men, not altogether destitute of good feeling, were awed by the gravity of her reproof; and, blushing for their effrontery, took off their hats, retiring from the scene, it is to be hoped, sadder and wiser men. — *Life of C. M. Yonge*.

26-29. (26) altar, making it in form of altar, not of ordinary pillar, that it might remind of the altar at the tabernacle. (27) witness,^d instead of meaning a separation, they had set up their altar as a monument to future ages of the connection between the tribes divided by the river, so that if, at any time to come, their descendants should attempt to cast off the connection and assert their own independence, or if the Israelites should hereafter attempt to disown their union, and declare that the people beyond the river "had no part in the Lord," this monument might be pointed to in evidence of the fact. — *Camb. B.* (28) pattern, not an actual resemblance to the altar of burnt offering at the tabernacle, but the earth was heaped up, together with the huge stones, so as to have a general resemblance. (29) God forbid, solemn form of repudiating the mere idea.

The altar of witness.—I. The objects aimed at. It was erected—1. To preserve the unity of the nation; 2. To maintain the religious faith of the two and a half tribes. II. The danger feared—1. Was due to separation from the other tribes; 2. Would increase with time; 3. Would find new generations less fortified against it than the old. III. The means employed. A visible and enduring symbol—an altar of witness. — *Adeney*.

Sensitiveness under false charges.—Not long since a prominent German politician, replying to the slanders of the press directed against public characters, and answering those who told him that ministers ought not to mind the calumnies spoken against them, was warmly cheered as he exclaimed in the German Parliament: "God keep us from a breed of statesmen with hearts of

lead and hides of leather. Let us have men whose blood moves to their cheeks when lies are flung in their faces; for it is no ideal of mine to become acclimatized to liars." — *Marchant*.

30-34. (30) **pleased them**, Heb. *it was good in their eyes*, it satisfied their anxieties, and calmed their fears. (31) **now ye have delivered**, rather kept from falling under the judgment of God, otherwise as punishment like that in Num. xxv. 9 might have fallen on the whole people. (32, 33) **pleased, etc.**, who waited with utmost distress the return of their deputation. **did not intend**, abandoned their intention. (34) **Ed, a witness**.

On receiving reproof. — Many who will not stand a direct reproof, and cannot abide to be plainly admonished of their fault, will yet endure to be pleasantly rubbed, and will patiently bear a jocular wipe; though they abominate all language purely bitter or sour, yet they can relish discourse having in it a pleasant tartness: you must not chide them as their master, but you may gibe with them as their companion. Such a reprehension, while it forceth a smile without, doth work remorse within; while it seemeth to tickle the ear, doth sting the heart. In fine, many whose foreheads are brazed, and hearts steeled against all blame, are yet not of proof against derision; divers who never will be reasoned may be rallied into better order; in which cases railery, as an instrument of some important good, as a servant of the best charity may be allowed. — *Barrow*.

B. C. 1444.

the name of
the altar

"It requires ability to make what we seem agree with what we are; and humility to feel we are no great things." — *Amiel*.

"Considering how many difficulties a friend has to surmount before he can bring himself to reprove me, I ought to be very much obliged to him." — *J. Foster*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

B. C. 1427.

1-5. (1) **a long time after**, R. V., "after many days, when the Lord," fourteen yrs. after conquest, seven yrs. after distrib. of the land. (2) **all Israel**, in an assembly of their leaders and representatives,^a possibly at Timnath-serah. (3) **ye have seen**, he reminds them that they had all shared experiences of God's power in recent years.^b (4) **nations that remain**, still unsubdued, or not dispossessed of their territories. (5) Assurance of continuing Div. aid, if they only remain faithful.

Joshua's dying
charge to
Israel

he recalls
the past

a De. i. 15.

An aged preacher (vs. 1). — 1. *The man*. — A great man, a brave man, a good man, an old man, a faithful man, a pious man. The strength of his whole life was the decision for God which he made when he began his career. Impress this. Begin life as devoted to God in Christ. 2. *The audience*. — All great men; magistrates and generals (De. i. 15). Most of them Joshua's companions for many years. Full of deepest respect for him. Would reverently listen to all he would say. Show that they give us an example of how to listen to our teachers. 3. *The speech*. — Its reminiscences; its personal testimony; its warnings of coming danger; its plea for heart-religion. — *Hive*.

b "Of his own merits towards Israel the modest hero boasts not a word." — *Lange*.

"For Hercules himself must yield to odds; and many strokes, tho' with a little axe, hew down and fell the hardest timber'd oak." — *Shakespeare*.

Need of perseverance. — He who allows his application to falter, or shirks his work on frivolous pretexts, is on the sure road to ultimate failure. Let any task be undertaken as a thing not possible to be evaded, and it will soon come to be performed with alacrity and cheerfulness. The habit of strenuous, continued labor, will become comparatively easy in time, like every other habit. Thus even men with the commonest brains and the most slender powers will accomplish much, if they will but apply themselves wholly and indefatigably to one thing at a time.

"The whole complexion of a negro is less noticed than a single stain on the features of a white countenance." — *Jay*.

6-10. (6) Comp. counsel given to Jos. himself.^c (7) **come not among**, he especially warns them against all intercourse with the heathen nations, and above all, against any participation in their idolatries. **make mention of the name**,^d make object of a call or proclamation. (8) **cleave**, keep close in devotion and obedience to God. (9) **able to stand**, bec. you were so powerful through His aid. He reminds them of the true source of their strength, and to whom they were indebted for their late victories. (10) **one man, etc.**, Le. xxvi. 8; De. xxxii. 30.

he exhorts to
perseverance

c Jos. i. 8, 9.

d Ex. xxiii. 13.

Religious stability enforced (vs. 8). — Notice — I. The duty the text recommends: "cleave unto the Lord." This implies — 1. Previous union with Him; 2. Faithful adherence to Him — to His name, to His word, to His ways, at all times. II. The importance the text involves. The duty enforced is — 1. Reasonable; 2. Honorable; 3. Profitable; 4. Indispensable. III. The motives the text suggests. Motives of — 1. Sacred obligation; 2. Former obedience; 3. Sincere gratitude; 4. Solemn warning.

"To mention the names of the gods, to swear by them, to serve them (by offerings), and to bow down to them (call upon them in prayer), are the four expressions of Divine worship." — *Kell*.

B. C. 1427.

he warns
against
apostasy

a Ex. xxxiv. 12-16;
De. vii. 3.

b 1 Pe. i. 24, 25.

c De. xxviii., xxix.

"As in a distempered and corrupt air it is hard for him that hath a strong constitution to avoid sickness; so it is in evil company, in corrupt ages and places, very hard to live unspotted from the world."—*Cawdry*.

"A Christian when he makes a good profession, should be sure to make his profession good. It is sad to see many walk in the dark themselves, who carry a lantern for others."—*Pecker*.

Joshua's
charge at
Shechem

d Jos. viii. 30-35.

e Ge. xi. 27.

"In that central valley of the hills of Ephraim which commands the view of the Jordan valley on the east and the sea on the west, a complete draught through the heart of the country, was the fit seat of the house of Joseph, the ancient portion of their ancestor, given by Jacob himself. In and around Shechem rose the first natural burial place, a counterpoise to the patriarchal sepulchres of Hebron. Joseph's tomb was already fixed; its reputed site is visible to this day."—*Stanley*.

11-16, (1) yourselves, Heb. *your souls*. True secret of strength and success is *right-heartedness*. (12) go back, fall away fr. yr. allegiance. make marriages,^a the most ready and certain source of national backsliding. (13) snares and traps, Ex. xxiii. 33; Nu. xxiii. 55. perish fr. off, moral evils surely involving national decay; as their after history fully exemplified. (14) this day, term used generally, soon. going . . earth, he was contrasting the abiding presence of Jehovah, with temporary presence of any earthly leaders.^b (15) all evil things, faithfulness to promises involved faithfulness to threatenings. Reference is to Moses' last addresses.^c (16) anger, holy wrath.

Joshua's retrospect (vs. 14).—In looking back at this juncture, Joshua seems to have been much impressed by—I. The largeness of God's promises. II. The steadiness of His purposes. III. The completeness of His work: "not one thing hath failed."—*Homilist*.

Christian conduct in worldly company.—A pious officer of the army, traveling through the Mahratta country, was asked by Judge D——, a religious gentleman, to accompany him to a public dinner, at which the commanding officer of the district, with all his staff, and various other public characters, were expected to meet. "I expressed a wish to be excused," says the officer, "as I had no relish for such entertainments, and did not think that much either of pleasure or profit was to be derived from them." His reply was: "While I feel it my duty to attend on such an occasion, I certainly have as little pleasure in it as you have. But there is one way in which I find I can be present at such meetings, and yet receive no injury from them. I endeavor to conceive to myself the Lord Jesus seated on the opposite side of the table, and to think what He would wish me to do and to say when placed in such a situation, and as long as I can keep this thought alive on my mind, I find I am free from danger."—*K. Arvine*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

1-4. (1) all the tribes, this was a later assembly, including the people, as well as the leaders. Shechem, comp. prev. scenes at this place.^d Here Abraham received the first recorded promise of the goodly land (Gen. xii. 6, 7). Here Jacob settled after his long sojourn in Mesopotamia. Here the bones of Joseph were laid, and here from the heights of Ebal and Gerizim, the blessings and the curses of the law had been solemnly enunciated. before God, expression usually means before the tabernacle; poss. the ark was brought fr. Shiloh for this occasion. (2) your fathers, names given are Terah and Nabor.^e flood, the river *Euphrates*. gods, probably the objects of nature, especially the heavenly bodies which the ancients invested with a "glory" and a "freshness" which has long since "passed away" from the earth. (3) father Ab., their first national father, as with him the Div. covenant was made. (4) mount Seir, Ge. xxxvi. 8.

Israel's pledge to serve God.—I. The pledge reconsidered. It was made at first in view of the goodness and mercy of God in providing for them, keeping and guiding them, and giving them victory over their foes. It would be well for them to know the God of holy claims, of justice, who is swift to punish transgression. There are two sides on which God must be viewed. If we were to take up a religious life for the sake of what we were to get by it, it would be a blessing to be made to reconsider our resolve, and think about the holy, jealous God. II. The pledge retaken. Further thought only made them more earnest. Less excitedly, but more reverently and heartily, the people said, "We will serve the Lord." So we should find to know God better, would be to give ourselves to Him more heartily and entirely. — *Hive*.

The casket of promises.—Where is thy casket of promises? Bring it out; open the jar of jewels. Pour out the golden ingot, stamped with the image and superscription of Heaven's King. Count over the diamonds that flash in thy hand like stars. Compute the worth of that single jewel. "Ask, and ye shall receive;" or that other ruby, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God." Bring forth that royal Koh-i-noor, "He that believeth shall be saved." Then remember who it is that gave them, and to what an unworthy sinner. and tell me if they are not "exceeding great and precious." When Cæsar once gave a man a great reward, he exclaimed, "This is too great a gift for me to receive." "But," said Cæsar, "it is not too great a gift

for me to give." So the smallest promise in thy casket is too much for thee to deserve; yet the most magnificent promise is not too great for the King of kings to bestow. God scorns to act meanly and stingily by His children; and how must He scorn us often when we put Him off with such contemptible stinginess of deeds or donations! — *Spurgeon*.

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5-10. (5) **plagued Egypt**, briefly recalling the well-known signs and wonders. (6) **pursued after**, Ex. xiv. 9. (7) **they cried**, the Israelites were encamped on the western shore of the Red Sea, when suddenly a cry of alarm ran through the vast multitude. Over the ridges of the desert hills were seen the well-known horses, the terrible chariots of the Egyptian host; "Pharaoh pursued after the children of Israel, and they were sore afraid." **darkness**, a grand, poetical description. In the midst of the terror and perplexity of the Israelites the Angel of God, who went before them in the pillar of cloud and fire, stationed himself behind them so as to deepen the gloom in which the Egyptians were advancing, and afford light and encouragement to the Israelites. (8) **they fought**,^a Nu. xxi. 23. (9) **Balak**,^b **Balaam**,^c Nu. xxii. 5. (10) **blessed you**, Nu. xxiv. 3-9.

he recounts
Israel's past
history

a De. iii. 8.

b Ju. xi. 25.

c De. xxiii. 4.

To curse you. — Even at the present day the pagan Orientals, in their wars, have always their magicians with them to curse their enemies, and to utter incantations for their ruin. In our own war with the Burmese, the generals of the natives had several magicians with them, who were much engaged in cursing our troops. — *Kitto's Bible Illustr.*, II, 214.

"Because you find a thing very difficult, do not conclude that no man can master it; but whatever you observe practicable by another, believe likewise within your own power." — *Steele*.

11-13. (11) **Amorites, etc.**, Jos. iii. 10. (12) **hornet**, Ex. xxiii. 28. Some would understand the word here in its literal sense, but it more probably expresses under a vivid image the consternation with which Jehovah would inspire the enemies of the Israelites. (13) **land . . labour**, De. vi. 10-12.

he rehearses
the story of
the conquest

Trials are expressions of love. — Our heavenly Father loveth us; and because He loveth us, He takes away our precious things. He deals with us somewhat after the manner of an ancient painter with his pupil. The young artist had genius, and produced a picture of much merit, which was greatly admired by all. His young heart then swelled with vanity. He laid aside his palette and pencil, and sat daily before his easel, admiring the offspring of his own genius. One morning, he found his beautiful creations expunged from the canvas. He wept bitterly. His master appeared, and said, "I have done this for your benefit; the picture was ruining you." "How so?" demanded the pupil. "Because, in the admiration of your own talents, you were losing your love of the art itself. Take your pencil, and try again." The youth dried his tears, seized his pencil, and produced a masterpiece, which, but for this severe trial, he would in all probability never have executed.

A succession of defeats often paves the way for victory, and a succession of victories often paves the way for defeat.

14-15. (14) **fear**, not dread, but reverence mingled with love, and these finding expression in obedience. **put away, etc.**, seeming to intimate that Jos. knew of some inclin. to idolatry still lingering among the people. (15) **seem evil**, *i. e.* undesirable after your experience. **choose you**,^a like Elijah afterwards on Carmel (1 Kings xviii., 21), the Hebrew leader challenges the people with the utmost freedom to decide once for all that day whom they would serve. He gives them their choice between the old worship of Penates or household gods practiced by their fathers, and the Baal-worship of the Amorites, if they would not serve Jehovah, who had brought them out of Egypt. — *Camb. B.*

he exhorts
Israel to
resolve to
serve God

d De. xxx. 15.

The two services (vs. 15). — I. What are the two orders of service, to one of which you must be devoted? The service of — 1. Sin; 2. God. II. What is the contrast which these two orders of service present for careful estimation? 1. Service of sin essentially wrong — of God essentially right; 2. Of sin, degrading — of God, exalting; 3. Of sin, painful — of God, happy; 4. Of sin, destructive — of God, saving. III. What is the conduct which this contrast does properly and invariably secure? 1. The nature of this conduct: "choose you whom ye will serve;" 2. The time for adopting it: "this day;" 3. The mode of exemplifying it: solemn publicity. — *J. Parsons*.

An aimless life. — I committed one fatal error in my youth, and dearly have I abided it. I started in life without an object, even without an ambition. My temperament disposed me to ease, and to the full I indulged the disposition. I said to myself: "I have all that I see others contending for; why should I struggle?" I knew not the curse that lights on those who have

"Though God be good, and free be heaven, No force divine can love compel:

The sweet persuasion of His voice
Respects thy sanctity of will.
He giveth day: thou hast thy choice
To walk in darkness still."
— *Whittier*.

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"Anselm was a man of holy resolution. 'I had rather,' saith he, 'go to hell pure from sin than to have heaven polluted with that filth.' And saith another, 'I will rather leap into a bonfire than wilfully to sin against God.'"—*T. Brooks.*

"Sudden resolutions, like the sudden rise of the mercury in the barometer, indicate nothing but the changeableness of the weather."—*Phelps.*

Joshua warns and Israel repeats the promise

"A good resolution is the most fortifying armor a good man can wear. That can defend him against all the unwelcome shuffles that the poor rude world can put upon him. Without this, like hot iron he hisses at every drop that finds him; but with it he can be a servant as well as a lord, and have the same pleasantness in the shakes of fortune that he carries in her softest smiles."—*J. Beaumont.*

Joshua makes a covenant with Israel

a Keil and others indeed, understand the passage

never to struggle for anything. Had I created for myself a definite pursuit—literary, scientific, artistic, social, political, no matter what, so there was something to labor for and to overcome, I might have been happy. I feel this now—too late! The power is gone. Habits have become chains. Through all the profitless years gone by, I seek vainly for something to remember with pride or even dwell on with satisfaction. I have thrown away a life. I feel sometimes as if there were nothing remaining to me worth living for. I am an unhappy man.—*R. O. Owen.*

16-18. (16) **people answered**, no doubt through their leaders, all by uplifted hands, or by shout, consenting to their words. (17) **our God, he it is**, the people ground their promises of fidelity for the future on the dealings of God with them in the past, (i.) their deliverance from Egypt; (ii.) the great signs wrought in that land; (iii.) their preservation in the wilderness; (iv.) the expulsion of the Amorites. (18) **our God**, in personal relation with us, which we resolve to maintain.

God rules through men's choice.—"When Ulysses sailed past the isle of the Sirens, who had the power of charming by their songs all who listened to them, he heard the sorcerers' music on the shore, and to prevent himself and crew from landing, he filled their ears with wax, and bound himself to the mast with knotted thongs. Thus, according to the subtle Grecian story, he passed safely the fatal strand. But when Orpheus, in search of the Golden Fleece, went by this land, he—being, as you remember, a great musician—set up better music than that of the Sirens, enchanted his crew with a melody superior to the alluring song of the sea nymphs, and so, without needing to fill the Argonauts' ears with wax, or to bind himself to the mast with knotted thongs, he passed the sorcerous shore not only safely, but with disdain." God does not keep us from hearing all that can be said of other gods, which are no gods; God does not bind us by force, so that we cannot seek and follow Him; He does but make "better music," and ask us to choose for ourselves. If men do not choose to serve Him, it is because they have closed their eyes to His wonderful works, and stopped their ears against His gracious words.—*Cooke.*

19-21. (19) **ye cannot**, in your own strength; it is more difficult than you imagine. Joshua wanted the resolve of calm judgment, not of excitement. **holy God**, so must be served with holiness. **jealous**, terms used first Ex. xx. 5. The Divine zeal is just the energy of Divine holiness. His jealousy turns especially against idolatry and all sin by which His holy name is desecrated. **not forgive**, forgiveness is dependent on repentance and amendment of life. (20) **strange gods**, Ge. xxxv. 2, 4. **do you hurt**, Josh. xxiii. 15. (21) **nay**, verily, assuredly. This their first solemn national response. Former expression by their leaders.

God declining first offers of service.—This procedure—I. Sifts the true from the false seeker; II. Leads the true seeker to examine himself more thoroughly; III. Binds a man to his profession by a stronger sense of consistency; IV. Educates us to a higher growth and greater capacity of happiness.—*Ker.*

Power of resolution.—It was resolution made Anaxarchus, when his bones were crushed, make sport with his torments, and cry out, "Break, break the carcase of Anaxarchus, but his mind you shall never break." It was resolution made Regulus fling himself into the merciless arms of his enemies, and suffer himself to be stung and pricked to death. It was resolution made Attalus sit down cheerfully in the fiery chair his persecutors had prepared for him, and say, "It's not we that do eat children, but it's you that devour innocent Christians." It was resolution made Blandina encourage her fellow-Christian, though she was wounded, torn, bruised, racked, and miserably handled.—*A. Horneck.*

22-25. (22) **against yourselves**, clearly and unmistakably the people had declared that they had chosen the service of Jehovah. By so doing, in the event of their falling away, they would condemn themselves by their own evidence, and would be obliged to admit that Jehovah had a right to punish them for their unfaithfulness. **We are witnesses**, their second response. (23) **put away, etc.**, intimates that idolatry lingered among the people, we do not know whether in Egypt, forms, or in Canaanitish, very prob. in use of

teraphim, as by family of Jacob. **incline your heart**, without wh. mere outward separation fr. idolatry would be vain. (24) Third and most distinct national response. (25) **a statute, etc.**, Ex. xv. 25.

A popular response to an earnest appeal (vs. 24). — I. A suitable response to a most important appeal, vs. 15. It was for this that Joshua had so earnestly labored. II. A promise of obedience founded upon past experience of Divine power and mercy. III. A promise which, being kept, preserved the people; the decline of their power began with their forgetfulness of these words. IV. You often make good promises to parents, teachers, etc. The virtue lies in the keeping. For this you must seek constant help of God. — *Hive*.

Serving the Lord.—The following anecdote is told of David Saudeman, the devoted missionary: "Delighting as he did in vigorous exercise and gymnastic feats, he one day joined with two companions in the amusement of leaping over the stile at one corner of the old Queen's Park. While his companions failed, he cleared the stile so easily and gracefully as to draw forth the admiration of a dragoon who stood by. When about to walk on Mr. Saudeman turned to the soldier, got him into conversation, and spoke of the perils and honors of a life like his. Then suddenly drawing himself up to his full height, he exclaimed: 'There is something far better yet! It is to be a soldier of Jesus Christ. Are you that?' The dragoon looked with wonder on the man of muscle and sinew who could thus speak to his soul; and shook hands at parting, evidently deeply interested. This power of gracefully turning every little event into a means of usefulness could exist only in one whose natural atmosphere was the love of God, and in whose soul there was an uninterrupted gravitation toward his Divine Saviour.

26—28. (26) wrote these words, registered this pledge. **great stone**, ancient custom to seal engagements by erection of pillars.^a **an oak**, the oath, or terebinth, referring to a well-known tree, or grove of trees.^b Gen. xxxv. 4. **by the sanctuary**, possibly beside the old consecrated oak of Abraham and Jacob their altar was still remaining. (27) **it hath heard**, speaking figuratively.^c (28) **depart**, he dismissed the great assembly.

Sunday-school address on vs. 26.—Intro. Picture the scene in Shechem. Joshua's address and the people's response. A memorial stone set up to mark the site, the event, the pledge. I. The stone. Durable material. The stone found recently in Moab; set up in that age, has lasted to this. They might have planted a tree. Preferred a stone to represent their firm and lasting determination to serve God. II. A great stone. Visible fr. afar. They were not ashamed of the promise they had made. Others seeing the stone, and learning its history, encouraged to make a similar vow. III. A great stone under an oak. Travelers in camping there, or shepherds taking shelter fr. the heat there, would see it, inquire about it; idolaters, who worshipped in groves, would see it also. IV. A stone near the sanctuary. It was set up, as in the sight of God. It was like asking Him to help them to keep their promise. It was as a pledge to Him that they would keep it. Remember that God marks your vows, though you set up no memorial stones. — *Hive*.

The need of perseverance.—In the heathery turf you will often find a plant chiefly remarkable for its peculiar roots. From the main stem down to the minutest fibre you will find them all abruptly terminate, as if shorn or bitten off; and the quaint superstition of the country people alleges that once on a time it was a plant of singular potency for healing all sorts of maladies, and therefore the great enemy of man in his malignity bit off the roots, in which its virtues resided. The plant with this odd history is a very good emblem of many well-meaning but little-effecting people. The efficacy of every good work lies in its completion, and all their good works terminate abruptly, and are left off unfinished. The devil frustrates their efficacy by cutting off their ends. Their unprofitable history is made up of plans and projects, schemes of usefulness that were never gone about, and magnificent undertakings that were never carried forward. — *Hamilton*.

29—31. (29) Joshua . . died, his work was now over. His work of war and his work of peace. His age when he died was precisely that which Joseph reached (Gen. l. 26), a hundred and ten years. (30) **border of his inheritance**,^d according to Jewish custom. Timnath-serah, Jos. xix. 50. A photograph brought out by the "Palestine Exploration Committee" gives a representation of the tomb of Joshua. "It is certainly the most striking

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to mean simply that the hearts of some among them were inclined to idolatry. But this is hardly consistent with the plain and obvious sense of the words." — *Spl. Com.*

Resolution is necessary to guard us against dejection; for the world will beat that man whom fortune buffets. And unless by this, he can ward off the blows, he will be sure to feel the greatest burden in his own mind. A wise man makes trouble less by fortitude; but to a fool it becomes heavier by stooping to it.

a stone of witness erected

a Ge. xxviii. 18; xxxi. 45.

b "Possibly the same as that at the root of wh. Jacob buried the idols and charms found in his family. Ge. xxxv.

c "In a vivid imagination, the stone is regarded as a person, so to speak, who has been present and heard everything. Jos. xxii. 34." — *Lange*.

"By making man free, God has given him a strong feature of likeness to Himself. Man's empire over his own will has in it something divine. Master of his own inner movements, he turns to whatever seems to him good." — *Fenelon*.

death of Joshua

d "According to a very ancient tradition, in the same grave were buried

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the stone knives used in the ceremony of circumcision at Gilgal, wh. were long sought out as relics by those who came in after years to visit the tomb of their mighty deliverer." —Stanley.

a Ju. ii. 9; 2 Sa. xliii. 30; 1 Chr. xi. 32.

"It is painful to grow old, to lose by degrees the suppleness, strength and activity of the body; but when we feel that the soul, constantly exercised, becomes daily more mistress of herself, more skillful to avoid, more strong to sustain, without yielding to the shock of all accidents, gaining on the one hand what we lose on the other, we are no longer sensible of growing old." —Robert Hall.

Joseph's bones interred at Shechem

Eleazar dies

b Ge. i. 25, 26; Ex. xlii. 19; He. xi. 22.

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear oall for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea.

"For tho' from out our bourne of time and place
The tide may bear me far,
I hope to see my pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."
—Tennyson.

monument in the country," says Lieut. Conder, "and strongly recommends itself to the mind as an authentic site." hill of Gaash,^a not identified. (31) elders, etc., Joshua's contemporaries, who shared his impressions of the power and goodness of Jehovah.

Sunset on Mt. Ephraim (vss. 29, 30). — This is a brief obituary. It allows no scope for imagination to paint the scene of the dying hero. But his life is his nobles. monument — his vast and varied achievements are his best panegyric. Let us gather, in thought, around that solitary tomb "on the north side of the hill of Gaash." We can read the epitaph of "the man of God" as well as the warrior and the patriot: "he being dead yet speaketh." Four elements of strength appear to stand out conspicuously in Joshua's character, and distinguish him pre-eminently in the O. T. as the "Warrior Saint." I. Zeal for God's honor: this his paramount aim and motive through life — stripping himself of all glory and exalting God alone (see ch. iv. 21–24, v. 14; viii. 30; xxiii. 3). II. Deference to God's law: like every true and loyal soldier, he acted up to the orders of his superior (ch. i. 7, 8; viii. 34; xxiii. 6; xxiv. 27). III. Dependence on God's strength: in the hour of disaster he casts himself humbled before the "Rock of his strength" (see ch. x. 12–14, 42). IV. Trust in God's faithfulness: this only the necessary concomitant and result of the preceding (see ch. xxiii. 14). — Macduff.

Death a halt in the journey of life. — A sergeant of Duryea's Zouaves was wounded at the battle of Bull Run, and lay on the field for three days unrelieved. At last, brought to the hospital it was too late to save his life. When sinking, Col. Rice broke the news to him thus: "Sergeant, we are going to halt soon; we shall not march much farther to-day." "Are we going to halt, colonel, so early in the day? Are we going into bivouac before night?" "Yes, sergeant; the march is nearly over; the bugle will soon sound the halt." The tears of the colonel interpreted his words; and the sergeant said, "Do you mean that I am so soon to die?" "Yes; you are soon to die;" "Well, colonel, I am glad I am going to die: I want to rest, the march has been so long; and I am weary, very weary. I want to halt; I want to be with Christ; I want to be with my Saviour."

32—33. (32) brought up out of Egypt, the body of the patriarch was embalmed and placed in an Egyptian coffin. The sacred burden had been borne by the two tribes of the house of Joseph all through the wanderings^b of the wilderness and was now reverently laid. Jacob bought, Ge. xxxiii. 19. (33) in a hill, etc., lit. in *Gibea-Phinehas*, 5 miles N. of Guphna, toward Neapolis or Shechem.

The burial of Joseph. — Joseph was not interred in Shechem, but, according to the ancient custom, in a field adjoining. Probably the other children of Jacob received the like honor, each tribe taking care to bury its ancestor, either at Machpelah, or elsewhere in the land of Canaan. Josephus asserts that it was so, upon the credit of an ancient tradition. St. Stephen confirms the relation (Ac. vii. 16). Savages consider the tombs of their ancestors as titles to the possession of their lands which they inhabit. This country is ours, say they: the bones of our fathers are here laid to rest. When they are forced to quit it, they dig them up with tears, and carry them off with every token of respect. About thirty miles below the falls of St. Anthony (says Carver), in North America, several bands of the Naudowessie Indians have a burying-place, where these people, though they have no fixed residence, living in tents, and abiding but a few months on one spot, always contrive to deposit the bones of their dead. At the spring equinox these bands annually assemble here to hold a grand council with all the other bands; wherein they settle their operations for the ensuing year. At this time, in particular, they bring with them their dead, for interment, bound up in buffaloes' skins. If any of these people die in the summer, at a distance from the burying-ground, they burn the flesh from the bones, and, preserving the latter, bury them in the manner described. — Burder.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

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Introduction.

I. Title, JUDGES, *Shophetim* in the Heb., "a name derived from *shaphat*, to judge, to determine causes, to do justice, to vindicate, and also in general, to rule, govern, regulate, and applied here to the chief rulers who governed the Hebrew Republic from the days of Moses till the time of Saul, because *ruling* and *judging* are so intimately connected in the East, that sitting in judgment is one of the principal employments of the oriental sovereign. From this it will be seen that the title, as thus applied, is to be taken in a wider sense than the same term conveys with us, viz., persons appointed to determine litigated questions, and to pronounce the sentence of the law in criminal cases. Here, on the other hand, it is used to denote those occasional leaders and chief magistrates of the Israelites who led out the people to war against their enemies, and after having delivered them from the oppressions of the neighboring nations, exercised each during peace the office of chief ruler and judge of Israel. Still the predominant idea conveyed by the term is rather that of military commanders, or more properly *avenging deliverers*, than of judicial officers, as this latter function came more within the province of the priests." — *Bush*. **II. Author**, unknown. **III. Time**. It comprises sketches from the history of the nation from the death of Joshua to the time of Samuel, i. e. from ab. B. C. 1400 to ab. B. C. 1100, though these dates are somewhat uncertain. **IV. Contents**. "The book consists of three parts. The *first* part (ch. i. 1; iii. 7) forms an Introduction, obviously designed to connect the book with the previous narrative in Joshua. We have first a description of the condition of the Israelites immediately after Joshua's death, and their relations with the Phœnician peoples whom Joshua had left only half subdued (ch. i. 1–ii. 10). Then (ch. ii. 11–iii. 7) the writer proceeds to give a brief summary of his history, chiefly from a moral and religious point of view, pointing out the cause of national misfortunes, namely the disobedience of the people to the national law, and their apostacy from the national religion. The *second* part (ch. iii. 8–xvi. 31) contains the history of the Judges. In the *third* part (ch. xvii. to end) the historian adds two episodes of a more private and personal character, obviously intended to illustrate the disordered condition of the morals of the people, and to point to the value in the author's mind of the more regular system of government under which he lived." — *Cambridge Bible*. **V. Scope**. "The author himself states (ii. 11–23) the object he had in view — viz., to prove that the calamities wh. the people suffered were the consequences of their unfaithfulness to the covenant, and to set forth the goodness of God, so strikingly manifested in His readiness to accept their repentance, and to grant deliverance." — *Lytton*. **VI. Characteristics**. "Other portions of Scrip. may be more profitable" for doctrine, for correction, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness; "but for merely human interest — for the lively touches of ancient manners — for the succession of romantic incidents — for the consciousness that we are living face to face with the persons described — for the tragical pathos of events and characters — there is nothing like the hist. of the Juds. fr. Othniel to Eli. No portion of the Heb. Scrips., whether by its actual date or by the vividness of its representations, brings us so near to the times described." — *Stanley*.

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(According to Horne.)

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4. Subj. to Midian and deliv. by Gideon, etc.....vi.-ix.

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2. Servitude of the eastern Israelites under Eglon, the king of Moab, and their deliverance by Ehud. .iii. 12-30.

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10. The oppression of the Israelites by the Philistines, and their deliverance by Samsonxiii.-xvi.



CHAPTER THE FIRST.

1-4. (1) after the death of Joshua, this fixes yet more distinctly the purpose of the author of the book of Judges to continue the history from the point at which the book of Joshua had left it. These words correspond verbally with those that form the commencement of the book of Joshua.—*Camb. Bible*. asked the Lord, by Urim and Thummin, thro' the high priest,^a already narrated, Jos. xiv. 6-15. For the Lord, here and elsewhere read *Jehovah*, or as is preferable, *Jahveh*, the name by which Israel's God was distinguished from the gods of the nations round about. (2) go up, fr. Gilgal into the hill country. land, the district comprising his lot. (3) unto Simeon, whose lot was within that of Judah, Jos. xix. 1, 2. (4) Perizzites,^b prob. dwellers in scattered villages. Bezek,^c apparently applied to a district rather than to a town.^d Not far from Jerusalem, for Adoni-bezek fled there.

The Lord delivered into their hand.—1. God calls and sends none of His servants in vain. 2. God's blessing answers to His own promise of blessing. To the man who is faithful, the Divine promise is the shadow which the actual mercy, in its coming to us, casts before. Thus, the words of promise in vs. 3, herald the same words, as history in vs. 4. 3. God's blessing satisfies His people's highest hopes.—*Hom. Com.*

Spiritual initiatives.—The one stern fact facing every Israelite is God's command to uproot the Canaanite. There must be at least one land wholly consecrated to Jehovah and freed from idolatry. The warfare is an inheritance, even as the land is. There is a common obligation to fulfil this task; but it is not to be done severally, at haphazard. United action being difficult on account of the loss of the great captain, representative action is the next best. Now upon one tribe, and now upon another, will the honor devolve of carrying the war into the ranks of the enemy. It is a kind of conscription of the tribes, the honor of the burden being borne in turn by one for all. In this case no lot is cast. Jehovah is the disposer of the forces of his kingdom.—*Pulp. Com.*

5-8. (5) Adoni-bezek, lord, or king, of Bezek. (6) cut off . . thumbs,^e etc., a barbarity unusual with Israelites, a designed retribution for his cruelties. This cruel punishment was common among heathen nations. (7) This verse tells of intestine wars among the petty kings of Canaan, weakening them before the attack of Israel. God, the Deity, he speaks wholly in the spirit of heathenism. (8) had fought, R. V., "and the children of Judah fought ag. J. and took it and smote;" i. e., after the capture of Adoni-bezek.^f

The laws of requital (vs. 7).—As I have done, so God hath requited me; then—I. The life of man cannot escape the judgment of God. II. Let no man take the law into his own hands. III. Every good deed will be honored with appropriate reward. IV. Though justice be long delayed, yet it will be vindicated eventually.—*Parker*.

Retribution in this life.—Bajazet was carried about by Tamerlane in an iron cage, as he intended to have carried Tamerlane. Mazentius built a bridge to entrap Constantine, and was overthrown himself on that very spot. Alexander VI. was poisoned by the wine which he had prepared for another. Charles IX. made the streets of Paris run with Protestant blood, and soon after blood streamed from all parts of his body. Cardinal Beaton condemned George Wishart to death, and presently died a violent death himself; he was murdered in bed, and his body was laid out in the same window from which he had looked upon Wishart's execution.

9-15. (9) Comp. Jos. xi. 16. (10-15) Comp. Jos. xiv. 6-15, xv. 13-19, in which this passage is almost exactly given.

Caleb was an Edomite, and might have enjoyed his own lot without such special effort or sacrifice. He is evidently deeply interested in the welfare and honor of his adopted tribe. This might be called a signal illustration of public spirit. As the greatest blessings to a nation arise from the public spirit of its citizens, so the greatest curses are frequently entailed by the want of it. Even more cogent is the need for public spirit in the church. Its honor and dishonor are ours, its success or failure. And it represents interests of the most tremendous importance. "England expects every man to do his duty" is a sentence of historic importance. Although not called upon to preach, or

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Judah and Simeon renew the war

a Nu. xxvii. 21.

b Ge. xlii. 7, xxxiv. 30.

c 1 Sa. xi. 8.

d "The name announces itself as an appellative derived fr. the character of the region, it designates unfruitful, stony sand areas. The land W. of Dead Sea, thro' wh. Judah marched into his territory, is for the most part of this character.—*Lange*.

Adoni-bezek required

e "Thumbs were cut off to incapacitate the hand fr. using the bow; great toes to render the gait uncertain.—*Lange*.

f Le. xxiv. 19, 20; De. xix. 21. g Jos. xv. 62; Ju xix. 10-12; 2 Sa. v. 6-7.

"The loss of the great toe would impede his speed, which was one of the qualifications of a warrior—*Spk. Com.*

Caleb, Othniel, and Achsah

"Collision is as necessary to produce virtue in men as it is to elicit fire in inanimate matter; and chivalry is the essence of virtue."—*Ld. J. Russell*

"The age of chivalry has gone, and one of calculators and economists has succeeded."—*E. Burke*.

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further
successes of
Judah

failure of
Benjamin

a Nu xxiv. 21, 22.
b De. xxxiv. 3.
c Nu xiv. 45, xxi.
1-3; De. i. 44.

"Our humiliations work out our most elevated joys. The way that a drop of rain comes to sing in the leaf that rustles in the top of the tree all summer long is by going down to the roots first, and from thence ascending to the bough."—*Beecher*.

"A week filled up with selfishness, and the Sabbath stuffed full of religious exercises, will make a good Pharisee, but a poor Christian. There are many persons who think Sunday is a sponge with which to wipe out the sins of the week. The seventh day is no more for religion than any other."—*Beecher*.

Joseph takes
Bethel

Luz founded

d Jos. i. 4; 1 Ki. x. 29; 2 Ki. vii. 6.

"Is there not some chosen curse, some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven, red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man which owes his greatness to his country's ruin!"—*Addison*.

"There is no traitor like him whose domestic treason plants the poniard within the breast which he trusted to his truth."—*Byron*.

failure of
Manasseh,
Ephraim,
Zebulun, and
Asher

even to pray in public, the private member of the church ought to regard the affairs of Christ's kingdom with enthusiasm, and be prepared to make great sacrifices for its advancement. — *Pulp. Com.*

16—21. (16) Kenite,^a i. e. Jethro. Moses' father in law, R. V., "brother in law." city of palm trees, Jericho;^b as late as the year 1838 vestiges of the palm-grove were seen; but no trace now remains. wilderness of Judah, where John the Baptist preached. The scenery is wild and barren beyond all description. Arad, Nu. xxi. 1, xxxiii. 40; Jos. xii. 14. among the people, of Judah. (17) Hormah, a name fixed on Zephath in connection with a vow.^c (18) Gaza, etc., comp. Jos. xi. 22, xiii. 3, xv. 45—47. The Israelites could not have held it long, as it appears to have been again in the hands of the Philistines in the time of Samson and Samuel. (19) mountain, hill district. valley, lowland. chariots of iron, Jos. xvii. 16. (20) Comp. Jos. xiv. 12—15. (21) Stated of Judah in Jos. xv. 63.

What hinders the Gospel? (vs. 19: see also Ro. i. 18). — What hinders the Gospel? I can find the chief, if not the whole, obstruction in one word — *malrepresentation*: a holding of "the truth of God in unrighteousness." Our first text (Jud. i. 19) contains two truths well suited to guide us here, (1) That the great God frequently makes human agency the condition of His own action; (2) That so entirely does He abide by this plan, that if the required agency is not put forth, He will not work. Three general remarks may show that there has been sufficient malrepresentation to account for the Gospel's present limited influence. Consider that the Gospel regards — I. The ceremonial as subordinate to the doctrinal. And therefore *ritualistic* displays a malrepresentation of the Truth. II. The doctrinal as subservient to the ethical. And if so, a mere *theological* manifestation is a malrepresentation. III. The true ethical as embodied in the life of Christ. And hence a mere dry *legal* manifestation is a malrepresentation. — *Thomas*.

The wilderness of Judah, where John the Baptist preached (Matt. iii. 1). It is a plateau of white chalk, 2000 feet lower than the watershed, and terminated on the east by cliffs which rise vertically from the Dead Sea shore to a height of about 2000 feet. The scenery is barren and wild beyond all description. The chalky ridges are scored by innumerable torrents, and their narrow crests are separated by broad, flat valleys. Peaks and knolls of fantastic forms rise suddenly from the swelling downs; and magnificent precipices of ruddy limestone stand up like fortress walls above the sea. Not a tree or a spring is visible in the waste, and only the desert partridge and the ibex are found ranging the solitude. — *Conder*.

22—26. (22) house of Joseph, Jos. xvi. 1. Bethel, Ge. xii. 8, xxviii. 19. Now Beitin. (23) descry, lay close siege to by setting watchers around. (24) spies, literally watchers. we will shew thee mercy, compare the saving of Rahab alive, with all her house, at the taking of Jericho (Josh. vi. 23). (26) Hittites,^d it is now discovered that the Hittites were a mighty nation, who were for a long period the successful rivals of the Egyptian and Assyrian empires. Luz, a new Luz, prob. in N. of Palestine, on the borders of Syria.

A traitor's reward. — The Duke of Buckingham, having by an unfortunate accident lost the army which he had raised against Richard III., was forced to flee for his life without page or attendant; at last he took refuge in the house of Humphrey Bannister, at Shrewsbury, who, being one of his servants, and having been formerly raised by him from a low condition, would, he trusted, be ready to afford him every possible protection. Bannister, however, upon the king's proclamation, promising £1,000 reward to him that should apprehend the duke, betrayed his master to John Merton, high sheriff of Shropshire, who sent him under a strong guard to Salisbury, where the king then was, by whom he was condemned to be beheaded. But on demanding the £1,000 that was the price of his master's blood, King Richard refused to pay it, saying, "He that would be false to so good a master, ought not to be encouraged." He was afterwards hanged for manslaughter.

27—32. (27) Bethshean, Jos. xvii. 11, 16. Later Scythopolis, now Beisan. and her towns, *lit. daughters*, i. e. a group of smaller towns at no great distance from the capital of the district. Taanach, Jos. xii. 21. Dor, Jos. xi. 2, xii. 23. Ibleam, Jos. xvii. 11. Megiddo, Jos. xii. 21. (28) tribute, this was what they were strictly forbidden to do (Exod. xxiii. 31—33; Deut. vii. 1—6)

and the cause of all their misfortune. (29) Gezer, Jos. x. 33. (30) Kitron, poss. *Kattah*, Jos. xix. 15; see this for *Nahalol*. (31) *Accho*, seaport town, 30 miles S. of Tyre. *Zidon*, Jos. xi. 8. *Ahlabb*, nowhere mentioned. *Achzib*, Jos. xix. 29. *Helbah*, prob. *Hebel*, Jos. xix. 29. *Aphik*, *Aphek* of Jos. xix. 30. *Rehob*, Jos. xxi. 31. (32) This indic. that Canaanites were the stronger.

Failure — a practical lesson. — It is far from being true, in the progress of knowledge, that after every failure we must recommence from the beginning. Every failure is a step to success; every detection of what is false directs us towards what is true; every trial exhausts some tempting form of error. Not only so; but scarcely any attempt is entirely a failure; scarcely any theory, the result of steady thought, is altogether false; no tempting form of error is without some latent charm derived from truth. — *Whewell*.

33-36. (33) *Bethshemesh*, comp. Jos. xix. 38, 41. "The house of the sun," i. e. the place where the sun was worshiped. *Bethanath*, Jos. xix. 38. (34) *Amorites*, Ge. x. 16. The word *Amorite* is supposed by Ewald, Fürst and Gesenius to mean *highlander*. (35) *mount Heres*, poss. the *Ir-shemesh* of Jos. xix. 41. (36) *hand . . of Joseph*, the most powerful of the tribes. (36) *coast*, border. going up to *Akrabbim*, Nu. xxxiv. 4; Jos. xv. 3; the ascent of scorpions. *the rock*,^a *Has-selah*, *Petra*, the capital of Idumea. upward, must be taken in its literal meaning, "upward" from the Ghor into the mountain district. See also Nu. xxxiv. 7, 8.

Tributaries. — We are always engaged in battle or in progress, and, do what we may, we are not always able to carry everything our own way. The signification of defeat is somewhere upon our proudest achievements; again and again shadows appear, which can only be accounted for by the presence of the enemy. What, then, is to be done? There remains the sweet and comforting doctrine that even where extinction is impossible tribute may be charged and enforced; not only so, sometimes tribute is better than extinction. We have a great tributary system established at the very centre of the Christian life. Nothing is destroyed but sin. Everything else is turned to a holy purpose. We use the world as not abusing it. Until we knew Christ we stood in a false relation to everything; but now, living in Christ and breathing His Spirit, we know exactly what the world is and what it can do, and whilst in some moods we despise its littleness, in others we are enabled to accept every one of its intimations as an assistant to our faith and an increase to the brightness of our hope. — *J. Parker*.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-5. (1) from *Gilgal*, there were two camping places of the Israelites by this name — one near Jericho, the other near Bethel. It is impossible to say which is meant here. *Bochim*, so named fr. this incident; meaning *the weepers*. (2) *league*, covenant, De. vii. 2, 5; xii. 3. *throw down their altars*, a quotation from Exod. xxxiv. 13; Deut. vii. 5; xii. 3. (3) *thorns*, etc., Nu. xxxiii. 55. (4, 5) Signs of anxiety, conviction, and penitence.

Death and sorrow in sin. — The tale of the goblet, which the genius of a heathen fashioned, was true, and taught a moral of which many a death-bed furnishes the melancholy illustration. Having made the model of a serpent, he fixed it in the bottom of the cup. Coiled for the spring, a pair of gleaming eyes in its head, and in its open mouth fangs raised to strike, it lay beneath the ruby wine. Nor did he who raised that golden cup to quench his thirst, and quaff the delicious draught, suspect what lay below, till, as he reached the dregs, that dreadful head rose up, and glistened before his eyes. So, when life's cup is nearly emptied, and sin's last pleasure quaffed, and unwilling lips are draining the bitter dregs, shall rise the ghastly terrors of remorse and death and judgment upon the despairing soul. Be assured, a serpent lurks at the bottom of guilt's sweetest pleasure. — *Guthrie*.

6-10. (6) let the people go, Jos. xxiv. 28. This section is clearly a quotation from the book of Joshua. and is intended (1) to connect the following history with that in the book of Joshua, and (2) to mark the contrast between Israel in his days, and Israel in after years. Vss. 7-9 are identical with Josh. xxiv. 29-31, except that the order is slightly varied, and Timnath-serah is used instead of Timnath-heres, probably by accidental transposition. (7) *outlived*,

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"A failure establishes only this, that our determination to succeed was not strong enough." — *Bovee*. "He only is exempt from failures who makes no efforts." — *Whately*.

"Success is full of promise till men get it, and then it is a last year's nest, from which the bird has flown." — *Beecher*.

failure of Naphtali and Dan a "So called from the mass of precipitous rock which encloses the town, and out of wh. many of its buildings are excavated." — *Spk. Com.*

"Sin is like sound, and it finds the moral nature of man, like the atmosphere, a good conducting medium." — *W. Arnot*.

"The freer you feel yourself in the presence of another, the more free is he." — *Lavater*.

"The fear of God is still ever the beginning of wisdom; but it must not be mixed with the fear of men." — *Cassell*.

rebuke of the angel at Bochim

"St. Austin in his youth was in the habit of praying against certain sins while he secretly desired that God would not hear him. How many nowadays, like him, pray against sin, but desire not to be heard."

tomb of Joshua

a new generation and its sin

B. C. 1425.

"Like as if a poor man should be commanded by a prince to put off his ragged garments, and put on costly royal robes; it would be a great rejoicing in his heart; so much more joyful news must this be to all repentant sinners, when the King of heaven comes to them by death, and bids them lay down their patched garments, and put on the princely robe of immortality."—*Cawdray*.

apostasy of Israel and its consequences

a "The plural form may mean images of the goddess, or it may imply that she was worshipped at different places under some different aspects or modifications."—*Ayre*.

When the believer is tempted to commit some sin, how often does the bitter experience of the past keep him from it! The burnt child dreads the fire.

judges are raised up and Israel delivered

b Ps. cvi. 44, 45.

"The true leader is always himself a follower of the Divine guidance."—*Parker*.

"Society is a piece of mosaic wrought out by the loving hands of God."—*J. Parker*.

prolonged days after Josh. (8) **servant of the Lord**, Moses' title, De. xxxiv. 5. (9) **buried him**, places of sepulture highly honored in the East. (10) **knew not the Lord**, by immediate experiences of His power.

Man.—This fragment of ancient history gives us several facts concerning our race. I. The moral obligation of every member of our race. All creatures serve God; but some—1. Without a will: inanimate matter, insentient life: 2. With their will: brutes, with their instinct; 3. Against their will: wicked men, fallen angels; 4. By their will: saints and angels. II. The service of one good man to our race. 1. A man can induce his race to serve the Lord; 2. To do this, he must himself be God's servant; 3. However useful a man may be, he must die. III. The degenerated tendency of our race.—*Thomas*.

Many victories often lead God's people to think lightly of winning more. The vast importance of the Divine commandments becomes obscured by the illusive light of unbroken triumphs, and a rich earthly inheritance. The light which comes to us through adversity is often the clearest and purest that we get. So it was with the Israelites. The proof of this is again and again set before us in their history under the judges. To use the magnificent image of Edmund Burke, on a political occasion,—The light broke in upon them, "not through well-contrived and well-disposed windows, but through flaws and breaches; through the yawning chasms of their national ruin."—*Hom. Com.*

11—15. (12) the Lord God of their fathers, render "Jehovah the God of their fathers," to contrast with the Phœnician deity. (13) **Baal** (*singular* of Baalim) was the male deity and was always allied with a female principle. This conjunction of male and female deities was also characteristic of the ancient Chaldean and Assyrian worship. **Ashtaroth**, plural form of Astarte, or Ashtoreth, the female deity.^a (14) **hot**, Ps. cvi. 39, 40. **spoilers**, fr. root, *rob*, 2 Ki. xvii. 20. **sold them**, De. xxxii. 30; Ps. xlv. 12. This term represents the absolute giving up into the hands of their enemies. It is no doubt derived from the idea of selling a slave. The converse process is **redemption**. (15) **against them**, contrast Jos. i. 9. **sworn**, Le. xxvi. 37; De. xxviii. 25.

God's way of asserting that He alone is God.—1. He chastised them severely. 2. He chastised them by the very people with whom they had made leagues. 3. He chastised them by the corruptions which came of their newly-chosen worship.—*Hom. Com.*

Idolatry.—A singular phenomenon, known as the Spectre of the Brocken, is seen on a certain mountain in Germany. A traveler who at dawn stands on the topmost ridge, beholds a colossal shadowy spectre moving on the summits of the distant hills. But, in fact, it is only his own shadow projected upon the morning mists by the rising sun, and it imitates, of course, every movement of its creator. So heathen nations have mistaken their own image for Deity. Their gods display human frailties and passions, and scanty virtues, projected and magnified upon the heavens, just as the small figures on the slide of a magic lantern are projected, magnified and illuminated upon a white sheet.

16—19. (16) judges, *Shophetim*, combining military leadership with civil rule, and beginning authority with an act of national deliverance. (17) **not hearken**, they would not listen even to the judge who had delivered them. **their fathers**, *i. e.* the generation led by Joshua. (18) **Lord was with**, nothing great was done, according to the writers of the Old Test., but by God's help (*see* Deut. viii. 17; Ps. xlv. 3). **it repented**,^b this is one of the many instances of condescension to the imperfection of human speech which are to be found in the Scriptures. *See* Gen. vi. 6; Jonah iii. 10, *etc.* Strictly speaking, God never repents. His nature is unchangeable (Num. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29; James i. 17). But His attitude to man is relatively changed when man turns to Him, as is the case here. Therefore the change of relations between God and the sinner when the latter forsakes his sin, is not inaptly described by the figure in the text.—*Camb. Bible*.

Mission and success of the Judges.—I. Their office must not be confounded with that of subordinate functionaries whom Moses appointed to administer justice in the wilderness. II. Their functions may be partly understood by referring to the position in which Moses and Joshua stood in relation to the twelve tribes. III. Their times were, on the whole, marked by national

advancement. IV. Note the spiritual or typical interpretation of these narratives of the Judges. — *L. H. Wiseman.*

"*The Lord raised up Judges.*" — This is a lesson quite as much to those who suppose themselves to be appointed to high authority, as for the peoples whom they rule or attempt to direct. The true judge, minister, leader, statesman, will recognize that he is divinely appointed, and therefore accountable to God. This will give moderation to his counsels, and invest all his thoughts and purposes with supreme solemnity, and will subdue the pomp of office by the consciousness of personal obligation to God. — *J. Parker.*

20-23. (20) This *vs.* continues the narrative fr. *vs.* 13.^a (21) **drive out any**, the further fulfilment of His promise was stopped. See Josh. xxiii. 13. (23) **left**, Heb. *caused to remain, or rest*. It was never God's intention to deliver these nations into the hand of Israel at once. See Deut. vii. 22. But these nations were used by God as a test of Israel's steadfastness in resisting the seductive temptations to which a residence in the midst of Canaanitish worship exposed them. — *Camb. B.*

Needful chastisement. — God would "prove Israel" to see whether or not they would keep His way. The spirit of this patient purpose runs all through the book. It was not a sudden purpose, formed only when the Israelites began to depart from God. God had cherished that purpose even in the time of Joshua, and forborne to deliver the Canaanites entirely into Joshua's hand. Through steady and stern chastisements, the Israelites gradually grew into the feeling that the way of sin was a way of sorrow. God made Bye Path Meadow rougher than the King's highway. There were times when Giant Despair fastened the people in his terrible stronghold. The result was that during Samuel's time the nation was found, probably, nearer God than at any period between the death of "the elders who outlived Joshua," and that of Samson in the house of Dagon, at Gaza. — *Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-4. (1) **left**, see note, ch. ii. 23. **not known, etc.**, showing reference to be to generation succeeding that led by Josh. (2) The construction here is somewhat obscure. The Polychrome Bible reads "Solely for the sake of the successive generations of Israelites, to teach war to them (only to those who previously had no experience thereof.)" war, war was a necessity to the children of Israel if they were to retain their possession in Palestine in the face of the three great military monarchies, the Egyptian, the Assyrian, and the Hittite, which bordered on them. (3) **Philistines**, Ge. xxi. 32. **Hamath**, extreme N. boundary of Canaan.^b

Geographical position of Palestine. — Palestine was always an isolated country. It lay like a bridge leading from the Euphrates to the Nile, with a desert on one side and a sea on the other; in the very midst of the region of west Asiatic culture, yet isolated from and unaffected by it. No other country had a similar position. No other lay like it in the immediate neighborhood of the six most illustrious, cultivated nations of the ancient world, the Babylonians, Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Phoenicians, and Egyptians; and yet in their very midst, divided from them by Nature herself, in order to secure to this country its own complete opposition, its own altogether peculiar culture, its monotheism, its grand spiritual independence. None lay thus so intimately connected with each of the three continents in their points of contact, and with the five arms of the sea, reaching far inland, thus early showing the paths prepared for the fulness of time, when the Gospel should be ready to be despatched from this common centre, in every direction to the ends of the world. — *Carl Ritter.*

5-8. (5) Comp. Ex. xxxiii. 2. **dwelt among**, instead of driving them out utterly, the Israelites associated with the accursed races of Canaan, and their faith was not equal to the self-imposed trial. (6) **took . . sons**, a distinct and most wilful breach of the covenant. The sacred writers are very careful to point out the evil of marriages with unbelievers. See Gen. xxiv. 3, xxvi. 35; Exod. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3, 4; 1 Kings xvi. 31; 2 Chron. xviii. 1. (7) **and the groves**, Heb. *Asherah*,^c comp. De. xvi. 21. The symbol or image of the goddess *Ashtoreth*. (8) **Chushan-rishathaim**,^d either *most wicked Cush-*

B. C 1425.

"It is to be lamented that great characters are seldom without a blot." — *Washington.*

God is angry with Israel

^aIntermediate *vs.s.* are an interruption of the sense, refer to much later times, and appear to be reflections of the compiler. — *Spk. Com.*

"For many miles around Swansea no vegetation exists, owing to the smoke from the large copper-works there; even so, the influence of bad companions prevents man flourishing in the Divine life." — *T. Jones.*

B. c. 1406.

nations left to prove Israel

^bNu. xlii. 21, xxxiv. 8.

"Many a day have I sought death with tears; not out of impatience, distrust, or perturbation, but because I am weary of sin, and fearful to fall into it." — *Cowper.*

"The humbleness and poverty of Israel during the early centuries of its history in Canaan served as a providential safeguard. God would not lose His people, nor suffer it to forget its mission." — *Watson.*

Israel inter-marries with Canaan

^c 2 Ki. xvii. 10.

^d "The only invader fr. the remote East till the

B. C. 1406.

decline of the monarchy, and his name has as yet received no illustration fr. the Assyrian monuments or history." — Stanley.

"Every sin has a Satan in it, and robs the soul of its beauty. Every sin hath robbery in it. It is an endeavor to carry away some one or other of the crown jewels of heaven." — Haliburton.

Othniel

a "His military experience qualified him for the work, while the gallant exploits he was known to have performed gained him the full confidence of his countrymen in his ability as a leader." — Jamieson.

"The last of the generation of conquerors." — Stanley.

Moab
subdues
Israel

Ehud

b Ju. 1. 16.

"They established themselves at Gilgal and Jericho. But beyond the mountain barrier they do not go. Their dominion extended itself over the neighboring tribe of Benjamin." — Stanley.

Acc. to LXX
Ehud was an *ambidexter*, i. e. able to use both hands with equal facility.

Ehud kills
Eglon, king
of Moab

c Ps xlix. 6; Re. i. 16.

ite, or lord of the land of the two rivers. Mesopotamia, Aram-Naharaim, Ge. 8-11.

Ashteroth. — *Groves*. — The name of this deity occurs earlier in the Bible than that of any other (Ge. xiv. 5). Ashteroth was the principal female deity of the old Canaanites, as Baal was the principal male deity. The moon was her symbol. Hence the name of that primeval city of the Rephaim, *Ashteroth-karnaim*, "the two-horned Ashteroth;" that is, as I actually found the goddess represented on a colossal bas-relief in Bashan, a female with a crescent moon on her forehead. The Hebrew *Ashteroth*, the Egyptian Athor, and the Greek Astarte, symbolized productive power. She was the universal mother, or producer. She presided over all productiveness, both in the animal and vegetable world. Her worship, under the guidance of sensuality, came to be connected with the most licentious rites. This form of idolatry tended, like others, to the utter degradation of human nature. Ashteroth is called by Jeremiah (viii. 18) "queen of heaven," and he describes Hebrew women as offering cakes to her in the streets of Jerusalem.

9—11. (9) *Othniel*,^a Jos. xv. 16-19; Ju. i. 13; one of the contemporaries of Joshua. (10) *Spirit, etc.*, this marks the peculiar office of the judges. They were called and directed by the Spirit of the Lord, who endured them with extraordinary wisdom, courage, and strength for the work before them. (11) *the land*, i. e. the district specially overrun by Chushan. *forty years*, poss. not intended to fix an exact number, but to stand for a generation.

Providential changes. — I have often observed that when the fulness and maturity of time is come that produces the great confusions and changes in the world, it usually pleases God to make it appear, by the manner of them, that they are not the effects of human force or policy, but of the Divine justice and predestination; and, though we see a man — like that which we call "Jack of the clock-house" — striking, as it were, the hour of that fulness of time, yet our reason must needs be convinced that his hand is moved by some secret and, to us that stand without, invisible direction. — Cowley.

12—15. (12) *king of Moab*, an extensive portion of the ancient possessions of Moab were in hands of Is.; these Eglon sought opportunity to recover. Samuel's comment on the event is to the same effect, "When they forgot the Lord their God He sold them into the hand of the King of Moab," 1 Sam. xii. 9. (13) *Ammon, Amalek*, both bitter foes of Israel. Continually spoken of in conjunction with Moab. *city of palm-trees*,^b Jericho; having subjected the eastern tribes, the enemy suddenly crossed the Jordan. Though Jericho was destroyed, Eglon may have constructed a fortification among the ruins. (14) *served*, vs. 8, were under tribute. (15) *Gera*, one of Benj.'s sons, Ge. xli. 21. *left-handed*, many such in this tribe, Ju. xx. 16. *present*, the tribute, a token of good-will.

Ehud (vs. 15) — The text shows that the instruments chosen of God may often surprise and disappoint men. Ehud left-handed. 1. A man not great merely because left-handed. 2. No man should be condemned merely because he does not take hold of things in the common way. 3. That some good use may be made of the most unlikely qualifications. — Parker.

The Lord strengthened Eglon. — Allowed him to become strong, suffered him to take such a course as would result in his becoming too powerful for the Israelites. It was not by positive agency, but by sovereign permission, that this result took place. The course of God's providence often favors the designs of His enemies, and they take advantage of it, while the effect, in scripture style, is attributed to God Himself. The phraseology is liable to no just objection when rightly understood, and affords a clue to the explanation of hundreds of passages in the sacred volume. "Rather than Israel shall want a scourge for their sin, God Himself shall raise them up an enemy. Moab had no quarrel but his own ambition; but God meant by the ambition of the one party, to punish the ambition of the other; His justice can make one sin the executioner of another, while neither shall look for any measure from Him but judgment." — Bp. Hall.

16—20. (16) *dagger*, short sword. *two edges*,^c customary way of sharpening. *right thigh*, sword being usually worn on the left side, this enabled Ehud to escape detection. (17) *fat man*, said to explain effectiveness of Ehud's attack. (18) *sent away*, going at first with them. (19) *quarries*,

"sculptured stones."—*Polychrome B.* (20) **summer parlour**, lit. *upper chamber of coolness*. Making as if to whisper, Ehud got close to the king. **a message from God**, lit. *a word of God*.

The secret errand.—From a circumstance mentioned by Mr. Bruce, it appears that Ehud acted in strict conformity to the customs of the time and place, so that neither the suspicion of the king nor his attendants should be excited by his conduct. It was usual for the attendants to retire when secret messages were to be delivered. "I drank a dish of coffee, and told him that I was a bearer of a confidential message from Ali Bey of Cairo, and wished to deliver it to him without witnesses whenever he pleased. The room was accordingly cleared without delay, excepting his secretary, who was also going away, when I pulled him back by the clothes, saying, 'Stay, if you please; we shall need you to write the answer.'"—*Burder*.

21—24. (21) **left hand**, so taking Eglon at unawares. (22) **haft**, hilt or handle. and . . . **came out**, *R. V.*, "and it came out behind." (23) **porch**, where the entrance doors were. **parlour**, antechamber in which the courtiers might wait. (24) **gone out**, wh. he did with surprising calmness. **covereth his feet**, comp. 1 Sa. xxiv. 3.

The summer parlor.—Russell has given the following account of one of the methods of cooling rooms in the East at the present day. Their great houses at Aleppo are composed of apartments on each of the sides of a square court, all of stone; and consist of a ground floor, which is generally arched, and an upper story, which is flat on the top, and either terraced with hard plaster, or paved with stone; above stairs is a colonnade, if not round the whole court, at least fronting the west, off from which are their rooms and kiosques; these latter are a sort of wooden divans, that project a little way from their other buildings, and hang over the street; they are raised about a foot and a half higher than the floor of the room, to which they are quite open, and by having windows in front and on each side, there is a great draught of air, which makes them cool in the summer, the advantage chiefly intended by them.

25—30. (25) **ashamed**, comp. 2 Ki. ii. 17, viii. 11. The whole passage shows (1) that Eglon was a monarch who enjoyed to the full the state usually connected in later periods with the regal dignity, and (2) that the customary decencies of civilization were by no means unknown, at least among the higher classes, in the times, and among the peoples, with whom this history deals.—*Camb. Bib.* **a key**,^a the chief officer would doubtless hold a duplicate key. (26) **Seirath**, beyond the fact that it was among the mountains of Ephraim, we do not know where this place is. (27) **mountain**, or hilly district. (28) **fords of Jordan**, those by Jericho, thus the enemy was intercepted and readily fell a prey. (29) **lusty**, stout, robust, "chosen men," Ps. lxxviii. 31. (30) **the land**, the part occupied by tribes of Ephraim and Benjamin chiefly.

Ehud.—Here is an example of what is possible to the obscure, whose qualifications, are not great, but have spirit and firmness, who are not afraid of dangers and privations on the way to an end worth gaining, be it the deliverance of their country, the freedom and purity of their church, or the rousing of society against a flagrant wrong. Armed for their task with fit weapons—the two-edged dagger of truth for the corpulent lie, the penetrating stone of a just scorn for the forehead of arrogance, they have the right to go forth, the right to succeed, though probably when the stroke has told many will be heard lamenting its untimeliness and proving the dangerous indiscretion of Ehud and all who followed him.—*R. A. Watson*.

31. And after him, not after his death, but after he had smitten the Moabites. **Shamgar**,^b he was no doubt of the tribe of Judah or Dan, and his exploits, like those of Samuel, purely local. **ox-goad**, instrument used by ploughmen. A strong pole 8 or 10 ft. long, with a point at one end to urge on the oxen, and a kind of chisel at the other to clear the ploughshare fr. earth and weeds.

Shamgar—Note—I. How absurd it is for any man to blame his tools for bad work—(ox-goad; jawbone of ass; sling and stone). II. How important it is that men should use those instruments which they can handle most skillfully. III. How foolish it would be to ridicule the instrument when the results are so obviously of God. IV. How victories are sometimes won in the face of the greatest improbabilities.—*Parker*.

B. C. 1406.

"Ev'n to the dull-
est peasant stand-
ing by who fast-
en'd still on him a
wondering eye, he
seem'd the master
spirit of the land."
—*Joanna Baillie*.

"Heroism—the
Divine relation,
which, in all times,
unites a great man
to other men."
—*Carlyle*.

"They cannot ac-
count for the long
closing of the door,
except on the sup-
position that their
lord had retired for
purposes which
Oriental delicacy
reserved for seclu-
sion."—*Stanley*.

**Ehud calls
Israel to
arms**

^a "Keys and locks
in Palestine are
very frequently
now, and were,
doubtless, in old
time, large, and
both of them made
of wood. Ancient
keys were crooked,
bent into the shape
of a sickle, and
like it borne on the
shoulder."—*Ayre*.

Shamgar

^b Ju. v. 6.

"Do not ridicule
the instrument.
Look at the 600
dead men, at the
slain giant, at the
prostrate walls of
Jericho. Rule ap-
plies to every de-
partment of life;

B. C. 1406.

to preaching, to missions, to every Christian effort." —Parker.

oppression under Jabin

α Ps. lxxviii. 56-58.

A small vessel with smart gales will sail faster than a large ship with small winds. When prayer mounts on the wings of fervor to God, then answers come down like lightning from God. —Seeker.

The arrow, though well pointed and feathered, is of little use unless pulled to the head by a strong hand. —Pilkington.

Deborah sends for Barak

b Ex. xv. 20.

c "The spirit of Deborah was like a torch for Israel, kindling their languid hearts." —Lange.

d Ge. xxxv. 8.

e Jos. xix. 32, 35, 37; xx. 7; xxi. 32.

f "Barak is to gather 10,000 men toward Tabor, one after another, in small squads; the tyrant must know nothing of the rising until the hosts are assembled." —Lange.

g Ju. v. 21; 1 Ki. xviii. 40.

Tradition has fixed on this spot as the scene of the transfiguration of Christ, but the correctness of this opinion has been disputed by Dean Stanley and other writers.

The ox-goad. — Jamieson says, "This implement was eight feet long, and about six inches in circumference. Such an instrument, wielded by a strong arm, would do no mean execution. Shamgar may, however, have been only the leader of a band of peasants, who, by means of such implements of labor (and in particular the ox-goads) as they could lay hold of at the moment, achieved this heroic exploit."

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

1-3. (1) *did evil*,^a in yielding to surrounding idolatry. when Ehud was dead, the judge not only delivered the people from their enemies, but also restrained them from idolatry. (2) *sold them*, as in ch. ii. 14. Jabin, prob. hereditary name of kings of Hazor. Comp. Jos. xi. Either the two chiefs of name of Jabin were contemporaries, or Hazor was rebuilt after its destruction by Joshua. Hazor, city of Naphtali, near waters of Merom, Jos. xix. 36; poss. mod. *Hazere*. The name Hazor or Hazar was a very common one, meaning *fort*, while the root meaning is to *wall around*. A similar meaning attaches to the name *Chester*, with which cf. Gloucester, Leicester, etc. Harosheth, not identified; Thomson thinks the double mound called Harothieh. of the Gentiles, or nations, Is. ix. 1. (3) *chariots of iron*, Jos. xvii. 16. *oppressed*, word used Ex. iii. 9. Prob. Israelites were put by Jabin to task work in hewing timber.

Israel's sin and oppression. — Here is — I. Israel backsliding from God. See in this — 1. The strange strength of corruption; 2. The common ill effects of a long peace; 3. The great loss which a people sustain by the death of good governors. II. Israel oppressed by their enemies. III. Israel returning to their God. Distress drives men to Him. — M. Henry

4-9. (4) *Deborah, a bee*, comp. Ge. xxiv. 59. A female ruler was an extraordinary thing in the history of Israel. *prophetess*, person thro' whom Divine communications were made, comp. Miriam^b and Huldah. Deborah differed from Miriam in that she was a judge, which Miriam was not. *wife of Lapidoth*, or, a woman of a fiery spirit, or of the torch-glow;^c lapidoth means firebrands, lamps, or flames. (5) *under the palm*, tent set up under well-known tree.^d This was the court of Israel. Ramah, prob. *Ramathaim-zophim*. judgment, of civil disputes. (6) *Barak, lightning*, He. xi. 32. Some have supposed that he was husband to Deborah. *Kedesh-naphtali*, to distin. fr. town in Issachar.^e *Lord God*, Jehovah God of the covenant. *draw, or spread out*,^f Tabor, at N. E. corner of plain of Esdraelon. (7) *Kishon*, now Mukutta, stream issuing fr. Carmel.^g (8) *go with me*, her presence would inspire the host. (9) *woman*, Jael, vss. 17-21.

Deborah (vss. 4-7). — I. Her lowly yet well-known dwelling. II. Her office, prophetess. God uses divers instruments. Pride taken out of man by use of a woman. Women have often shamed men by their courage at critical times (Joan of Arc, Maid of Saragossa). III. Her influence; that of wisdom. Israel perceived that she was the mouthpiece of God. IV. Her knowledge. She knew Barak, the right man for the times. V. Her faith. Believed God would draw Sisera into the snare; believed the time of Israel's deliverance had come.

The summit of Tabor. — Here we are, on the top of Tabor! Let us breathe our tired animals beneath this fine old oak at the entrance into the fortress. You observe that a fosse once protected the wall on all this part of the summit, because it is less precipitous than elsewhere. This narrow plot on the north side, I suppose, was leveled into its present shape, by the inhabitants of this ancient city, for gardens, or to make a hippodrome and parade-ground. South of this a rocky ridge rises some fifty feet higher, and the entire summit was surrounded by a heavy wall, strengthened with towers at suitable distances, and further defended by a ditch when needed. These works are obviously of very different ages; and history not only accounts for, but demands them. There was a town here, and no doubt fortified, at or before the time of Joshua. Here Barak and Deborah assembled the thousands of Naphtali to attack Sisera. And Tabor is never lost sight of, either by Hebrew historian or poet. It has, therefore, a story many times too long for us to repeat. — Canaanitish, Jewish, Græco Macedonian, Roman, Christian, Saracenic, Frank, and Turk. — Thomson, *Land and the Book*.

10-13. (10) at his feet, following him, Ex. xi. 8, marg. went up, to meeting-place on Tabor. (11) R. V., "Heber the Kenite had severed himself from the Kenites, even from the children of Hobab," the brother-in-law of Moses." Kenites, Ge. xv. 19; Nu. xxiv. 21, 22. plain, R. V., "Oak in Zaanannim," Jos. xix. 33. (12) to mount Tabor, probably Barak, for security's sake, had gone up into the mountain district, where Sisera would be unable to follow him with his chariots. (13) gathered, by cry, or proclamation; as marg. from . . Kishon, the entire plain of Esdraelon.

Heber the Kenite (vs. 11). — I. A man descended from an idolatrous ancestry. II. A man who was saved the doom of his countrymen by a timely separation. III. A man who proved the sincerity of his conversion by the aid he rendered Israel. Sisera's hope (vs. 13). — Chariots of iron. I. He illustrates the vain confidences of those who make not the Lord their trust. Historical examples. II. He illustrates the fate of those whose dependence is in the creature. His own chariots made the confusion of his defeat the greater.

Men at his feet. — The phrase "men at his feet" did not, I believe, refer to any particular class of soldiers, but applied to all, whether they fought in chariots, on horses, or on foot. This form of speech is used in Eastern books to show how many obey or serve under the general. It may be taken from the action of a slave being prostrate at the feet of his master, denoting submission or obedience. In this way devotees, when addressing the gods, always speak of themselves as being at their feet. When the orientals speak of His Majesty of Britain, they often allude to the millions who are at his feet. — Roberts.

14-17. (14) And Deborah said, we may almost trace the decadence of Israel in this history. No high priest, with the sacred Urim and Thummim, stands before God's altar to ask His will, as in Joshua's days, or even those of Phinehas. See ch. xx. The sacred fire is no longer to be found in official quarters; it descends wherever an heart can be found capable of receiving it. — Camb. Bib. went down, though the plain gave great advantage to Sisera's chariots. A sudden onslaught ere Sisera was prepared for battle. (15) discomfited, produced a panic. This was the last stand made by the Canaanites against Israelite supremacy. off his chariot, either bec. stuck fast in the morass, or fearing recognition if in it. (16) Sisera tries to get out of the regular course of flight. (17) tent of Jael, the manners of the east, then as now, did not allow strange men to enter a woman's tent.^b Hence, if permitted, in his urgent need, to enter, he was safe from Barak's pursuit.

Decision and indecision contrasted. — When Gen. Suwaroff commanded, under the Prince of Coburg, on the frontiers of Turkey, he had an army of twenty-two thousand men. Coburg himself had thirty-seven thousand, and the Turks only twenty-eight thousand. Prince Coburg's army, which had taken a good position on a rising ground, about nine miles distant from Suwaroff, was attacked, and obliged to fall back. Coburg then wrote to Suwaroff, "I was attacked this morning by the Turks. I have lost my position and artillery. I send you no instructions what to do. Use your own judgment, only let me know what you have done as soon after as you can." Suwaroff immediately sent the following answer: "I shall attack the Turks to-morrow morning, drive them from your position, and retake your cannon." Before three o'clock in the afternoon Suwaroff kept his word; and Coburg's army had the cannon and their old position before night. — Percy Anec.

18-21. (18) turn in, my lord, the disgraceful treachery of Jael has been thought to be palliated by the sacred historian, and it has been supposed that Christians were bound to defend it. No such necessity is laid upon us. The act was utterly indefensible, and was rendered more completely so because it is an Eastern custom, and no doubt was so in the days of Jael — a custom which scarcely the most treacherous and unprincipled Arab ever fails to observe — that any one who has partaken food under a man's roof is safe from molestation. — Camb. Bib. mantle, rug, or coverlet. (19) bottle, made of skin; giving this was sign of friendliness.^c (21) nail, prob. a spare tent-pin. to wh. the ropes were fastened. hammer, the mallet used in driving pin into the ground. This was violation of hospitality, and murder.^d fastened it, R. V., "it pierced through."

Butter in the East. — The method of making butter in the East illustrates the conduct of Jael, the wife of Heber, described in the Book of Judges:

B. C. 1316.

Barak and Sisera summon their armies

a Nu. x. 29; Ju. i. 16. The transactions of Providence are not seen clearly at first; the painter at the first makes but a rough draught of his picture — first a hand, then an eye; but when he hath filled up every part and laid on his colors, it is beautiful to behold; we who live in this age of the church see but a rough draught of God's Providence, but when we reach heaven, and see all the lineaments of God's Providence drawn out and completed, all will be perfection and wisdom and mercy — kindness and love will seal the whole.

the army of Sisera routed

b Ge. xxiv. 67. "Wouldst thou know the lawfulness of the action which thou desirest to undertake, let thy devotion recommend it to Divine blessing; if it be lawful thou shalt perceive thy heart encouraged by thy prayer; if unlawful, thou shalt find thy prayer discouraged by thy heart. That action is not warrantable which either blushes to beg a blessing, or, having succeeded, dares not present a thanksgiving."

— Quarles.

Sisera is killed by

Jael

c "It is an ancient practice, common to all Bedouins, Arabs, etc., that whosoever has eaten or drunk anything in the tent is received into the peace of the house. The Arab's mortal enemy slumbers securely in the tent of his adversary, if he has drunk with him." — Lange. d "Though praised

B. C. 1316.

in the song, the eulogy must be considered as pronounced, not on the moral character of the woman, and on her deed, but on the public benefits wh. in the overruling providence of God, would flow from it." — *Jamieson*. Why did the "Invincible Armada" perish, despite the beauty of its vessels, and the long-tried experience of its mariners? Probably the very fact that it called itself invincible had some share in its defeat. God allows us the epithet only after the fact.

B. C. 1296.

the song of Deborah
praise to God

a "For the leading of the leaders in Israel, for the free self-offering of the people, praise Jehovah!" — *Stanley*.

b Ps. lxxviii. 7-9;
Ha. lii. 3-12.

c Prayer Bk. ver.
of Ps. lxxviii. 8.

the exploits
of Shamgar
rehearsed,
and the
decline of
Israel

d "The obscure, tortuous paths were the only means of communication." — *Stanley*.
e "There was no one to do justice in the gate." — *Spk. Com.*

"And Sisera said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink, for I am thirsty: and she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him." In the song of Deborah the statement is repeated: "He asked water, and she gave him milk, she brought forth butter in a lordly dish." The word (*hemah*) which our translators rendered butter, properly signifies cream, which is undoubtedly the meaning of it in this passage, for Sisera complained of thirst, and asked a little water to quench it, a purpose to which butter is but little adapted. Mr. Harmer, indeed, urges the same objection to cream, which, he contends, few people would think a very proper beverage for one that was extremely thirsty; and concludes that it must have been butter-milk which Jael, who had just been churning, gave to Sisera. — *Paxton*.

22-24. (22) whom thou seekest, Barak wanted to complete his victory by putting to death, or taking prisoner, the general of the army. (23) God subdued, they must see past the secondary to the chief agent.

Lessons suggested by defeat of Sisera. — I. That which was the chief boast of the heathen oppressor, and the chief terror of Israel, proved to be one of the chief causes of Israel's salvation, and of the enemy's overthrow — chariots of iron. II. That faith is the highest reason. III. A type of the final overthrow of Satan. IV. An emblem of encouragement to ourselves in the daily struggle with evil.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1-5. (1) sang Deborah, "This poem is one of the oldest monuments of Hebrew literature, much older than any of the prose stories of the judges. We may surmise that it was preserved in one of those collections of old Hebrew poetry, like the *Book of Jasher*, and the *Book of the Wars of JHVH*, from wh. the historians quote." — *Polychrome B.* (2) praise ye, etc., R. V., "For that the leaders took the lead in Israel. For that the people offered themselves willingly. Bless ye the Lord." (3) kings, this and the two following verses celebrate the glorious deeds of Jehovah. (4) out of Seir, "JHVH is described as leaving His sacred mountain in the distant South to fight with His people against their foes." — *Polychrome Bib.* the earth trembled, "to the prophetic spirit of Deborah the earthquake becomes a powerful symbol, a symbol of the creature's humility and awe on account of the sacred nearness of God." (5) Sinai, prob. here used as figure."

God praised by a song (vs. 1). — I. A very natural expression of rejoicing. II. A very proper expedient for spreading the knowledge and perpetuating the remembrance of great events. — *M. Henry*.

Songs on the battle-field. — A Western captain as he lay on the battle-field of Shiloh, suffered greatly from a fatal gunshot-wound through both thighs, and from thirst. He said, "The stars shone out clear and beautiful above the dark field; and I began to think of that great God who had given His Son to die a death of agony for me; and that He was up there — up above the scene of suffering, and above those glorious stars; and I felt that I was going home to meet Him, and praise Him there; and I felt that I ought to praise God, even wounded, and on the battlefield. I could not help singing that beautiful hymn, 'When I can read my title clear,' etc. And," said he, "there was a Christian brother in the brush near me. I could not see him; but I could hear him. He took up the strain; and beyond him another and another caught it up, all over the terrible battlefield of Shiloh. That night, the echo was resounding; and we made the field of battle ring with the hymns of praise to God."

6-9. (6) Shamgar, here a new subject is introduced — the downtrodden condition of Israel before the battle. Shamgar's was probably only a local deliverance. highways, etc., the ordinary roads were unsafe. Vivid picture of unsettled times.^d (7) villages, R. V., "the rulers' ceased in Israel, they ceased." a mother, to the grown people she was as mother to a child. (8) new gods, other than Jehovah. spear seen, this cannot mean that the Israelites had no weapons (as in 1 Sam. xiii. 22), for if so, the battle of Mount Tabor could not have been fought. It means that such was their condition of servitude, that they dared not display them. (9) heart is toward, i. e. is full of admiration of. Here we return to the idea of vs. 2, the willingness of the leaders in Israel.

The soldier's honor (vss. 8, 9).—I have chosen two strains of this song, from which, as they shall teach me, so I purpose to teach you, to bless the Lord that teacheth us all. The Lord give me a tongue to sing it, and you ears to hear it, and us all hearts to embrace it. Herein I observe—I. Great affliction. In the affliction I find three points of war: 1. The alarm: "they chose new gods." (1) "They chose," a frank choice, no compelling; (2) "Gods," And they a nation trained up in the knowledge of one God; (3) "New gods." Will any other nation change their gods? 2. The battle; "war in the gates." (1) "War," the nature of it; (2) "Then," the time of it: when "they chose new gods;" (3) "The gates," the place of it: this an extreme progress of war; 3. The forlorn hope: "was there a shield," etc. War in the gates, and yet no weapons! Two inferences from this part of the subject: (1) That war at some times is just and necessary; (2) That munitions and arms should at all times be in readiness. II. Great affection: "my heart," etc. Set upon—1. Men: "the governors of Israel;" 2. God: "Bless ye the Lord."—*T. Adams.*

Roads in the East.—There are roads in these countries, but it is very easy to turn out of them, and go to a place by winding about over the lands, when that is thought safer. The account Bishop Pococke gives of the manner in which that Arab, under whose care he had put himself, conducted him to Jerusalem, illustrates this with great liveliness, which his lordship tells us was by night, and not by the high road, but through the fields; "and I observed," says he, "that he avoided as much as he could going near any village or encampment, and sometimes stood still, as I thought, to harken." And just in that manner people were obliged to travel in Judea, in the days of Shamgar and Jael.—*Harmer.*

10-13. (10) *white asses*,^a white dappled she asses, scarce and costly, a breed peculiar to the East, and a mark, in those days, of persons of distinction. in judgment, *R. V.*, "on rich carpets." *walk by the way*, the common people. (11) *R. V.*, "far from the noise of archers," omitting "they that are delivered." *places . . water*,^b reference to the wells outside the towns. *toward the inhabitants, etc.*, *R. V.*, "righteous acts of his rule in Israel." *down to the gates*, coming from their hiding places to dwell again in the towns. (12) *awake*, a new division of the song. The attention of the hearer is re-awakened by this lively appeal to Deborah and Barak. *captivity*, *captive*, pointing to the captive Canaanites. This is one of the expressions from this song made use of in Ps. lxxviii. (13) *him that remaineth, R. V.*, "Then came down a remnant of the nobles and the people; the Lord came down for me against the mighty;" the remnant left of the persecution.

Blessings of peace.—Of these this passage gives us a vivid picture. I. Nobles whose equipages made them conspicuous for a prey. II. Judges whose administration of justice was suspended. III. Travelers whose mercantile pursuits had been hindered. IV. Shepherds whose well had been stopped, or the approaches cut off. V. Simple villagers whose life and property had been threatened were to rejoice with accord, while the prophetess and the hero led the song.

The ambush at the fountain.—Dr. Shaw mentioned a beautiful rill in Barbary, which is received into a large basin, called, *shrub ue krub*, "Drink and away," there being great danger of meeting there with rogues and assassins. If such places are proper for the lurking of murderers in times of peace, they must be proper for the lying in ambush in times of war; a circumstance that Deborah takes notice of in her song.—*Harmer.*

14-18. (14) "Out of Ephraim came those whose root is in Mount Amalek," *Ju. xii. 15. after thee, Benjamin, among thy people*, an address to Ephraim, *i. e.* Benjamin came next to Ephraim. *Machir*, western Manasseh, *Jos. xvii. 1-6. the pen, R. V.*, "the marshal's staff." Refer. is to officer who kept the muster roll. (15) *on foot, R. V.* "into the valley they rushed forth at his feet." *the divisions, R. V.*, "By the watercourses of Reuben, there were great resolves of heart." (16) *bleatings of, lit. pipings to the flocks. for the divisions, etc., R. V.* "at the watercourses of Reuben." (17) *Gilead*, name of district E. of Jordan, occupied by the tribe of Dan, *wh. is meant here. breaches, R. V.*, "creeks."^d (18) *jeopardied, exposed to peril.*

The divisions of Reuben (vss. 15, 16).—I. Explain the word "divisions."

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"There ceased to be heads in Israel."—*Staley.*

"We speak much about the fathers of the Church, and the fathers of the nation, and are apt to forget that the 'mothers in Israel' have often been more heroic than the fathers, and that their very gentleness has become their strength in time of danger."—*Parker.*

"I knew a very wise man that believed that if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation."—*Andrew Fletcher.*

"What is defeat? Nothing but education, nothing but the first step to something better."—*Wendell Phillips.*

princes and others exhorted to praise God

a *Ju. x. 4; xii. 14.*

b "From amidst the shouting of the dividers of spoils, between the water-troughs."—*Staley.*

"No peace was ever won from fate by subterfuge or agreement; no peace is ever in store for any of us, but that which we shall win by victory over shame or sin"—*Ruskin.*

the divisions of Reuben

c *Nu. xxxii. 1-8; Ge. xlix. 4.*

d *Jos. xix. 29.*

e *O. Eng. fuportie, fr. feu partie, an even game. Afterwards confounded with Fr. jeu perdu, a lost game.*

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The wicked are repelled by any obstacles, however slight, in the way to heaven, but they make great efforts to gratify their lusts.

the stars and the river

"Came not to the help of the Lord. To the help of the Lord's people; for He takes what is done to His people, as done to Himself; and what is withheld from them is withheld from Himself."—*Bush.*

the exploit of Jael

vs. 25. "The approaches of sin are like the conduct of Jael, it brings butter in a lordly dish. It bids high for the soul. But when it has fascinated and lulled the victim, the nail and hammer are behind."—*Cecil.*

conclusion of the song of Deborah

1. Not dissensions in the tribe of Reuben; or 2. Separation from the rest of Israel; but 3. The watercourses that flowed through the territory of the tribe. What happened at these divisions. When the sound of war echoed through the land the children of Reuben *thought* of what they might gain or lose by the contest; and *sought* for plausible excuses for withholding aid. Our quiet resting-places are too often places for inglorious ease rather than nurseries of noble resolutions.

The breaches of Asher.—Though the coast of that part of Syria which is denominated Palestine is not remarkable for the number of its ports, yet besides Joppa, St. John d'Acre, Caïpha under Mount Carmel, and a few others that might be named, there are some creeks, and small convenient places, where little vessels, and such as those that are used for fishing, may shelter themselves, and land what they take, though there are very few rivers on all that coast. To these places Deborah seems to refer, when she says, "Asher continued on the seashore, and abode in his breaches," or creeks, as it is translated in the margin.—*Harmer.*

19—23. (19) *the kings came*, a new subject; the gathering together of the enemy and their defeat. *Taanach*, Jos. xii. 21. *waters, etc.*, either the Kishon flowing by Megiddo, or a mill-stream running into the Kishon. *gain of money*, either no ransoms received, or no booty taken. (20) *stars*, Josephus relates that, just as the battle began, a violent tempest came on with a great downfall of rain, and a hailstorm, which, driving full in the faces of the Canaanites, so blinded and benumbed them with cold, that they could neither use their bows with effect nor even hold their swords. It was as if the heavenly bodies were fighting ag. Sisera. (21) *river*, a small stream, swelled suddenly in a storm. *O my soul, R. V.*, "O my soul, march on with strength." (22) The Polychrome Bible translates: "Then were battered the hoofs of his horses by the galloping of his chargers," and regards this *vs.* as a description of the precipitate flight of the enemy, *cf.* Nah. iii. 2.

The cursing of Meroz (vs. 23).—I. The duty of universal union of the church against a common foe is here clearly implied. II. The terrible consequences of neglecting this duty. The very site of Meroz not known. III. This neutrality was evidently exceptional.

That ancient river.—The phrase in the text seems to refer, not so much to the existence of the river for so long a time, but to the fact that it was well known in past times for its remarkable associations. So recently as 1799, in a battle between the French and the Turks, many of the latter perished in the sudden rising of its waters. In the spring season, especially, it sends down a flood of rushing waters.—*Hom. Com.*

24—27. (24) *blessed*, in contrast with Meroz. We need not suppose that because Deborah sang this song under the influence of inspiration, we are therefore to accept her judgment upon a point of morals. To her, accustomed, like her fellow-countrymen, to view all events from an Israelitish standpoint, and under the exaltation of the recent victory, Jael's conduct naturally appeared eminently glorious and heroic.—*Camb. Bib.* (25) *butter*, curds, or curdled milk. (26) *smote off, R. V.*, "smote through his head. Yea, she pierced and struck."

Jael and Sisera.—Consider this transaction as—I. An historic fact. Recount the circumstances. Justify the act. II. An emblematic record—1. Of the judgments that await God's enemies; 2. Of the triumphs that are prepared for the Lord's people."—*C. Simeon.*

Jael, a type of the unscrupulous helpers of a good cause. Long has the error prevailed that religion can be helped by using the world's weapons, by acting in the temper and spirit of the world. Of that mischievous falsehood have been born all the pride and vain-glory, the rivalries and persecutions that darken the past of Christendom, surviving in strange and pitiful forms to the present day.—*R. A. Watson.*

28—31. (28) *The mother of Sisera*, the poet hurries us off from the death-chamber of Sisera to set before us a most vivid picture in close connection with it, though in a different and remote place, in the palace of Sisera himself. The impatient expectation and awakening fears of his mother are portrayed with a few powerful strokes.—*Bib. Com.* *lattice*, openwork, for coolness, before window or round a balcony. (29) *wise ladies*, her maids of

honor. answer to herself, thought it over in her own heart. (30) **have they not sped, etc.**, *R. V.*, "Have they not found, have they not divided the spoil?" (31) **as the sun**, *Dan. xii. 3.*

The triumph of the church.—I. The fact of the triumph. 1. This implies the destruction of her enemies. (1) Spiritual. (2) Human. 2. It implies the bestowal of honor on the church. 3. It implies the enjoyment of great happiness. 4. It implies the gift of power. 5. It implies the exercise of benevolence. II. The source of this triumph. 1. It is accorded by God. 2. The rough devotion to God. 3. By silent and gradual means.—*Adeney.*

"So let all thine enemies perish."—"Though our enemies," said Henry, "are to be prayed for, God's enemies, as such, are to be prayed against; and when we see some of God's enemies remarkably humbled and brought down, that is an encouragement to us to pray for the downfall of all the rest." Thus are Deborah's words to be interpreted. Being prompted by the spirit of inspiration, they are to be regarded not only as an imprecation, but also as a prediction; a prediction which shall assuredly be accomplished in its season upon all that continue to withstand omnipotence.—*Bush.*

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"Whether such sentiments would be appropriate in our own day is not in question: we believe in the doctrine and in the fact of progressive light."—*L. H. Wiseman.*

"It is time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss."—*Shakespeare.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

B. C. 1236.

1-6. (1) **Midian**,^a nomadic people, occupying territory E. of Red Sea. This tribe was descended from a son of Abraham by Keturah (*Gen. xxv. 2*). Name applied sometimes to all Arab tribes. (2) **dens, etc.**, there are an immense number of caves in Palestine, partly natural, partly artificial. (3) **sown**, the year's harvest. This done year after year. **the children of the east**, nomadic tribes, who were ready to join the Midianites and Amalekites. There seems to have been no design of conquest in these invasions. (4) **against them**, among them with hostile intention. **Gaza**, the limit of their depredations, *Ge. x. 19; Jos. x. 41.* (5) **grasshoppers**, locusts.^b

Note on the Judges.—I. The order of judges, the nature of their office; its distinction from either the office of Joshua, or that of the later kings. They were first deliverers of the people from some foreign yoke, and then civil rulers, centres of unity and authority in the different districts. II. The influence of particular judges was felt only in parts of the country. One after another different districts got into trouble, and the deliverer was generally found among the people in the sinning and suffering region. III. The character and conduct of the judges is not always to be commended. Some of them, as Samson, ill, the wildness and immorality of the age.

Josephus thus describes this period of their history: "Now when Barak and Deborah were dead, whose deaths happened about the same time; afterwards the Midianites called the Amalekites and Arabians to their assistance, and made war against the Israelites, and were too hard for those that fought against them, and when they had burnt the fruits of the earth, they carried off the prey. Now when they had done this for three years, the multitude of the Israelites retired to the mountains, and forsook the plain country. They also made themselves hollows under ground, and caverns, and preserved therein whatsoever had escaped their enemies, for the Midianites made expeditions in harvest-time, but permitted them to plough the land in winter, so that when the others had taken pains they might have fruits for them to carry away."—*J. Antiq. B. V. ch. 6, § 1.*

7-10. (7) **cried**, *iii. 9, 15.* (8) **prophet**, to show the national sin wh. led to national calamity. The word prophet means originally one who speaks by a divine impulse. Such men are peculiar to revealed religion. Other religions had their priests, Judaism and Christianity alone had their prophets.

A timely reminder.—I. Israel's cry. 1. To whom directed; 2. The reason. II. Jehovah's answer. God sends a messenger. 1. A prophet: He was not without a witness even then; 2. The message—(1) A reminder of past deliverances; (2) A reproof for present disobedience.

The uses of discipline.—Beethoven said of Rossini that he had in him the stuff to have made a good musician if he had only been well flogged when a boy; but that he had been spoiled by the facility with which he produced. When Mendelssohn was about to enter the orchestra at Birmingham, on the first performance of his *Elijah*, he said laughingly to one of his friends and critics, "Stick your claws into me. Don't tell me what you like, but what

oppression under Midian

^a *Ge. xxv. 2; Nu. xxxi. 1-18.*

^b *Ex. x. 4-6; Joel i., ii.*

Avoid the beginnings of sin.—

"Those who would not fall into the river must not approach too near the banks. He who would not drink of the wine of wrath, must not touch the cup of pleasure. He who would not hear the passing bell of eternal death, should not finger the rope of sin."—*Secker.*

"A desire to resist oppression is implanted in the nature of man."—*Tacitus.*

"Defeat is a school in which truth always grows strong."—*Beecher.*

Israel's cry and the prophet's warning

"Men think God is destroying them because He is tuning them. The violinist screws up the key till the tense cord sounds the concert-pitch; but it is not to break it, but to use it tunelessly, that

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he stretches the string upon the musical rack." — *Beecher.*

Gideon
his call

a Jos. xviii. 23.

"Close by the smooth level was a cave, into which the juice of the grapes ran off . . . and which Gideon now used to hide the corn from the rapacious invaders. Above this cave, as it would seem, stood a rock, in the midst of a grove of trees, amongst which was the most conspicuous was a well-known terebinth, spreading its wide branches alike over the rock and the wine-press." — *Stanley.*

he asks for
a sign

b Ex. iii. 11.

c 1 Sa. ix. 21.

d "Its double sense of offering to God, or a gift to man, suits the doubt in Gideon's mind as to who his visitor might be." — *Spk. Com.*

"The proper means of increasing the love we bear our native country is to reside some time in a foreign one." — *Shenstone.*

"An extreme rigor is sure to arm everything against it." — *Burke.*

Jehovah-shalom

e Ge. xix. 3.

f Ge. xxxv. 14.

g "It was a belief prevalent in ancient times, that whoever saw an angel would forthwith die." — *Jamieson.*

you don't like." Washington lost far more battles than he gained, but he succeeded in the end. The Romans, in their most victorious campaigns, almost invariably began with defeats. Wellington's military genius was perfected by encounters with difficulties of apparently the most overwhelming character. — *Smiles.*

11-14. (11) an angel of the Lord, in human form, as was usual, on this occasion Jehovah, or His angel, appeared in the guise of a traveler, with a staff (*vs.* 21) in His hand. an oak, *R. V.*, "this oak," the well-known oak or terebinth. Ophrah, disting. from Oph. of Benj.^a A village or farm belonging to Joash. Abi-ezrite, Jos. xvii. 2. threshed, *etc.*, in an unusual and unsuitable place. This shows the straits to which Israel was reduced by the incursions of these bands of marauders. wine-press, the place in wh. the pressing is done. (12) mighty, *etc.*, prophecy of what he would be. (13) my Lord, simple term of respect. (14) looked upon him, phrase signif. to look graciously, giving strength by his look. thy might, with which he was now endowed.

Historical characters. — The great and successful men of history are commonly made by the great occasions they fill. They are the men who had faith to meet such occasions, and therefore the occasions marked them, called them to come and be what the successes of their faith would make them. The boy is but a shepherd, but he hears from his panic-stricken countrymen of the giant champion of their enemies. A fire seizes him, and he goes down, with nothing but his sling and his heart of faith, to lay that champion in the dust. Next he is a great military leader; next the king of his country. As with David, so with Nehemiah; as with him, so with Paul; as with him, so with Luther. A Socrates, a Tully, a Cromwell, a Washington — all the great master-spirits, the founders and lawgivers of empires, and defenders of the rights of man — are made by the same law. These did not shrink despairingly within the compass of their poor abilities; but in their heart of faith they embraced each one his cause, and went forth, under the inspiring force of their call, to apprehend that for which they were apprehended. — *Bushnell.*

15-18. (15) my lord, Gideon now perceived his speaker was more than a traveler. Comp. Moses^b and Saul.^c poor, *lit.* "my thousand is the meanest," the thousand being probably a division for military purposes. (16) with thee, assurance as given to Mos. and Josh. (17) found grace, *Ge. vi. 8, xviii. 3, xix. 19, shew me a sign*, here as in *vs. 13*, we see the deep self-distrust of Gideon. He requires these several signs before he will lead Israel forth to battle. (18) present, *lit. mincha*, meat-offering.^d

The call of Gideon. — I. The call and its attendant promise. A call to work; a great work, a noble work, a dangerous work. The promise not of Divine aid only, but also of Divine presence. II. The signs, and their comforting assurances. Consumed sacrifice showed angel was really from God. God graciously in the others met Gideon's own wishes.

Eastern threshing-floors. — In Palestine, as in Greece and Italy, the floor was for the most part in the open air. Thus the threshing-floor of Gideon appears to have been an open uncovered space, upon which the dews of heaven fell without interruption. But a barn, or covered space, had been unfit for such an experiment. The threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, seems also to have been an open area, else it had not been a proper place for erecting an altar, and offering sacrifice. In the prophecies of Hosea the idolaters of Israel are compared to the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor. Hence it was designedly prepared in a place to which the wind had free access on all sides; and from this exposed situation it derived its name in Hebrew. — *Paxton.*

19-24. (19) ephah, three measures, usual quantity for one baking. flesh, cut into strips, and toasted. broth, for immediate use. (20) this rock, used as an altar. pour out, *etc.*, as a libation.^f (21) fire, hence arose a belief that all celestial beings would eat no earthly food (*cf. ch. xiii. 16*), and thus some Rabbinic expositors explain *Gen. xviii. 8* that angels only seemed to eat. That Gideon was not acting, as some have supposed, under such a belief, may be seen from his surprise and dismay when he found that the being to whom he was speaking was an angel. — *Camb. Bib.* (22) alas, trembling and fear succeeds visions of God. See Moses, Josh., Job, Is., St.

John, etc. (23) **the Lord**, not now the angel. **thou shalt not die**, the idea of the vision of God being fatal to the life of man was common in these early times. (24) **Jehovah-shalom**, the Lord is peace. More of a monument than an altar.

The accepted sacrifice. — Concerning Gideon's note — I. Of what it consisted. II. How it was offered and accepted. III. What the acceptance signified. The person of Gideon accepted. Peace and safety. Both these procured by Christ our Sacrifice for us. Well might Gideon call his memorial Jehovah-shalom.

The flesh in the basket. — There is a passage in Dr. Shaw that affords a perfect comment on this text: "Besides a bowl of milk, and a basket of figs, raisins or dates, which upon our arrival were presented to us, to stay our appetites, the master of the tent where we lodged fetched us from his flock, according to the number of our company, a kid or a goat, a lamb or a sheep, half of which was immediately seethed by his wife, and served with cuscasoe; the rest was made kabab, *i. e.* cut into pieces and roasted, which we reserved for our breakfast or dinner next day." May we not imagine that Gideon, presenting some slight refreshment to the supposed prophet, according to the present Arab mode, desired him to stay till he could provide something more substantial for him; that he immediately killed a kid, seethed part of it, made kabab of another part of it, and when it was ready, brought the stewed meat in a pot, with unleavened cakes of bread which he had baked; and kabab in a basket for his carrying away with him, and serving him for some after repast in his journey? I never could, till I met with these remarks, account for his bringing the meat out to the angel in a basket. As for Gideon's leaving the supposed prophet under a tree, while he was busied in his house, instead of introducing him into some apartment of his habitation, and bringing the repast out to him there, we have seen some thing of it under the last observation. I would here add, that not only Arabs that live in tents, and their dependents, practice it still, but those also that live in houses, as did Gideon. Dr. Pococke frequently observed it among the Maronites, and was so struck with this conformity of theirs to ancient customs, that he could not forbear taking particular notice of it; laymen of quality and ecclesiastics, the patriarchs and bishops, as well as poor obscure priests, thus treating their guests. — *Harmer*.

25-27. (25) **the Lord said**, in vision. This incident is mentioned in the preceding verse by anticipation. **even**, or *and*: bullocks seem intended. **throw down**, prob. labor of bullocks required for this work. ^a **grove**, ^b *R. V.*, "Asherah." "The Asherah or sacred pole was doubtless dedicated to Baal. Such poles or posts seem to have stood at ev. Canaanite place of worship (Ex. xxiv. 13; Dent. xii. 3), and were erected by the Israelites beside the altars of JHVH (1 Ki. xiv. 23; 2 Ki. xvii. 10) and even in the temple in Jerusalem (2 Ki. xxi. 7; xxiii. 6)." — *Polychrome B.* (26) **this rock**, *R. V.*, "strong hold." It shows how deeply the plague of idol worship had eaten into the heart of Israel, that it was consecrated to Baal and not to Jehovah. **ordered place**, *R. V.*, "in the orderly manner." (27) **father's household**, house of fathers, as Nu. i. 2.

Difficult duties of faithful men. — I. The duty was plain since the command was so explicit, and from God himself. II. The execution was difficult. Opposition to be feared — 1. From his father's household; either they were idolaters, or would be unwilling to spare the animal; 2. From the men of the city. III. It was resolutely performed in the way that, under the circumstances, was best. Learn to be as ingenious in devising plans for the execution of duty, as the godless are for evading it.

Excuse from duty. — When Palamedes came to Ithaca to invite Ulysses to join in the expedition against Troy, the latter, unwilling to engage in the undertaking, betook himself to ploughing the sand, and sowing salt, on the pretence of being visited with insanity. There are multitudes as insane as Ulysses, who betake themselves to works as insane, and all in the way of pretense to excuse themselves from the duties to which God calls them.

28-32. (28) **altar . . built**, close by, and with materials of idol altar. (29) **asked**, Gid. did not try to conceal his act. (30) **die**, here we again see how deep-seated was Baal-worship in Israel at this time. There was an utter forgetfulness of God displayed here. (31) Emphasis lies on word *ye*. Baal, if a

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"Jehovah-shalom," "The Lord, Peace," one of the beautiful, instructive, comforting names by which God has revealed Himself to man. Many have seen the picture of the martyr asleep. The jailer is coming to open the door, the crowd awaits the spectacle in the amphitheatre, the lions, fierce with hunger, are thirsting for blood, but the Christian sleeps, with a deep repose expressed in his features. He is at peace with God."

"Be just, and fear not; let all the ends thou aimest at be thy country's, thy God's, and truth's." *Shakespeare*.

Gideon destroys the altar of Baal

^a "Altars of Baal, as the superior Sun-god, were located on heights or elevated situations. They were built of stone, sometimes also of wood or earth, and were of considerable massiveness." — *Lange*.

^b Ju. iii. 7.

Men are valued, not by their usefulness on great occasions, but by the way in which they discharge the common-place duties of life.

Gideon's name is changed

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a 1 Ki. xviii. 27.

b "That is — 'Will Baal contend with him? It sets forth the utter impotence of Baal, and the mockery which it excited.'" — *Lange*.

"Joash quieted the mob in a manner similar to that of the town-clerk of Ephesus. It was not for them to take the matter into their own hands. The one, however, made an appeal to the magistrate, the other to the idolatrous god himself." — *Chalmers*.

Gideon calls Israel to arms

c "The S. part of the Ghor lies in a very low level, so that there is a steep and difficult descent into Canaan by the southern wadies. Keeping this in view, we see the reason why the Mid. army, fr. E. of Jordan, entered Canaan by the northern wadies of the Ghor, opposite Jezreel." — *Jarvis*.

d *Scott's Lady of the Lake*.

Gideon's fleece

e "God's own character is well indicated in the sign of the fleece, cool in heat of all around, dry when all around are damped by fear." — *Ewald*.

f Ge. xviii. 32.

"Sailors have used every night to hang fleeces of wool on the sides of their ships towards the water,

god, could take care of himself." His son's peril and his own evident authority in his city prompts him to meet the demand for the death of Gideon by a demand more in accordance with the national institutions, namely the death of those who would derogate from the honor of Israel's God. — *Camb. Bib.* (32) *Jerubbaal*,^b comp. *Jerub-bosheth*, 2 Sa. xi. 21; *bosheth*, a term of reproach for Baal.

Joash defending Gideon. (vs. 31). — The conduct of Joash leads us to remark — I. That if we have been zealous in a bad cause, we should with greater zeal seek to amend what we have done amiss, by our open advocacy of the truth. II. Nothing must prevail upon us to give up the innocent, whoever combine to destroy them. Though it may be highly dangerous to reprove a wicked people, we must do our duty, and trust God with the event. — *G. Bush*.

The impotency of idols. — When Pomare, King of Tahiti, gave up heathenism, he ordered a chief to chop his gods in pieces. The priests threatened Divine vengeance, but beginning with a trembling hand, and finding no evil result, he completed the work heartily. After the last decisive battle, Pomare told the people to commit Cero (the god of war) to the flames. Instead of entering the temple, some bold spirits fired into it, saying, "Now, ye gods, if ye be gods, and have any power, come forth, and avenge these insults!" The gazing multitude were amazed, both at the rashness of the assailants and the impotence of the gods. At last the house was pulled down, shots were poured into the idols and they were burnt to ashes.

33-35. (33) went over, Jordan; their crossing place near *Bethshean*,^c now Beisân. The river is fordable in many places near Bethshean. *Jezreel*, plain of Esdraelon, the great battle ground of Canaan. Dr. Bartlett remarks on the singular group of memories connected with the spot, Barak and Deborah, Sisera, Gideon, Saul and Jonathan, Ahab and Jezebel, Jehu, Josiah, Holofernes and Judith, Vespasian and Josephus, Saladin and the Knights Templar, Bonaparte and Kléber. He might have added two others to the various list, the famous Egyptian conquerors, Thothmes III. and Rameses II., better known as Sesostris, who invaded Syria by this route. — *Camb. Bib.* (34) blew a trumpet, the well-known war call. His own tribe responded heartily. (35) messengers, heralds. Comp. calling of Scotch clans.^d

Preparing for war. — Gideon saw the coming struggle and — I. Himself sounded the war-cry. II. Sent messengers to arouse Israel. III. His call to arms recognized by the tribes. Note: Asher, rebuked for past supineness by Deborah, also responds.

"To meet them." — Most probably the sense is that the remaining tribes who were summoned went up to meet those who were already in the field, to "effect a junction with them," as military historians say. The Midianites were a mere disorganized rabble, as the event shows. A glance at the map will shew that the junction in this case might easily have been prevented, since Asher, Zabulon and Naphtali were on the north, and the territory of the Manassites on the south, of the plain of Jezreel, and the huge hosts of the marauders lay in reckless confidence (ch. vii. 14) between them. — *Camb. Bible*.

36-40. (36) If thou wilt, then graciously confirm thy purpose with a sign. "He that hath might enough to deliver Israel, hath not might enough to keep himself from doubting." — *Bp. Hall*. (37) fleece,^e prob. a whole one, wool would collect the dew. floor, threshing-floor. Smooth, circular space, in the open air. (38) early, to be sure no one had tampered with it. (39) anger be hot, asking another sign was, he feared, a trial of Div. patience.^f The severity of the Mosaic Law has been much exaggerated. Nothing could be more tender than the way in which God bore with the weak faith of Gideon, as of Moses before him (Exod. iv. 10-17). Upon the obstinate guilty, His wrath must fall. But wherever there was a spark of faith, He is ever revealed as dealing tenderly with it, that it may have time to grow into a flame. — *Camb. Bib.*

Gideon's fleece. — In these verses we see displayed — I. The weakness of man. Gideon could not give full credit to the work of God. II. The condescension of God. God accedes to his request. III. The efficacy of prayer. 1. Prayer prevailed here; 2. God will answer our prayers now. — *C. Simeon*.

The dews of the East. — It may seem a little improbable to us who inhabit these northern climates, where the dews are inconsiderable, how Gideon's

fleece, in one night should contract such a quantity, that when he came to wring it, a bowl full of water was produced. Irwin, in his voyage up the Red Sea, when on the Arabian shores, says, "Difficult as we find it to keep ourselves cool in the daytime, it is no easy matter to defend our bodies from the damps of the night, when the wind is loaded with the heaviest dews that ever fell; we lie exposed to the whole weight of the dews, and the cloaks in which we wrap ourselves, are as wet in the morning as if they had been immersed in the sea." — *Burder*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1-4. (1) well, *R. V.*, "spring." Harod, *i. e.*, *trembling*: so named fr. fear of people, *vs. 3*; mod. Ain Jalud, fountain of Jezreel. hill of Moreh, prob. little Hermon, *Jebel-el-Dukky*. (2) too many, "And now whiles the Israelites think, we are too few; God says, The people are too many." — *Bp. Hall*. vaunt, boast. (3) go to, *Ge. xi. 3.* fearful, *De. xx. 8.* mount Gilead, prob. *Gilboa*. and there returned of the people, this does not say much for the martial spirit of Israel at this time — only one-third of the Hebrew army was left with the leader. (4) water, of the brook.

The Lord saveth not with sword and spear. — I. Gideon's army was not great at the first — 1. When compared with the number and warlike character of the foe; 2. When compared with former armies of Israel. II. But too great for the accomplishment of the main purpose — 1. The quickening of Israel's faith in God; 2. Giving a warning to Israel's enemies.

There returned of the people twenty and two thousand. — The application of a rigid test is apt to make thinning work in the ranks of God's professed friends. One would have thought that against such an enemy as Midian, and under such a leader as Gideon, no Israelite would have owned himself fearful and proved recreant to his duty. Yet two parts out of three turned their backs upon their country's standard when they saw the numbers and the strength of the enemy! Alas, if it should be found that the true and constant hearts enlisted under the banner of Christ bear no larger proportion than this to the whole number, who will not do well to fear and tremble for his own fidelity? — *Bush*.

5-8. (5) lappeth, not putting mouth to water as a dog, but catching up some in hand, and lapping fr. it. (6) the people, the remaining 10,000. (7) Gideon's faith must now be put to the test. (8) took victuals, took what they required for their enterprise fr. the people, before they left. This accounts for each of 300 having pitchers, lamps, and trumpets.

Gideon's army (*vs. 7.*) — Here were — I. Three hundred earnest men. The rest of the ten thousand drank at their ease. These stand, arms in hand, erect; not thinking unnecessarily about themselves, eager for the fray. II. Three hundred united men: one mind in those three hundred. Not merely external union, but union of heart and soul is required. III. Three hundred brave men. Only three hundred left, and yet none discouraged. IV. Three hundred believing men. So strong was their faith that, when the time came, they were willing to lay aside their weapons, and content themselves with the God-directed use of "lamps, pitchers, and trumpets." V. Three hundred selected men: selected that all Israel might learn that the battle is God's, and that all His enemies might know that opposition to Him is in vain.

The three hundred. — The same principles which run through the choice of God's instruments on other occasions appear here. The instruments are to be such in quality or in quantity as to make it quite manifest that the excellency of the power is God's, not man's, and yet the instruments themselves are to be conspicuous for their rare excellence. The shepherd boy who sat on the throne of Israel was manifestly made to sit on that throne by the appointment of God; but what a ruler, what a noble character David was! It has always been deemed one of the proofs of the Divine origin of Christianity that its apostles were men of such humble station, and yet were able to change the whole religion and morality of the world, and yet what noble stuff Peter and John and Paul were made of! — *Pul. Com.*

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and they have crushed fresh water out of them in the morning." — *Spk. Com.*

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Gideon's army

"The Hottentots have a curious custom. On a journey, immediately on coming to water, they stoop, but no farther than sufficient to allow their right hand to reach the water, by which they throw it up so dexterously, that their hand seldom approaches nearer to their mouth than a foot; yet I never observed any of the water to fall down upon their breasts. They perform it almost as quickly as the dog, and satisfy their thirst in half the time taken by another man." — *African Light*.

Gideon's three hundred men

a "The wandering people in Asia, when on a journey or in haste they come to water, do not stoop down with deliberation on their knees, but only bend forward as much as is necessary, to bring their hand in contact with the stream, and throw it up with rapidity, and at the same time such address that they do not drop a particle." — *Jamieson*.

Comp. company at Thermopylae and cavalry attack at Balaklava.

"Originality proves originality." — *Goethe*.

9-14. (9) arise, get thee down, a command to go and smite the host; but knowing Gideon's distrustful disposition, Jehovah bids him first to take an

the cake of barley bread

B. C. 1249.

a Ge. xxii. 17; Ju. vi. 5; Is. xlviii. 19.

"That the interpreter should hit upon the explanation given is not, therefore, very wonderful; and if the Midianites were accustomed, in their extemporaneous songs, to call Gideon and his band, 'eaters of barley bread,' as their successors, these haughty Bedawin, often do to ridicule their enemies, the application would be all the more natural." — *Thomson*.

"When monarch reason sleeps, this mimic wakes." — *Dryden*.

"A certain degree of fear produces the same effects as rashness." — *Cardinal de Retz*.

Gideon's night attack

b Nu. xliii. 21.

Three companies, to produce the impression of a large army, and make their enemy think he was entirely surrounded, so producing panic and disorder. Ancient warfare largely employed stratagem. See Saul's imitation (1 Sam. xi. 11). vs. 16. The trumpets had been taken from the regiments dismissed. Earthen jars or pitchers are largely used in the East for water. The lamps were torches or splinters of resinous wood, still used to give light in some countries. The battle-cry of the roundheads was, "The Lord of Hosts, the Lord of Hosts is with us," that of the cavaliers was, "The King and Constitution."

lamps, pitchers and trumpets

c "The sleepers

attendant and go down to listen to the talk of the host. (11) **armed men**, the meaning of this word has been much disputed. It occurs only here and in Exod. xiii. 18; Josh. i. 14, iv. 12. As it is related to the Hebrew word for five, it probably means *in battle array*, which usually is in five divisions, the van, the centre, the two wings, and the rear. In spite of the disorder reigning in the camp of the Midianites, they probably had not abandoned the five-fold arrangement. — *Camb. Bib.* (12) **grasshoppers**, locusts. Obs. Eastern extravagance of expression. (13) **barley bread**, the food of the poor and of beasts; expressing contempt for Israel. (14) This ans. shows a panic had already begun.

The Midianite soldier: the power of the little (vs. 13-15) — This dream ill. the power of the little — (1) By representing a great end reached by most insignificant instrumentality; (2) By influence it had upon the mind of Gideon. The power of the little furnishes — I. An argument for special Providence. II. A lesson for our every-day life. 1. Despise not things of humble aspect; 2. Cultivate an appreciation of the little; 3. Recognize God's presence in the minute as well as the vast. — *Thomas*.

Barley bread. — Barley bread is in some regions of the East commonly used by the lower orders. In the Roman camp, as Vegetius and Livy inform us, soldiers who had been guilty of any offense, were fed with barley, instead of bread corn. An example of this punishment is recorded in the history of the second Punic war. The cohorts that lost their standards, had an allowance of barley assigned by Marcellus. And Augustus Caesar commonly punished the cohorts which gave way to the enemy by a decimation, and allowing them no provision but barley. So mean and contemptible, in the estimation of the numerous and well-appointed armies of Midian, was Gideon, with his handful of undisciplined militia; but guided by the wisdom, and supported by the power of the living God, he inflicted a deserved and exemplary punishment on these proud oppressors. — *Paxton*.

15-18. (15) **host of Israel**, the 300 prepared men. At once Gid. put his plan into action. (16) **three companies**, each to take diff. ways, and produce impression of surrounding the army. **lamps**, *R. V.*, "torches." The article in *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible* tells us that this mode of concealing the light of a lamp is still practiced in Egypt. (17) **Look on me**, prob. giving them an example of what he intended. The signal to be his blowing the trumpet. (18) **say**, shout. The shout of Israel always terrible. **the sword of the Lord and of Gideon**, the words "the sword of" are not in the original — we may render as in the *R. V.*, "For the Lord and for Gideon."

Interpretation of dreams (vs. 15). — I. In many cases we have interpretation of heaven-sent dreams by Him who sent them. II. Here we have a dream interpreted, as, by the ungodly, dreams often are, by natural conscience quickening superstitious fear.

Battle-cries. — It was formerly the custom of almost every nation, when joining in battle, to begin the attack with loud shouts, called cries of war, or of arms; these shouts were intended to terrify the enemy, to occupy the soldiers, and prevent them from hearing the shouts of their opponents. Froissart says that "At the battle of Crecy, fifteen thousand Genoese archers began to yell in a most frightful manner, to terrify the English." In these cries, every nation, and almost every leader, had their peculiar word or sentence, which also served as a kind of watchword to distinguish friends from foes; cries of arms were likewise used to rally broken squadrons, especially when their banner was in danger. The ancient English cry was St. George; this was in such estimation, that a military writer, Davis, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, inserts the observance of it among the military laws, to the obedience of which he would have all soldiers sworn. "Item," says he, "that all soldiers entering into battle, assault, skirmish, or other actions of arms, shall have for their common cry and word, 'St. George! St. George! forward, or upon them, St. George!' whereby the soldier is much comforted, and the enemy dismayed, by calling to mind the ancient valor of England, which with that name had been so often victorious; therefore, he that shall maliciously omit it, shall be punished for his obstinacy." — *Percy Anec.*

19-21. (19) **middle watch**, Jewish division of night into three watches of four hours each. and **brake the pitchers**, Keil gives several instances of such stratagems from ancient and modern history. Hannibal extricated himself in a similar manner, when surrounded by Fabius. Niebuhr relates how in the

last century an Arab chief escaped from a fortress in which he was besieged by a vastly superior force, through the employment of the same means as we here find employed by Gideon. — *Cam. Bib.* (20) **three companies**, almost simultaneously. (21) **they stood**, the 300, every man proving himself brave and faithful. **ran and cried, etc.**, *R. V.*, "ran; and they shouted and put them to flight."

The natural and supernatural (vs. 20). — Notice — I. Some of the events in which we behold the co-operation of the natural and supernatural. 1. Providence; God works in Providence only what man cannot; 2. Conversion; all who would be saved must co-operate with the influence of the Divine Spirit; 3. The sustenance of the religious life; 4. The propagation of the Gospel. II. That the co-operation of the natural and supernatural is necessary to insure success. 1. This the only way success might be expected; 2. The only way in which success is possible; 3. A way that makes success certain. Learn — (1) Form a true estimate of yourselves; (2) Acknowledge the Lord in every success. — *D. Lewis.*

The power of example. — No kind of studious entertainment doth so generally delight as history, or the tradition of remarkable examples; even those who have an abhorrence or indisposition toward other studies are yet often much taken with historical narrations. And such are those which present to us the lives and examples of holy men, abounding with wonders of providence and grace; no attempts so gallant, no exploits so illustrious, as those which have been achieved by the faith and patience, by the prudence and courage, of the ancient saints; they do far surpass the most famous achievements of pagan heroes. — *J. Barrow.*

22-25. (22) **against his fellow**, mistaking friend for foe.^a **Beth-shittah** house of the acacia, mod. *Shutta*. **Zererath**, or *Zereda*, poss. *Zaretan* of Jos. iii. 16, not far fr. Beth-shan. **Abel-meholah**, field of the dance, 1 Ki. iv. 12, xix. 16. **Tabbath**, poss. lower down Jordan valley. (23) **pursued after**, those at first rejected were not far away, and might help to secure fruits of victory. (24) **waters**, both the streams of the district, and the northern fords of Jordan. The original shows that we must distinguish between the "waters unto Beth-barah" and "the Jordan." **Beth-barah**, prob. *Bethabara*. (25) **Oreb**, the raven. **Zeeb**, the wolf.^b **other side**, as the Ephraimites occupied the fords, they must have taken Oreb and Zeeb on the western side of Jordan. While they were being gathered together, others of the flying enemy had clearly made their way beyond Jordan, pursued by Gideon, and the expostulations of the men of Ephraim related in the next chapter must have taken place before the heads of Oreb and Zeeb were brought to him. — *Cam. Bib.*

Gideon's army and attack. — I. The select few. The bravest, most faithful men found out by a double test. Describe each. We always want to find the men best fitted for special enterprise. Best generals. Best Christian workers. II. The skilful stratagem. Effective because Midianite host made up of several tribes and nations, and a lot of non-fighting followers. Such an army would be liable to panic, and quite helpless in such a time. III. The utter discomfiture. Overwhelming, humiliating, complete. A glorious fulfilment of God's promise. Illus. how strong they are who trust in God and obey Him.

The suspicion of treachery rose among them. They were a mixed company, several armies joined in one, the only link of union being their common hatred and contempt for the people of Israel (Ps. lxxxiii. 5-12) — Amalekites, Moabites, Midianites, and Arabs. As no one knew how it was possible that a large army could rise up against them in a moment, the thought must have flashed across the minds of many — "there is treachery in the camp." Some one of two of the races must have laid a plot to massacre all the rest, to secure the whole booty for themselves. Distrust thus arose among them, and we are told, "the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow." A frightful slaughter of each other began. This demoralization became complete when they feared also that the supposed large army on the heights was already among them. In the pitch dark, and amid the utter confusion, every man took his neighbor for an enemy, and so smote him down. All the while the panic urged them instinctively to flight. Large numbers would be trodden down, because they impeded the progress of those who were flying for their lives. Thus thousands on thousands would perish of the mutual slaughter, before the swords of the Israelities were among them. — *Hom. Com.*

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and the dreamers slept on, to be waked up by the blast of the pastoral horns, and at the same moment the crash of the three hundred pitchers, and the blaze of the three hundred torches, and the shout of Israel, always terrible, wh. broke thro' the stillness of the midnight air fr. three opposite quarters at once." — *Stanley.*

"Emulation admires and strives to imitate great actions; envy is only moved to malice." — *Balzac.*

the panic and defeat of Midian

a Comp. 1 Sa. xiv. 20; 2 Chr. xx. 23.

b Is. x. 26.

At one instant it appeared as if a mighty army had fallen upon them, and was a ready conqueror. The clashing of the broken pitchers sounded as if the enemy was already in the tents: the trumpets represented an immense army; and the flashing lights bewildered and frightened the host; a sudden panic seized them, and they struck down each other.

It was a maxim of Napoleon I. that the skill of a consummate general is never so critically tested as in deciding how to turn a victory to the best advantage.

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CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

the exostulation of Ephraim

a "Their remembrance is as characteristic of the growing pride of Eph., as Gideon's answer is of the forbearance and calmness which places him at the summit of the heroes of his age." — Stanley.

It will almost invariably be found true, that as men are ready to hate those who arrogate honor to themselves, so will they be more easily reconciled to those who are humble and unassuming. — Bush.

Gideon pursues Zebah and Zalmunna

b Ge. xxxiii. 17; Jos. xiii. 27; 1 Ki. vii. 46.

c "A cruel torture to wh. captives were often subjected in ancient times, — by having thorns and briars placed on their naked bodies, and pressed down by sledges, or heavy implements of husbandry being dragged over them." — Jamieson

"One may go far after he is tired." — French.

"Perseverance kills the game." — Spanish.

"Hard pounding, gentlemen; but we will see who can pound the longest." — Wellington at Waterloo.

"There is no mistaking an earnest man. Even his feebleness may be so used as to become an element of spiritual strength." — Parker.

Gideon attacks and takes Karkor

1-3. (1) **Ephraim**, the leading tribe. Its central position rendered it more secure from invasion, and no doubt by this time it had become preponderant in numbers. Hence the tone of arrogance assumed here. **chide**, see Ex. xvii. 2. (2) **gleaning**,^a etc., a fig. way of acknowledg. that the greater honor belonged to them bec. they had taken the princes. In ancient warfare much depended on securing the persons of the princes or chieftains. (3) **God hath**, greatest honor due to Him.

Gideon's answer to the men of Ephraim (vs. 2). — Notice a few lessons suggested by the text. I. "A soft answer turneth away wrath." 1. War averted by Gideon's soft answer; 2. Apply the lesson to the Christian church; 3. Apply also to the home life. II. It is better to destroy the principles of evil than to be constantly fighting against results. III. Promptness in responding to the call of duty is the only way to insure success. IV. Although late in the field, that is no reason why we should be discouraged. The gleanings may be better than the vintage. — A. F. Barfield.

The blindness of self-love. — Nobody admires pride, envy, jealousy, and petulance, when they see them pictured in the character and conduct of other men. Everybody, on the contrary, recognizes the beauty of humility, gentleness, and forbearance, and admires self-control and patience under provocation, and the postponement of private feelings to the public good. How is it that we so often yield to the passions which we condemn in others, and so seldom and so imperfectly practice those graces of which we see the beauty and excellence? Lord, help us to be what we approve, and to leave off in ourselves what we disapprove in others. — Pulp. Com.

4-9. (4) **passed over**, Mid. host had broken up, and fled in different directions. **the three hundred**, who had been been up all night. **Gid.'s special companions** in his stratagem. **faint, yet pursuing**, the attempt to continue the pursuit of this vast host with three hundred men in an exhausted condition was at once an act of bravery and a work of faith. (5) **Succoth**, place of tents or booths.^b (6) **And the princes of Succoth said**, we may trace the progress of national disintegration and degradation by comparing this answer with the narrative in Josh. xxii. (7) **tear**,^c etc., the word is akin to our **thresh** and **dash**, and signifies to strike with violence. (8) **up**, fr. Jordan valley. **Penuel**, and this where the vision of God (Gen. xxxii. 24-30) had appeared to their forefather Jacob! This conduct seems to have been altogether without the limits of Gideon's forbearance. The conduct of Ephraim, however arrogant, was at least dictated by a regard for the honor of the nation. The conduct of the men of Succoth and Penuel was cowardly and moreover unfeeling, as the conduct of cowards generally is, to say nothing of its utter inconsistency with the claim of Israel to be God's covenant people. — Camb. Bib.

"Faint, yet pursuing." — A splendid and really forced march. Humanly speaking, it was the real battle. The grandest qualities were called forth, and the greatest results secured. A picture of the Christian life. I. God often suffers His servants to endure hardship in doing His will. II. Those who are doing important service under circumstances of hardship ought to be encouraged and supported. III. Duty and the high calling of Christians ought to triumph over weakness, hardship, and opposition. IV. The greatest results often depend upon persistency even amidst disadvantages. — Muir.

Faint, yet pursuing. — Here an important principle is laid down for those who would enter into God's service. It relates to the condition on which success is to be gained. *Even when strength is exhausted, there must be the resolution to persevere.* Wearied and weak, with small visible resources, while difficulties and dangers are numerous and formidable, the true worker for God must resolutely persevere. He is allowed to think only of victory — never of defeat. Even should his arm become feeble, and he be scarcely able to drag his limbs along, he must ever keep his face to the foe, and assume the certainty of his being a conqueror in the end. — Hom. Com.

10-12. (10) **Karkor**, this has been supposed by Eusebius and Jerome to be Carcar, about a day's journey from Petra, and therefore not far from the Dead Sea. The place, with Nobah and Jogbehah, has not been identified. The

identification of Eusebius and Jerome falls in with the direction of the Midianites' flight, but the distance, as Gesenius remarks in his *Thesaurus*, seems too great. The remark that "the host was secure," however, implies that they *had* fled rapidly and far, and that Gideon, by making a *détour* to the east, had fallen on them quite unexpectedly. — *Camb. Bib.* (12) kings, comp. Oreb and Zeeb, called princes, ch. vii. 25.

The secure host. — I. Picture the host retreating utterly discomfited, and rallying at Karkor. Imagined safety. So with enemies of God. 1 Th. v. 3; Pr. vi. 15. II. Gideon's forced march. By an unlooked-for quarter. Divine retribution comes in our secure moments, and by unthought-of channels. III. Another night surprise. Vain to say, "surely the darkness shall cover me."

Gideon's surprise of the Midianites. — He seems to have gone round about somewhat, so as to come upon them from the northeast, which would be a great surprise, and being the season of night, it would renew the terror of the previous night. Not having yet recovered from the panic, they would feel as if new terrors would spring up mysteriously wherever they went, and so they would be unnerved for fighting. They would also very likely be unarmed and laid down to sleep, thus being unprepared for battle. The strength, too, of Gideon's army would be unknown to them in the darkness, and doubtless they thought it far larger than it really was. But the principal element of weakness was the superstitious dread they had of Gideon and of Gideon's God. A mysterious awe fell upon them in connection with the name Jehovah, and with the name of Gideon as His servant. — *Hom. Com.*

13—17. (13) before the sun was up, R. V., "from the ascent of Heres." (14) described, wrote down the names. The number suggests a senate or council. (15) came . . Succoth, not returning by way of Penuel. (16) thorns, etc., vs. 7. taught, taught them a lesson, as we should say. (17) tower, as threat of vs. 9. men of city, elders or princes.

Tearing with thorns. — This punishment probably relates to a cruel method of torture used in those times for putting captives to death by laying briars and thorns on their naked bodies, and then drawing over them some heavy implements of husbandry. Drusius thinks that persons put to death in this manner were laid naked on thorns and briars, and then trampled on. — *Burder.*

18—21. (18) ye slew at Tabor, reference to an incident not recorded. We may hence learn how very many details are passed over in the sacred narrative, which, if we could recover them, would solve difficulties now inexplicable. childr. of king, oriental figure for beauty, strength, and grace of form. (19) I would not slay you, the gentleness of Gideon is displayed once more in this incident. There appears to have been no hesitation about the slaughter of Oreb and Zeeb; nor was tenderness to the vanquished enjoined in the Mosaic code. It was reserved for Jesus Christ to teach men the duties of pity and humanity to the world at large. — *Camb. Bib.* (20) Jether, as the heir, was the proper blood-avenger. youth, comp. 1 Sa. xvii. 33. (21) rise thou, esteeming it an honor to be slain by a warrior, a disgrace to fall by hands of a youth or a woman.^a Death by a strong man would be swift and complete. ornaments,^b R. V., "crescents."

Spiritual strength (vs. 21). — I. There are great differences between men, not only of a physical or intellectual, but also of a moral and spiritual character. II. There are great differences between the same individual at different times. III. The increase of spiritual strength is intensely desirable for individual comfort — for usefulness to others — for the glory of God. IV. It is essential to Christian prosperity to act upon the conviction that our strength is in God. V. The means by which spiritual strength may be increased. 1. Food: God's Word, Christ's flesh; 2. Air: communion with God in Christ; 3. Exercise: practice of Christian graces.

"As the man is, so is his strength." — It is another of the pregnant sayings which meet us here and there even in the least meditative parts of Scripture. Yes; as a man is in character, in faith, in harmony with the will of God, so is his strength; as he is in falseness, injustice, egotism and ignorance, so is his weakness. Strength is the property of truth and truth only; it belongs to those who are in union with eternal reality and to no others in the universe. Would you be invincible? You must move with the eternal powers of righteousness and love. As the man or woman is in simple allegiance to God

B. C. 1249.

"A man in a trance saw himself locked up in a house of steel, through the walls of which, as through walls of glass, he could see his enemies assailing him with swords, spears, and bayonets; but his life was safe, for his fortress was locked within. So is the Christian secure amid the assaults of the world." — *C. Evans.*

Gideon takes Succoth

"Nothing is so pregnant as cruelty; so multifarious, so rapid, so everteeming a mother, is unknown to the animal kingdom!" — *Lavater.*

the end of Zebah and Zalmunna

a Ju. ix. 54.

b "Small ones of gold, in shape of half-moon or crescent, worn on necks of men, women, and camels. Custom of adorning necks of camels prevailed among Arabs so late as time of Mahomet." — *Spk. Com.*

"Oh, if so much of beauty doth reveal itself in every vein of life and nature, how beautiful must be the Source Itself, the Ever-Bright One!" — *Tegner.*

B. C. 1249.

and clear resolution there is strength to endure, to govern, to think and every way to live.—*R. A. Watson.*

Gideon declines the kingship and makes an ephod

a Ge. xxiv. 47; Job xlii. 11; Is. iiii. 21; Ez. xvi. 12, marg.

b Ex. xxviii. 4-35; 1 Sa. ii. 18; xxii. 18; 2 Sa. vi. 14; 1 Chr. xv. 27.

"It would seem, fr. the hist., that he was not blamable in making this ephod, etc., as a civil robe or ornament merely, but that it afterwards bec. an object to wh. religious ideas were attached, whereby it proved a snare, and consequently an evil by *perversion*, to Gideon and his house."—*Taylor's Fragment.*

peace for forty years

"Numa Pompilius, from a love of peace and to recommend it, altered the beginning of the Roman year. It formerly commenced with the month of March (which Romulus had appointed because he loved Mars, the god of war), but Numa changed it to January, from Janus, the god of peace."—*Anon.*

"Planets govern not the soul nor guide the destinies of men, but trifles lighter than straws are levers in the building up of character."—*Tupper.*

Gideon dies and Israel declines

22—27. (22) **Rule thou**, in impulse of gratitude. Obs. beginning of desire for a king, and idea of hereditary sovereignty. (23) **the Lord**, Jehovah; first principle of the theocracy. Gideon with noble disinterestedness, refused to alter the constitution of his country. A republic it had been from the first, under the guidance of an Unseen Monarch. (24) **earrings**, prob. should be *nose rings*. *a* **Ishmaelites**, Ge. xxxvii. 28. The Ishmaelites were the traders of the East, who went down into Egypt with their spices and balsams, and received instead gold and silver. (25) **they spread**, or Gid. spread his large military mantle. (26) **ornaments and collars**, *R. V.*, "the crescents and the pendants." **purple**, the costly, royal color. (27) **ephod**,^b for use as a civil magistrate; no idolatrous intention. "Never man meant better than Gideon in his rich ephod; yet this very act set all Israel on whoring."—*Bp. Hall.* **whoring**, Ju. ii. 17. **snare**, cause of ruin.

Gratitude and piety.—I. The gratitude of the people—1. Evincing their desire for a monarchical form of government; 2. Showing what kind of king they would prefer. II. The answer of Gideon—1. Illustrates the humility of his heart; 2. His desire that God might reign in the hearts of His people. (1) Had this wish of Gideon been fulfilled the nation had continued great; (2) The fulfilment of Israel's wish led to the ultimate ruin of the nation.

Rare self-denial.—The Emperor of Germany, Joseph II., having a vacant office, which he wished to confer on the son of Count de Palsy, intimidated his intention to the father. The count thanked his Imperial Majesty for his kindness, but begged leave to observe that his son already possessed a considerable fortune, and had great expectations, and he thus had no occasion for addition to his income. The count humbly suggested whether the place might not be more acceptably conferred on some father of a family, whose slender income would render it a desirable object. The emperor still pressed the office, when the count finally addressed his sovereign, saying, "Sire, I consent that my son should accept the appointment with which you design to honor him, but I implore your majesty to permit the salary annexed to it to be assigned to some person less fortunate in circumstances." The emperor, sensibly affected by such an instance of true greatness of mind, consented to the count's request: the place was given to his son, and the profits appropriated to the aged father of an impoverished family.—*Percy Anec.*

28—31. (28) **lifted up**, etc., after this most crushing blow. **forty years**, the frequent recurrence of this number (with eighty and twenty) suggests that it is rather an approximation to an exact date, than the date itself. (29) **Jerubbaal**, here implies that Gideon was renowned all his life as the man who had thrown down the altar of Baal. **own house**, one he erected at Ophrah as the seat of his judgeship. (30) **body begotten**, indic. the royal state he assumed, and the low state of moral sentiment in that age. (31) **concubine**, not called wife, prob. bec. a Canaanite woman.

Influence of the life.—A holy life is the most effectual power for doing good: in this case the man himself seems, in a Scripture sense, to become an arrow. A poor invalid came home to an ungodly father's house to die; her meek submission, her patient endurance, her joyous hope, subdued his rebellion; and she expired, expecting to see him again. A modest tradesman upheld his family devotion, though it tried all the fibres of his courage; a clerk who lodged with him was won by the spectacle to begin a better life. A wife, on the way home from church, ridiculed the awkwardness of the preacher; looking up in her husband's face, she discovered his eyes were filled with tears; his emotion melted her heart. A peeress had a little class of ignorant women, whom she was wont to teach in the Scriptures. A blacksmith in the neighborhood, a notorious villain, swore he would break up the school, and so one day violently forced his way in. She went faithfully forward in her work, and God touched his hidden sensibilities with the purity of her purpose and the indefatigableness of her zeal, and he became her efficient ally.—*Hive.*

32—35. (32) **in the sepulchre of Joash his father**, it is perhaps one of the minute touches indicative of the genuineness of the narrative that here, for the first time, now that the Israelites had been some time in the land of

Canaan, do we hear of family burial-places. (23) *Baal-berith, covenant-lord*. The name under wh. Baal was worshiped by the Shechemites.^a (34) **remembered not**, *i. e.* so as to be anxious about their allegiance to Him. (35) **kindness, etc.**, ingratitude toward God will be soon shown in neglect of God's servants.

As soon as Gideon was dead. — The personal influence of a great man was sufficiently strong to retain Israel in the right way while he lived, but the principles of their austere and pure religion were not sufficiently rooted to enable them without such aid to withstand the seductions of the Phœnician worship. — *Camb. Bib.*

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1-6. (1) **Shechem**, Ge. xii. 6, chief city in Ephraim. Its situation between Ebal and Gerizim, in a valley of rare beauty, has attracted the notice even of travelers such as Dr. Petermann, who seem generally somewhat inaccessible to the charms of natural scenery. Canon Tristram and Dr. Thomson both describe it in glowing language. **mother's brethren**, so Canaanites. His interest was bound up with them rather than with God's sons. (2) **all the sons**, insinuating the evils of divided authority. **reign**, neither Gid. nor his sons sought regal power. (3) **their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech**, doubtless the Ephraimite pride revolted from Abi-ezrite rulers, and inclined them to one who was a Shechemite by birth. See the same spirit in the time of David and of Rehoboam.^b (4) **house**, place of worship, poss. temple. **Baal-berith**, ch. viii. 33. Temple treasures were frequently applied to political purposes (see Kings xv. 18; 2 Kings xviii. 15). **vain and light**, worthless vagabonds. (6) **Millo**,^c a citadel or fortress of Shechem. **house of**, those who garrisoned it. **plain**, *R. V.*, "oak," **pillar**, or monument, *i. e.* the stone set up by Joshua (Josh. xxiv. 26; cf. Gen. xxxv. 4). This stone, like many another memorial, was now put to uses sadly different from those which it was intended to serve.

Shortcomings of unscrupulous schemes. — That there are instances of seemingly complete and permanent success cannot be denied. But the cases in which the act just falls short of success are too frequent and dramatically striking not to be pondered. I. A moral government of the world is witnessed to. II. If evident in some cases, may not the same law exist where not clearly visible? III. In this is illustrated the essentially moral character of highest reason. The wicked always leave something unconsidered or unprovided for. The lives and schemes of the wicked are based on fallacies. Truth and righteousness coincide. — *Muir.*

The dissembler. —

O serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant, fiend angelical!
Dove-feather'd raven! wolfish-ravens lamb,
Despised substance of divinest show!
Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,
A damned saint, an honorable villain.

7-9. (7) **Gerizim**, the mount upon which the blessings commanded by Moses (Deut. xi. 29, and xxvii. 12) were to be recited. See also Josh. viii. 33. Shechem lay at its base.^d It was afterwards famous as the site of the celebrated temple erected by the Samaritans in rivalry with that at Jerusalem (John iv. 20). (8) **the trees went forth**, cf. 2 Kings xiv. 9. This, the first parable recorded in Scripture, is in accordance with almost a universal fashion in the infancy of nations, in which lessons were usually inculcated in a figurative form, bringing the imagination, which is usually earlier developed, to the aid of the reason. **olive**, Ge. viii. 11. (9) **honor God**, "his oil consecrates kings and priests and feeds the light which burns in the sanctuary of God."

Bramble rule; or the people and their leaders. — The general truths contained in this fable are — I. That the people have a conscious want of leaders. and they are not particular in their choice of them. II. That inferior men are often more ready to assume the responsibility of leadership than great ones.

B. C. 1249.

a Ju. ix. 4, 46
We are to find our first sphere of duty according to our moral nature, our age, and our circumstances.
"Not one false man but does unaccountable mischief." — *Carlyle.*

B. C. 1209.

Abimelech
he kills his brethren

b Comp. 2, Sa. xx. 1; 1 Ki. xii. 16.

c "It is evident that there was a distinct population dwelling in Millo, which tho' perhaps numerically small, had great weight fr. possessing the stronghold." — *Spk. Com.*

"Men are so simple, and yield so much to necessity, that he who will deceive will always find him who will lend himself to be deceived." — *Machiavelli.*

Jotham's
parable

d "Several lofty precipices of Gerizim overhang the city, any one of which would answer his purpose." — *Land and Book.*

"A briar is a briar, though it be in a paradise, and a lily is a lily, tho' it grow in a wilderness." — *Reynolds.*

B. C. 1209.

The preaching of the Word in some places is like the planting of woods, where, though no profit is received for twenty years together, it comes afterward.

"Say not this calling and vocation to which God has appointed me is too small and insignificant for me. God's will is the best calling, and to be faithful to it is the worthiest. God often places great blessings in little things. Should thy proud heart learn humility and resignation by this humble work, wouldst thou not have high wages for thy low service?"—*From the German.*

"My country claims me all, claims every passion; her liberty henceforth be all my thought; though with a brother's life yet cheaply bought; for her my own I'd willingly resign, and say, with transport, that the gain was mine."—*Martyn.*

"A little wit and a great deal of ill-nature will furnish a man for satire; but the greatest instance of wit is to commend well."—*Tillotson.*

III. That leadership in the hands of inferior men is ever fraught with mischief. 1. Small men can do great mischief; 2. The higher the office they reach the greater is the mischief they can effect. — *Thomas.*

Eastern allegories. — The people of the East are exceedingly addicted to apologies, and use them to convey instruction or reproof, which with them could scarcely be done so well in any other way. Has a man been told a secret, he says, in repeating it, for instance, "A tree told me this morning, that Kandan offered a large bribe to the Modeliar, to get Muttoo turned out of his situation." Does a man of low caste wish to unite his son in marriage to the daughter of one who is high, the latter will say, "Have you heard that the pumpkin wants to be married to the plantain-tree?" Has a man given his daughter in marriage to another, who uses her unkindly, he says, "I have planted the sugar-cane by the side of the *margossa* (bitter) tree." — *Roberts.*

10-13. (10) fig, Ge. iii. 7. (11) sweetness, etc., the fruit of the fig-tree is the sweetest or most luscious of all fruits. (12) vine, Ge. ix. 20. (13) cheereth God, this is a strong poetic hyperbole. It cannot be understood, literally, save so far as we may believe God rejoiceth in the gladness of His creatures, when it is innocent.

Lessons. — I. Nations may be actuated by caprice and false cravings, as well as by moral obligation. II. Good and worthy men will refuse to be the playthings and venal instruments of others. III. There are sacrifices for which political advancement does not compensate, and which it does not justify one's making. IV. The character of a people is reflected in their political representatives. V. High position magnifies powers of mischief as of blessing. VI. The trust that has been won by unworthy acts will be as basely betrayed. — *Muir.*

To be useful is better than to reign. — All the good trees gave it as a reason for their refusal to wave their tops over the other trees, that they had each a useful vocation to fulfil, and, that the fulfilment of that vocation was a far more important thing than to reign over others. To reign, is to live for the glorification of one's self; to be useful, is to be a fountain head from which blessings might flow out to others.

14, 15. (14) bramble, Canon Tristram (*Land of Israel*, p. 149) says that the bramble is to be found in the neighborhood of Shechem, clinging to the rocks, and that this, with the olives and figs growing in the valley, must have given point to Jotham's parable. The *thistle* of the margin must be given up. The trees could hardly "put their trust in its shadow." (15) fire, etc., the application of this is to be seen in vs. 20. The consequence of setting a worthless person like Abimelech over them would be misery to persons better than himself. "Thorns easily catch fire." *Keil* (who refers to Exod. xxii. 6). And so the worst men are the most certain causes of mischief.

Jotham on Gerizim. — "The ancient city of Shechem, I suppose, stood where Nablûs does now, and it is easy to comprehend how Jotham could stand above it, and deliver his cutting allegory in the hearing of the people, and then 'run away' before they could take him. Nor would it be difficult to be heard, as everybody knows who has listened to the *public crier* of villages on Lebanon. In the stillness of evening, after the people have returned home from their distant fields, he ascends the mountain side above the place, or to the roof of some prominent house, and there 'lifts up his voice and cries' as Jotham did; and he gives forth his proclamation with such distinctness that all can hear and understand it. Indeed, the people in these mountain countries are able from long practice so to pitch their voices as to be heard distinctly at distances almost incredible. They talk with persons across enormous wadies, and give the most minute directions, which are perfectly understood; and in doing this they seem to speak very little louder than their usual tone of conversation. Jotham, therefore, might easily be heard by the greater part of the inhabitants of Shechem. The custom of his allegory is simple and natural, and the allusions are to the very trees which most abound at Nablûs—the olive, the fig, the vine, and the bramble." — *Thomson.*

16-21. (16) These verses contain the interpretation of the fable. (17) adventured, the Hebrew is very vivid, *caused to cast his life from before*, i. e.,

flung it away, exposed it as a thing of no value. (18) **maidservant**, concubine, in ch. viii. 31. **your brother**, the mother being Shechemite. (19) **rejoice ye**, be glad in, enjoy your king. (20) **fire**, etc., may Abim. be occasion of ruin to you, and you to him. (21) **Beer**,^a now *El Bireh*, 10 miles of Jerus.

A patriotic satirist. — I. Some of the uses of satire, with illustrations from Word of God. II. This of Jotham in particular. 1. He suggests that they may have acted up to their light in electing Abimelech; 2. He hints that perhaps Gideon did not deserve more from them; 3. Was not Abimelech nobly born? 4. He exhorts king and people to rejoice in each other as worthy of each other; 5. If these things were not right — Jotham knew they were not — he prays that king and people may destroy each other.

The patriot. — He who undertakes an occupation of great toil and great danger, for the purpose of serving, defending, and protecting his country, is a most valuable and respectable member of society; and if he conducts himself with valor, fidelity, and humanity, and amidst the horrors of war cultivates the gentle manners of peace, and the virtues of a devout and holy life, he most amply deserves, and will assuredly receive the esteem, the admiration, and the applause of his grateful country; and, what is of still greater importance, the approbation of his God. — *Bp. Porteus*.

22-25. (22) **over Israel**, it looks as if the Shechemites alone had made him king and the rest had submitted to his tyrannical domination without allowing his title of king. (23) **evil spirit**,^b everything that happens by God's permission is said to be done by Him in these historical books, a fact which may serve to explain many difficulties. In a sense it is perfectly true. **treacherously**, usurped authority is of necessity unstable.^c (25) **liers in wait**, spies, for him, not perhaps for him personally, but in consequence of his conduct and to revenge themselves for it. Bad, oppressive government is universally the parent of brigandage, as we may see in our own days.

No friendship among the wicked. — I. Who are these with this feud? The men whom the king had paid; the king whom they had elected. Friendship based on convenience, not affection. II. How came this feud about? It was provoked by the righteous anger of God. III. Why did God act thus? To avenge the murder of the sons of Gideon. Learn — 1. Prosperity of the wicked is shortlived; 2. Ill-gotten gains and titles do not prosper.

26-29. (26) **Gaal**, nothing further is known of Gaal than what we read in this chapter. (27) **made merry**, *R. V.*, "held festival." It would seem by a comparison of Lev. xix. 23, 24, where the same word occurs, that the feast which Moses had ordained was now kept in honor, not of Jehovah, but of Baal-berith. (28) **Shechem**, an assumed name of Abimelech. **Jerubbaal**, Baal's enemy, in whose house they were feasting. **serve the men of Hamor**, etc., this passage is difficult. The Polychr. Bib. translates (freely): "Were not this son of Jerubbaal, and Zebul, his lieutenant, subjects of the family of Hamor?" See Gen. xxxiii. 19 and xxxiv. (29) **would to God**, Gaal wishes he were prefect of the city, as Zebul was. **Increase**, etc., an apostrophe addressed to the company.

Diamond cut diamond. — I. Strifes, jealousies, divisions, in high quarters furnish opportunities to the enemies of government. II. A wicked, ill-governed people are likely to be deceived in their choice of an insurrectionary leader. Gaal himself a vain, boastful person.

Vintage in the East. — In the East they still tread their grapes after the ancient manner. "August 20, 1765, the vintage (near Smyrna) was now begun, the juice (of the grapes) was expressed for wine; a man, with his feet and legs bare, was treading the fruit in a kind of cistern, with a hole or vent near the bottom, and a vessel beneath to receive the liquor." — *Chandler*.

30-33. (31) **privily**, craftily. The plot of Gaal's party was to secure the city: this they appear to have accomplished. **fortify**, *R. V.*, "constrain the city to take part against thee." (32) **by night**, hurriedly, and secretly, so taking them at unawares. **in the field**, outside the city. (33) **find occasion**, Zebul intended to render efficient aid fr. within.

A worthy servant of a worthless master. — Zebul served Abimelech faithfully according to his lights. His devotion appears strangely misplaced. God relates the lives of the good and the bad for wise ends. "Never any man

B. c. 1209.

^a "The Beer of Nu. xxi. 16; on the frontier of Moab." Ewald.

"Satire is a sort of glass, wherein beholders generally discover everybody's face but their own: which is the chief reason for that kind of reception it meets in the world, and that so very few are offended with it." — *Swift*.

"The noblest motive is the public good." — *Virgil*.

the insurrection of Shechem

^b 1 Sa. xvi. 14-23.

^c Friendship among the wicked is only a league of vice against others. In itself it cannot stand." — *Lange*.

Gaal heads the insurrection

The wicked are usually most secure when they are most in danger.

"Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." — *Milton*.

Zebul prepares a snare for Gaal

"Opportunity has hair in front; behind she is bald;

B. C. 1209.

If you seize her by the forelock, you may hold her; but, if suffered to escape, not Jupiter himself can catch her again."—*From the Latin.*

Abimelech prepares an ambush

"By the tops of mountains we are to understand the more distant mountains; by the 'height of the land' a nearer hill in the immediate vicinity of the city; by the *Elon Meonenim* (magician's grove) a dusky forest against the near horizon."—*Langue*

"Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds, exhilarate the spirit and restore the tone of languid nature."—*Cowper.*

Gaal is defeated

"The instability of friendship furnishes one of the most melancholy reflections suggested by the contemplation of human life; and few of us have traveled far upon our pilgrimage, without having had occasion to lament the loss of some companion who has parted from our side upon the first rumor that we have wandered from the fountains of the desert."—*Willmott.*

the destruction of Shechem

"God is the brave man's hope and not the coward's excuse."—*Plutarch.*

was so ill as not to have some favorites: Abimelech hath a Zebul in the midst of Shechem."—*Bp. Hall.* Every situation has its moral complications.—*Muir.*

As thou shalt find occasion.—The Hebrew has, "As thy hand shall find." (1 Sa. x. 7 margin.) In asking a favor, it is common to say, "You must not deny me, sir; but as your hand finds opportunity, so you must assist me." "Well, my friend, when I have the opportunity of the hand, I will assist you." "The man has assisted me according to the opportunity of his hand; what can he do more?"—*Roberts.*

34-38. (34) laid wait, accord. to Zebul's advice. four companies, or parties, for quieter movements, and better eluding observation. (35) stood . . city, prob. as assuming rule and magistracy. (36) to Zebul, who still made show of siding with him. shadow, etc." Zebul's object is to lull the suspicions of the foolhardy Gaal until it is too late to close the gates of the city and offer effectual resistance. (37) plain of Meonenim, oak of the soothsayers. (38) Then said Zebul, the near approach of Abimelech's troops enabled Zebul to throw off the mask, for he knew that Gaal would have difficulty enough in collecting his adherents to meet Abimelech, without wasting time in strife with himself.

The shadows of the mountains.—Our translation of the Book of Judges represents Zebul as saying to Gaal, upon his being alarmed at seeing troops of men making to him, Thou seest the shadows of the mountains as if they were men; whereas Josephus represents him as telling him he mistook the rocks for men. A commentator might be at a loss to account for this change, that had not read Doubdan's representation of some part of the Holy Land, in which he tells us, that in those places there are many detached rocks scattered up and down, some growing out of the ground, and others are fragments, broken off from rocky precipices, the shadow of which, it appears, Josephus thought might be most naturally imagined to look like troops of men at a distance, rather than the shadow of the mountains.—*Shaw.*

39-42. (39) men of Shechem, as vs. 26. (40) chased him, defeating Gaal in the open; he, however, gained the gate, and closed it. (41) Arumah, it is not again mentioned, but from what follows it must have been near the city. thrust out, Zebul was enabled to expel Gaal and the men who had fought on his side, but the temper of the city was nevertheless such that it would not have been wise for Abimelech to enter. (42) field, they went out to their ordinary work, evidently presuming that with the expulsion of Gaal's adherents all was at an end. But Abimelech's revenge was not so easily satiated.

Caught in the toils.—I. The shadows were men after all. The forecasting fears of Gaal were realized. II. The men who followed Gaal were, like shadows, dispersed. Retreating upon Shechem, Gaal found the city in possession of Zebul. Learn—(1) The hollowness of vain boasting; (2) The folly of false confidences; (3) The prosperity of fools destroys them.

Zebul thrust out Gaal.—"These words, it would seem, are not to be taken as indicating a violent expulsion. For if Zebul and his party had obtained a complete ascendancy in the city, why did they not at once deliver up Gaal and his faction to Abimelech, and receive him within the walls? The fact undoubtedly was, that notwithstanding the recent defeat, the crafty Zebul saw that Abimelech's interest in the city was not strong enough to justify him in completely throwing off the mask, and he accordingly went to work, like a skilful master of intrigue, to undermine Gaal in the affections of the people. This is the account Josephus gives of the matter, and we think the correct one.—*Bush.*

43-45. (43) the people, his own people. laid wait, hiding from view until the men were well away from the city. smote them, as more precisely described next vs. (44) stood . . city, preventing both return of the citizens and shutting of the gates. (45) all that day, people left in city making a vigorous resistance.

Sowed it with salt.—Not as some commentators have thought, in order to make it unfruitful, for the operation must have been carried on upon a somewhat large scale to have brought about such a result, but to indicate that it should be desolate forever, like the well-known salt desert beside the Dead Sea.—*Cambridge Bible.*

46-49. (46) **tower of Shechem**, see vs. 6. **hold**, there is no doubt that here the meaning is, "the upper chambers of a lofty tower." (47) **gathered**, not, in this case, with a hostile purpose, but for refuge. (48) **Zalmon**,^a not certainly known; may be Ebal. **make haste**, with idea of earnestness rather than hurry. (49) **to the hold**, the entrance would be of wood and poss. the whole building. Obs. lit. fulfil. of Jotham's curse.^b

Cruelty and selfishness. — At the time of the destruction of the man-of-war *Prince George* by fire, off Lisbon, by which four hundred and eighty-five persons perished, the fishermen and merchantmen, of which there were many around the burning ship, instead of rescuing their drowning fellow-creatures, busied themselves in picking up fowls, and whatever else floated to them from the wreck, except the drowning sailors.

50-53. (50) **Thebez**, now Tûbas.^c The inhab. seem to have joined in opposing Abimelech. (51) **top of the tower**, fr. wh. in those days they fought by throwing stones down, shooting arrows, etc.^d (52) **went hard**, Abimelech's hatred and his thirst for revenge, made him despise danger. **burn**, repeating former plan. (53) **millstone**, part of ordinary household handmill. **all to**, omitted in *R. V.*, an old Eng. term, meaning *quite, entirely*.

The end of Abimelech. — From it we learn — I. That the death of the wicked often reflects the character of their life. This a violent one, like the life it ended. II That a false life sometimes ends with a lie. III. That the ruling passion of the ungodly is sometimes strong in death. Abimelech vain-glorious to the last.

Stones as implements of war. — April 9th, we all were called up and acquainted that the walls were assaulted and scaled in five different places, though it was so exceedingly dark that neither moon nor stars were to be seen; yet the agent and all the gentlemen of the factory rose immediately, and made the best of their way for the creek's mouth. On our way the women threw tiles and stones at us from the tops of the houses. But as it was so very dark that we could not see each other at four yards' distance, we were obliged to run the gauntlet, and were so lucky as to escape without being knocked on the head, although we received many blows on the arms and shoulders which left their marks for some days. — *Parsons' Trav. in Asia.*

54-57. (54) **armour-bearer**, such attended on ancient chieftains.^e **that men say not of me**, an instance of "the ruling passion strong in death." Abimelech had been a warrior, and lived among warriors, and dreaded above all the reproach of dying by a woman's hand. (55) **men of Israel**, it is important for the understanding of the story to notice that Abimelech's followers were Israelites. The revolt of Shechem was a Canaanite rising ag. the half-Israelite Abimelech. — *Polych. Bib.* (56) **rendered**, back; brought the conseq. of his wickedness on his own head. (57) **curse**, as vs. 20.

Retribution. — We learn — I. That no craft or courage can evade the just judgment of God. II. That, in the providence of God, the sin of society recoils upon its own head.

Retribution inevitable. — When Bonaparte was about to invade Russia, a person who had endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose, finding he could not prevail, quoted to him the proverb, "Man proposes, but God disposes;" to which he indignantly replied, "I dispose as well as propose." A Christian lady, on hearing the impious boast, remarked, "I set that down as the turning-point of Bonaparte's fortunes. God will not suffer a creature, with impunity, thus to usurp His prerogative." It happened to Bonaparte just as the lady predicted. His invasion of Russia was the commencement of his fall.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1-5. (1) **defend**, *R. V.*, "save." **Puah**, Ge. xvi. 13; 1 Chr. vii. 1. Nothing more is known of either of these, save that their names appear to have been family names in the tribe of Issachar. **Dodo**, 2 Sa. xxiii. 9, 24; not an uncommon proper name. **Shamir**, not the town in hill country of Judah, mentioned in Jos. xv. 48. (2) **judged**, no special act of deliv. fr. outside enemies was effected by him. (3) **Jair**, poss. descendant of the Jair of Nu. xxxii. 41; De. iii. 14.^f (4) **ass-colts**, the animal ridden by princes. **cities, villages. Havoth-jair, villages of Jair**, Nu. xxxii. 41.

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the burning
of the tower
of Shechem

a Ps. lxxvii. 14.
b Ju. ix. 20.

"Self-will is so ardent and active, that it will break a world to pieces to make a stool to sit on." — *Cecil*.
"Thou, who lov'st nothing but what nothing loves, and that's thyself!" — *Dryden*.

the death of
Abimelech

c 2 Sa. xi. 21.

d "The Assyrian bas reliefs afford counterparts of the scene here described so vividly and exact, we might almost suppose them to be representations of the same historic events" — *Jamieson*.

"It is not our criminal actions that require courage to confess, but those which are ridiculous and foolish." — *Rollin*.

retribution

e 1 Sa. xiv. 7; xvi. 21; xxxi. 6.

"After long experience of the world, I affirm, before God, I never knew a rogue who was not unhappy." — *Junius*.

"Much danger makes great hearts most resolute." — *Marston*.

B. C. 1206.

Tola and
Jair

f Jos. xiii. 13; 1 Chr. ii. 22.

"Unselfish and noble acts are the most radiant epochs in the biog-

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raphy of souls. When wrought in earliest youth, they lie in the memory of age like the coral islands, green and sunny, amidst the melancholy waste of ocean."—*Thomas*.

"He who, in questions of right, virtue, or duty, sets himself above all ridicule, is truly great, and shall laugh in the end with truer mirth than ever he was laughed at."—*Lavater*.

oppression under Philistia and Ammon

a Comp. 1 Kl. xl. 5, 7, 33.

A Scotch woman whose husband went to sea a few days after their marriage, used to go to a neighboring headland and watch for his returning ship, or, lying in bed, listen for his footfall. So God waits for the returning prodigal.

Israel's cry is rejected

b LXX.

"Show us your God!" said one of the heathen at Buhapurum to a child who had been educated in Christianity. "I cannot do that," answered the child; "but I can soon show you yours." Taking up a stone and daubing it with some resemblance of a human face, he placed it upon the ground, and "There," said he, "is such a god as you worship." Superstition is but the fear of belief, religion is the confidence. —*Lady Blessington*. The true instrument of man's degradation is his ignorance. —*Lady Morgan*.

Israel's repentance is accepted

Historical negatives. — I. Great deeds do not always go with great names. II. It does not always follow that because deeds are not great, therefore they are not useful. III. Human history when looked at in great breadths is seen to have a plan and to be under the most beneficent control. IV. Do not shrink from duty because you are invited to follow an illustrious predecessor. V. Greatness will be abused if it be taken as a discouragement of humble service. From the cross we learn — 1. That the greatest name is servant; 2. That the humblest deed will be rewarded; 3. That submission must precede exaltation; 4. That self-denial is necessary to the growth of the best life. — *Parker*.

That rode on thirty ass colts. — Horses were not then in the country. To ride on an ass was at that time equivalent to a man keeping his carriage now. It was a mark of wealth, which few could afford, for nearly the whole population were accustomed to go from place to place on foot. This must, therefore, have been a large and opulent family. The horse when it appeared was generally associated with war, while the ass being quiet and the reverse of formidable, was regarded as the symbol of peace. Hence Zion's King came riding on an ass, His kingdom being one of peace (Zech. ix. 9). — *Hom. Com.*

6—9. (6) Baalim, Nu. xxii. 41. Ashtaroth, pl. form of *Ashtoreth*, the female deity of the Phœnicians. This descrip.^a indic. very general lapse into idolatry throughout the land. the gods of Syria, we are not told what their names were, but they did not differ much from the gods of Phœnicia already mentioned. (7) sold them, ch. ii. 14. Philistines, see ch. iii. 31. Since Shamgar's time they had grown in strength. Ammon, prob. leagued with the Phil. and oppressing tribes E. of Jordan. (8) that year, the year in which God "sold them into the hands" of their enemies. Probably also the year of Jair's death. The expression strongly suggests the idea that this history was compiled from a record like the Saxon Chronicle. (9) Judah, etc., tribes on the W. of Jordan. They bore the brunt of the oppression.

The sore distress of Israel. — I. It was self-invoked. II. Occasioned by departure from the worship and service of God. III. Proved the weakness of the gods they preferred to Jehovah. IV. Alliance with the world's sin did not secure the world's friendship.

Tyrannical oppression. — The Hebrew has "crushed." Of a severe master it is said, "He crushes his servants" "Ah! my lord, crush me not." "When will the king cease to crush his people?" — *Roberts*.

10—14. (10) forsaken . . Baalim, R. V., "We have sinned against thee, even because we have forsaken our God, and have served the Baalim." (11) the Lord said, prob. through the high priest. Egyptians, as Ex. xii. 29—36. Amorites, Jos. x. 5, 6, 12. Philistines, Ju. iii. 31. (12) Zidonians, part of Hazer's army, Jos. xi. 8; Ju. v. 19. Aમેલેક. Ju. vi. 33. Maonites, Midianites,^b it may be name of one of the Eastern tribes. (13) no more, temporary refusal designed to deepen repentance. (14) Go, etc., De. xxxii. 37, 38, so they would learn the vanity of their idol-worship.

A Divine taunt (vs. 14). — We observe — I. That departure from God involves men in sorrow and tribulation. II. That in their tribulation men find the objects they preferred to God impotent to save them. III. That God will sometimes leave men to discover from experience the worthlessness of their worldly choice. See if wealth or works will save in sorrow.

God or Baal. — We follow light or darkness, good or evil. There is no middle course. In this early growth of the soul's life on earth, the great question is, What tendencies does it show? The twilight of sunrise looks very like the twilight of sunset, yet the one is the prophecy of day and the other the portent of night. Two streams which flow from one watershed are at first near together, yet if one is running east and the other west, they may come at last to be divided by a whole continent, and to end in two separate oceans. We must be moving in one or other of two directions. The question is, Are we going to the light or from the light, to God or from God? The tendency determines the character of the life, and this must be justly estimated by the full issues involved in the tendency, not by the present early stages of it. Thus we are all children of the light or children of the darkness, ripening into saintly servants of God or corrupting into wretched slaves of sin. — *Adeney*.

15—18. (15) And the children of Israel said, as the conduct of Israel grows worse, the answer of Jehovah to their cries grows sterner. He is not

content now with the expression of regret. He requires some visible sign that it is real.—*Cam. Bib.* (16) **his soul was grieved**, this is one of the many instances of accommodation to human understanding in the way of speaking of God which are to be found in Scripture. (17) **gathered together**, for a combined and serious attack of the country. *Mizpeh*,^a a city of Gilead, on a height, and a strong position. (18) **begin to fight**, they were very dependent on the faith and enterprise of a leader. **head**, comp. ch. xi. 11

Mercy for the truly penitent. —I. The repentance of Israel was marked by— 1. A full confession of sin; 2. An acknowledgment of the justice of the Divine dealings; 3. A practical exhibition of their real sorrow of heart for the sin of idolatry. II. The mercy of God manifests— 1. His compassion for a suffering people; 2. His willingness to answer prayer; 3. The condition upon which He bestows salvation.

Examples. — It was said of the good *Richard Cecil*, when leaving a sick bed, where he had been confined for upwards of six weeks, a friend remarked to him he had lost much precious time lying on that couch. "No," he replied, "the time has not been lost. I have learned more within these curtains during these weeks, than I learned during all my academical course at the university." *Joseph*, too, learned the lessons which served him so well in after life, more effectually in the pit of Dothan, and the dungeons of Egypt, amid cruelty, injustice, and desertion of friends, than he ever could have done under the wing of parental indulgence in his natural home. Suffering is the most effective of teachers. — *Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

1-3. (1) **Gileadite**, or son of Gilead: names often recurred in Jewish families. (2) **wife**, lawful wife. **thrust out**, an unrighteous act, after his father had given him shelter and acknowledged him. (3) **Tob**, district N. of Gilead, towards Syria. 2 Sa. x. 6, 8. **vain men**, idle men, preferring a wild, independent life; these made him a leader. Comp. *Abimelech*, Ju. ix. 4: *David*, 1 Sa. xxii. 2.

Jephthah. — The mode of life here indicated is precisely that which was followed by David, when *his* reputation brought around him men of similar character to these followers of Jephthah. This kind of military robbery is far from being considered dishonorable in the East. On the contrary, the fame thus acquired is thought as fair as any that can be obtained through any class of military operations. An Arab or Tartar desires no higher or brighter distinction than that of a successful military robber; and to make that fame unsullied, it is only necessary that his expedition should not be against his own nation or tribe. — *Bush.*

4-6. (4) **process of time**, *R. V.*, "after a while." *Ammon*,^b for origin of the nation, see Ge. xix. 38. Usually associated with Moab; as Ju. iii. 12-14. (5) **when the children of Ammon made war**, that is, when the children of Israel had resolved to resist the incursions which they had borne for eighteen years. Compare ch. x. 8 with 18. With this agree the facts (1) that Jephthah was young when he was expelled from his father's house, and (2) that when he conducted his successful expedition against Ammon, he had a grown-up daughter. (6) **captain**, leader in war, and according to later usage in peace also; see the office and work of a *judge*.

In process of time. — After several years, or as the years rolled on. The meaning seems to be, when a considerable period had elapsed after Jephthah's expulsion, and many things had come and gone. When he was expelled, it was the period of the people's sin and impenitence, and not at all unlikely, one of the special items of dislike to him on the part of his brethren was his staunch loyalty to the God of Israel, while they at that time were idolaters. That he was a true fearer of Jehovah is manifest from the whole account, and he was not likely to learn that lesson in Aram while living among heathen strangers. He must have learned it before leaving his father's house and kindred, for in the darkest nights of Israel's history there were always some glimmerings of the true light left unextinguished. Jephthah's brethren, being now penitent, and having returned to the worship of Israel's God, would feel that his piety, which they formerly disliked, was one of the best qualifications

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a Ge. xxxi. 49.

"Travelers tell us that there is a tribe in Africa so given to superstition that they fill their huts with so many idols that they do not even leave room for their families. How many men there are who fill their hearts with the idols of sin so that there is no room for the Living God. — *John Bate.*

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Jephthah
—
dwells in Tob

"Let us live for God, and then we need not fear the gathering ills of the future. Let us live for God, and the joys and the sorrows of the coming year will alike be the fore-runners to us of endless years in a cloudless clime."

his help sought against Ammon

b "They had expelled the *Zanzumim* fr. the region between the *Arum* and the *Jabbok*, and had established themselves in the strong mountainous country about the sources of these streams, Nu. xxi. 24; De. ii. 20, 21."—*Ayre.*

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his compact with Gilead

a "The circum. of his birth, and long residence in a heathen land, were little favorable to the formation of the highest type of character. Yet he has his record among the faithful He xi. 32."—*Sp' Com.*

b See Ga. xxxi. 48, 49.

"It often happens that the providences which are, to appearance, our greatest misfortune, are necessary to fit us for the work for which God designs us."—*Bush.*

vs. 9. "Jephthah's wisdom had not been answerable to his valor if he had not made his match beforehand. He bargains, therefore, for his sovereignty ere he wins it."—*Bp. Hall.*

his messages to Ammon

c "When Is. went forth out of Eg. this territory was in the hands of Sihon, king of the Amorites. Israel itself had fought with neither Moab nor Ammon."—*Lange.*

De. ii. 9, 19. "Courage is like the diamond—very brilliant, not changed by fire, capable of high polish; but except for the purpose of cutting hard bodies, useless."—*Colton.*

"No man can be brave who considers pain to be the greatest evil of life; nor temperate, who considers pleasure to be the highest good."—*Cicero.*

he describes the facts as to Israel

d Nu. xxxiii. 36, 37; De. i. 19.

for his becoming their leader in a battle which was to be won through the aid of Israel's God.—*Hom. Com.*

7-11. (7) **ye hate me**, indic. that the leaders of his tribe had shared with his brethren in his expulsion. By this Jephthah's mind was greatly embittered. (8) A prudent and soothing answer; they wished bygones to be bygones, recog. his military genius, and were willing to trust him. (9) **shall I be your head?** Jephthah stands upon a lower platform than Gideon^a (viii. 22, 23), inasmuch as he made his own aggrandizement the condition of his delivering his country. (10) **witness**, Heb. *be the hearer between us*: this is taking an oath of faithfulness to their word. (11) **uttered, etc.**, made solemn protestation that he undertook the work for Jehovah. Mizpah, "the renowned old capital of land beyond Jordan."^b No reason to think ark removed for the occasion.

Recognition of God in position of honor and responsibility.—How many would have at once swollen with self-conceit. It is a test of the inner life of Jephthah. We may all be more or less tested in this way. I. He entered upon his great task with a sense of solemn responsibility to God. Mizpah was the reminder of an ancient covenant, and its associations are honored. II. He made public confession of Jehovah. III. He looked to Jehovah for guidance and help.—*Muir.*

Jephthah's recall.—In the hour of Israel's need, repentant and humble, its elders approach the outlaw whom they had expelled. The man himself is not prepared for the singular conversion. He questions them suspiciously, nay, with all his magnanimity, reminds them of their different behavior in years gone by. They admit all; but they are too humbled to make evasion and to conceal their real motive. He is master of the situation. His whole previous training and reputation now stand him in good stead, and he understands a little of God's dealings with him. The Bible is full of instances of men who have gained power and fame through the overcoming of difficulties. Time and God are on the side of them who, notwithstanding temptation, are found faithful. And is there not One who outshines all others in this? "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head stone of the corner." His career is our incentive and example (Phil. ii. 5-11). Have not all rejected Christ? In our need let us go to Him, a nobler than Jephthah.—*Muir.*

12-15. (12) **messengers**, the word is the same as that translated angel in ch. ii. 1. **to do with me**, what is thy purpose? what cause of offense has been given? **my land**, the newly-appointed head speaks in the name of the land of which he has been made head. (14) **again**, in reply. (15) **took not away**,^c position Jephthah takes is that Is. had not grasped the land, but it had been given them by God bec. of Amorite sins, vs. 21.

First in the fray.—I. Jephthah vindicates the wisdom of those who made him their leader by at once assuming the offensive. II. By putting on this bold form the hopes of Gilead would be rallied, and the fears of the enemy excited. III. He who strikes the first blow in necessary conflicts obtains an advantage. IV. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Noble daring.—

I have a heart to dare,
And spirit-thews to work my daring out;
I'll cleave the world as a swimmer cleaves the sea,
Breaking the sleek, green billows into froth,
With tilting, full-blown chest, and scattering,
With scornful breath, the kissing, flattering foam,
That leaps and dallies with his dipping lip.
Thou'rt distant now, O World! I hear thee not
There's no pale fingers of thy fires to-night
Around the large horizon. Yet, O World!
I have thee in my power, and as a man
By some mysterious influence can sway
Another's mind, making him laugh and weep,
Shudder or thrill, such power have I on thee.—*Alex. Smith.*

16-19. (16) **unto Red Sea**, wh. they reached again after walking thro' desert *el-Tih*.^d Kadesh, Nu. xx. 1, etc. (17) Then Israel sent messengers, this passage, down to the word "land," is evidently taken with requisite

changes from Nu. xx. 14, 17. (18) compassed, went around rather than force their way through. **within the border**, studiously avoiding offense. **Arnon**, the district in dispute. (19) **Sihon**, Nu. xxi. 21—26 **Heshbon**, on the western part of the high table-land, E. of the Jordan. Orig. belonged to Moab. **my place**, W of Jordan.

Israel and Ammon. — Thus in Jephthah's controversy with the Ammonites there was room for doubt how far the defeat and dispossession of the children of Ammon by the Amorites had forever extinguished the claim of the former to the ownership of the land. That Israel had not taken the land from the children of Ammon, or displayed any hostility towards them, was undoubtedly true. But it did not necessarily follow that the Ammonite claim was wholly unrighteous. The question how long a time it takes to establish or to invalidate ownership is obviously a debatable one, in the decision of which personal feelings will carry much weight. In the Franco-German war of 1870 the Germans no doubt felt about Alsace and Lorraine that even 200 years possession by France had not wholly abrogated the German rights. And so it may have been with the king of the children of Ammon. He may have thought that he was justified in claiming the land which had once belonged to his people; and the matter could only be decided by the arbitrament of war. The practical lesson, however, to be learnt is, in all the business of life, whether in politics, or commerce, or in social intercourse, or in religion, to cultivate a spirit of fairness. In religious controversies especially, the value of fairness, with a view to truth, and to the peace of the church, cannot be overrated. — *Pul. Com.*

20—23. (20) **trusted not**, comp. Israel's promises.^a **Sihon gathered**, this passage, to the end of the verse, is for the most part a literal quotation from the narrative in Numbers. Jephthah's message thus shows the Pentateuch to have been in existence in his day. — *Camb. Bib.* **Jahaz**, see Nu. xxi. 23; Is. xv. 4; Jer. xlviii. 21. (21) **land of the Amorites**, so not territory at all of *Ammon*, whose king he was addressing. (22) **coasts**, borders, districts. **wilderness**, district further east, beyond the high lands of Gilead.

The gifts of Providence not to be thoughtlessly surrendered (vs. 23). — I. The possession of Israel was the gift of God. II. What God had so given Israel was not to resign. III. Providence has been very good to us — nationally and personally — in the past. IV. What Providence has given it is our duty to hold fast. V. A careless surrender of mercy is a dishonor to God; a slight upon His wisdom.

Providence our guide. —

I stand like one
Has lost his way, and no man near him to inquire it of;
Yet there's a Providence above that knows
The roads which ill men tread, and can direct
Inquiring justice. The passengers that travel
In the wide ocean, where no paths are,
Look up and leave their conduct to a star. — *Sir R. Howard.*

24—28. (24) **Chemosh**,^b subduer, desolator, the god of war. National god of the *Moabites*, but worshiped also by Ammon. Nu. xxi. 29. Jeph. appeals to the principle on which the king himself would act. Conquests in war were regarded as gifts of the gods. (25) **Balak**, who, though king of Moab, did not dispute Is.'s right to Sihon's kingdom. (26) **three hundred years**, round number; time enough to bring right of possession. (27) **Judge**, vindicator; let him show who is right. (28) he continued his occupation of the land.

The gifts of the gods, and of God (vs. 24). — I. Superstitiously or reverently men regard their possessions as the gifts of the higher powers. Christians speak of God. Idolaters, of their gods. Worldly men, of luck, fortune, etc. II. Those who connect their portion with the wisdom and love of God are alone contented. III. The degree of men's content is the measure of their confidence in the supposed or real giver.

The gift of God. — God gave them the country by giving them the victory over him who possessed it. The great Proprietor of the earth, the King of nations, bestowed it upon them by an express and particular conveyance, such as vested in them a title that none could gainsay, Deut. ii. 24, "I have given into thy hand Sihon and his land." — *Bush.*

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"They that govern elephants never appear before them in white; and the masters of bulls keep from them all garments of blood and scarlet, as knowing that they will be impatient of civil usages and discipline when their natures are provoked by their proper antipathies." — *Bp. Taylor.*

"Men suppose that their reason has command over their words; still it happens that words in return exercise authority on reason." — *Bacon.*

B. C. cir. 1161.

how Israel was treated by Sihon

a Nu. xxi. 22; De. ii. 26—28.

"Who ever knew truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter?" — *Milton.*

"Gifts come from on high in their own peculiar form." — *Goethe.*

the king of Ammon rejects the message

b 1 Kl. xi 7, 33; 2 Kl. xliii. 13; Jer. xlviii. 7, 13, 46.

"It is very possible that the king of the children of Ammon at this time may have been a Moabite, poss. the king of Moab." — *Spk. Com.*

"Narrow minds think nothing right that is above their own capacity." — *La Rochefoucauld.*

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**Jephthah
invades
Ammon**

his rash vow

"The fatal vow at the battle of *Aroer* belongs naturally to the spasmodic efforts of the age; like the vows of Samson or Saul... or of Clovis or Bruno in the Middle Ages." — Stanley.

a "His Syrian birth and long residence in a Syrian city would make him familiar with such fierce rites." — Spk. Com.

"The fathers were almost unanimously of the mind that he really sacrificed his daughter. They that have purposefully handled this question will tell you that Tertullian, Athanasius, Nazianzen, Hierom, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Austen, Theodoret and others were of that mind." — T. Lightfoot.

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**Jephthah's
daughter
goes out to
meet him**

b Comp. Ge. xxii. 2, 12, 16; Jer. vi. 26; Zech. xii. 10.

"Lament my virgin estate, that I am never to be a mother in Israel." — Wordsworth.

"Take, then, no vow at random; taken with faith, preserve it; yet not bent, as Jeph-

29-33. (29) *Spirit, etc.*, comp. Ju. iii. 10; vi. 34; xiii. 25. This declares the relig. charac. of his enterprise. **passed over**, or went through the country E. of Jordan, rousing the people to war; making Mizpeh his centre of operations. (30) **vowed a vow**, "Vows are the signs and expressions of the deepest surrender to God." Comp. Ge. xxviii. 20-22; 2 Sa. xv. 8; 1 Sa. i. 11. "It was his zeal to vow, it was his sin to vow rashly." (31) **whatsoever, lit. the comer forth, who shall come forth, etc.** burnt offering, there can be little doubt that Jephthah, in his eagerness, had in his mind a human sacrifice. The expression "that which cometh out of the doors of my house" could hardly have signified an animal. Therefore Jephthah no doubt had in his mind some one of his household, whom he probably expected would be ready to meet him on his return. He was terribly punished for his rash and cruel vow. — *Camb. Bib.* (32) **So**, resuming narrative fr. vs. 29. (33) **Minnith**, 4 m. fr. Heshbon.

Jephthah's vow (vs. 30). — Consider — I. The nature of Jephthah's vow. II. The circumstances attending it; the victory, return home, Jephthah's sorrow and regret, his daughter's modest composure and heroism. III. The manner in which he is said to have accomplished it. Probably he *literally* fulfilled the vow. — H. Dunster.

Jephthah's vow. — If we refer to the marginal reading, which is generally the most correct, we shall find it run: "It shall surely be the Lord's, or I will offer up a burnt-offering;" in the original there is no word for it ("I will offer it up"), but the literal reading is, "Whatsoever cometh forth of the door of my house to meet me shall surely be the Lord's, or" (if I do not devote that object to Him) "I will offer up a burnt-offering." In the next place, Jephthah, the father, was not at liberty to kill his daughter by any law, much less on any vow made in haste. Human sacrifices were interdicted under all circumstances. And, further, in order to offer up a sacrifice there must have been a priest to do it. Jephthah was not a priest—he was a soldier. It is stated in the thirty-eighth verse that she went with her companions for two months, and "bewailed her virginity upon the mountains." She was secluded—separated from the world, and devoted to a sort of monastic life. In the last verses it is said that "her father did with her according to his vow" (not "he slaughtered her"); "and she knew no man; and it was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah four days in a year." The literal rendering of that last expression is, that "the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament with the daughter of Jephthah;" . . . she was devoted to the immediate service and worship of God in a state of perpetual virginity. — *Cumming*. [As the question respecting Jephthah's daughter cannot be certainly decided, arguments on both sides are given in these notes.]

34-37. (34) **timbrels**. Ex. xv. 20. The timbrel was identical with our modern tamborine or little drum. **only child**, Heb. word used as term of endearment. (35) **rent his clothes**, sign of desperate grief. **Alas, my daughter**, it appears evident from this lamentation of Jephthah, and his daughter's reply, that the conception of Jehovah entertained by the Israelites of this time was much debased by the frequent relapses into idol worship. Jephthah conceives of Him as the neighboring nations conceived of their gods. They were accustomed to offer living sacrifices (2 Kings iii. 27; xvi. 3; Micah vi. 7). He thought it only due gratitude to do the same. He had rashly vowed, and he believed that Jehovah strictly exacted from him the fulfilment of his vow. — *Cam. Bib.* **brought . . low**, bowed me down. (36) **she said . . My father**, no language is sufficient to do justice to the nobleness of this devoted woman. There are no lamentations, save for the fact that her father's house would cease out of Israel. No reproach is uttered against her father for his rashness. She is quite content to yield her life, since Israel is avenged of his enemies by her father's hands.

Filial rejoicing in parental successes (vs. 34). — I. A picture of a brave father returning from victory. The return home of men from scenes of conflict or toil. In defeat or trial their sweetest solace: in victory their best reward to be found at home. II. A picture of a noble daughter welcoming her father. Had he returned defeated, such a daughter would have soothed him; or wounded, she would have nursed him.

Jephthah's daughter.—

A moment more,
And he had reached his home; when lo! there sprang
One with a bounding footstep, and a brow
Of light, to meet him. O, how beautiful!
Her dark eye flashing like a sunlit gem,
And her luxurious hair!—'twas like the sweep
Of a swift wing in visions. He stood still,
As if the sight had withered him. She threw
Her arms about his neck,—he heeded not
She called him "father,"—but he answered not,
She stood and gazed upon him. Was he wroth?
There was no anger in that bloodshot eye.
Had sickness seized him? She unclasped his helm,
And laid her white hand gently on his brow,
And the large veins felt stiff and hard, like cord.
The touch aroused him. He raised up his hands,
And spoke the name of God, in agony.
She knew that he was stricken then, and rushed
Again into his arms; and, with a flood
Of tears she could not bridle, sobbed a prayer
That he would breathe his agony in words.
He told her,—and a momentary flush
Shot o'er her countenance; and then the soul
Of Jephthah's daughter awakened; and she stood
Calmly and nobly up, and said 'twas well,—
And she would die.

* * * * *

The sun had well-nigh set,
The fire was on the altar; and the priest
Of the High God was there. A pallid man
Was stretching out his trembling hands to heaven,
As if he would have prayed, but had no words.
And she who was to die, the calmest one
In Israel at that hour, stood up alone,
And waited for the sun to set. Her face
Was pale, but very beautiful,—her lip
Had a more delicate outline, and the tint
Was deeper; but her countenance was like
The majesty of angels.

The sun set,—

And she was dead,—but not by violence.—*N. P. Willis.*

38—40. (39) did with her, many think there can be no question that he sacrificed her. (40) No other allusion to this custom^a is found in Scripture. **lament**, Heb. lends itself to the ambiguous feeling of the narrative, and may mean to praise, or to lament.

Modern Jephthahs, or parental immolations (vs. 39).—In Jephthah's vow we see—(1) A good feeling overcoming the judgment; (2) A sense of right leading to an enormous crime. We shall go on the assumption that he actually sacrificed the life of his daughter; and he sacrificed—I. To the true God. Parents now offer up their children to false gods: to—1. Idleness. 2. Worldliness; 3. Ambition. II. Only the body of his daughter. Souls of children are often immolated now. Soul-immolation is more—1. Gradual; 2. Mischievous. III. From a noble impulse. No such feeling prompts parents of children in these days. IV. With a terrible regret. Modern parents oft lay the souls of their children on the altar of sin with an utter indifference. V. With her full concurrence. Do worldly parents in these times get the consent of their daughters to be morally immolated?—*Thomas.*

Vows.—Just prior to the issue of the September proclamation of liberty to the slaves in the United States, the President opened the business of the Cabinet meeting by saying, that "the time for announcing the emancipation policy could be no longer delayed. Public sentiment would sustain it, many warm supporters demanded it, and (speaking in a low tone) I have promised my God that I will do it." On being asked by Mr. Chase, whether he correctly understood him, "Yes," he replied, "I have made a solemn vow before God

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thah once, blindly to execute a rash resolve, whom better it had suited to exclaim, 'I have done ill,' than to redeem his pledge, by doing worse.'—*Dante, Par. v. 64.*

"I cannot by any means agree with Dr. Kitto in his interpretation of this difficult and much controverted passage. The structure of Heb. text does not require such an interpretation as he gives, and there are incidental expressions in the narrative which, in my opinion, are decidedly opposed to it."—*Porter.*

the daughter of Jephthah

^a"A salutary custom, warning posterity against the sin of making rash vows, and of tempting God."—*Wentworth.*

"A rash vow, that he could not come off with either breaking or performing it, but with sin. If he performed it not, he sinned in making a vow that he might not perform. If he performed it, he sinned in performing a vow that he might not make. . . . He is caught under a rash and sinful vow, as a man that hath a wolf by the ears, that whether

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he hold him or let him go he is in danger." — *J. Lightfoot.*

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the murmuring of Ephraim

a Comp. Ju. viii. 1-3.

b Comp. Ju. xiv. 15, xv. 6.

c Heb. in the palm of my hands.

Anger in many instances arises from a cowardly fear of seeing or being told our own faults.

Shibboleth

"The making of life and death to depend on the issue of this trial seems very hard, seeing that an innocent person who had an infirmity of lisping or stuttering might thus have perished." — *Assem. Annot.*

The word Shibboleth has now come to be applied to the pass-word of a secret society; the secret by which those of a party know each other.

Ibzan

"A house without a roof would scarcely be a more indifferent home than a family state unsheltered by God's friendship and the sense of being always rested in His providential care and guidance." — *Bushnell.*

Great events and mighty deeds figure on the page

that if General Lee were driven back from Pennsylvania I would crown the result by the declaration of freedom to the slaves." He issued his proclamation, and four million slaves became free men. — *Chase.*

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

1-3. (1) Ephraim, this tribe aimed at supremacy, and were jealous of honor gained by any other tribe.^a northward, or to Taphon in the land of Gad. This is the more probable rendering. burn thine house, indic. the lawless spirit of the times,^b and the overbearing pride of Eph. (2) when I called, this makes the case worse for Ephraim. They had been asked to join the expedition and had neglected to do so. (3) life in my hands,^c took on me the whole responsibility and peril.

Ephraim's anger (vs. 1). — Note — I. That quarrels between brethren are usually most bitter and violent. II. That they who have done the greatest service to the cause of God are not secure from the greatest insults, even sometimes from the pretended friends of that cause. — *J. Bush.*

Life in the hand. — The Hindoos use the same figure: When a son who has been long absent returns home, his father says, "My son has returned from the far country with his life in his hand;" which means, he has passed through many dangers. "O that divine doctor! my son was at the point of death, but he brought his life in his hand." — *Roberts.*

4-7. (4) fugitives, the only explanation that seems plausible is that it is applied to Jephthah's army, in which some individual Ephraimites may have been present. (5) passages, fords: as Gid. Ju. vii. 24. escaped, fr. the battle. (6) Shibboleth, this test word indic. diff. of pronunciation E. and W. of Jordan. The meaning of the words is not important. The Ephraimites could not pronounce *sh*, as French cannot *th*.

Shibboleth. — In different communities among the same people nothing is more common than to hear different dialects spoken. The guttural sound of the letters *ch* as known and pronounced in Scotland is impossible of pronunciation by an Englishman, as in the words Ecclefechan or Auchtermuchty. Again, the letter *r*, as in *river*, cannot be pronounced by a native of Northumberland. The sound of *th* cannot be given by many foreigners, though quite easy of utterance to the English-speaking race. Many German Jews pronounce the Hebrew word *Beth* as *Baiss*, and *Bereshith* they pronounce as *Beresiss* or *Bereshiss*. Peter, as a Galilean, often brought in his broad, inelegant phrases which grated on refined ears, so that bystanders knew him to be a Galilean from his tongue. "Thy speech bewrayeth thee" (Mark xiv. 70). So is the Arabic tongue different as spoken in Aleppo, in Cairo, and in Bagdad. When, during the Flemish war, the insurrection against the French broke out (1802), the gates were guarded, and no one was suffered to pass out except those who were able to say, "*Scitt ende friend*," which words no Frenchman could pronounce. — *Cassel.*

8-10. (8) Ibzan, some think the same as Boaz. Bethlehem, the commentators are agreed that this was Bethlehem of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 15). (9) thirty sons, etc., indic. that he kept almost royal state, and entered into alliances with the other tribes. (10) buried, the indic. of respect for him maintained to close of his life.

Peaceful times. — Now there came quiet, uneventful days, both for Israel and his rulers. There is no mention of foreign foe or of domestic discord. Scenes of family life take the place of the martial muster and the bloody fight. There is nothing to record save how long the judges judged, when they died, and where they were buried. We infer, indeed, from the fact that there were judges the continual care of God for His people, and from the absence of invasion and servitude we infer that the people did not forsake God. But more than this we do not know, nor over how great a part of Israel these judgeships did extend. But the reflection cannot but arise that it is not good for a people to be in continual strife. Struggle for supremacy over enemies without, and conflict for the settlement of government at home, should have their term, and give way to enjoyment of prosperity and peace. The happiest times in a nation's life are not always those that shine the

brightest on the page of history. And so in the life of the individual. — *Pul. Com.*

Ties of the family and the country. — The ties of family and of country were never intended to circumscribe the soul. Man is connected at birth with a few beings, that the spirit of humanity may be called forth by their tenderness; and, whenever domestic or national attachments become exclusive, engrossing, clannish, so as to shut out the general claims of the human race, the highest end of Providence is frustrated, and home, instead of being the nursery, becomes the grave of the heart. — *W. E. Channing.*

11-15. (11) **Zebulonite**, Ju. iv. 10; v. 18. judged, acted as civil ruler. No act of deliverance was accomplished by these men. Their civil administration gave some degree of unity and strength to the nation. (12) **Aijalon**, disting. fr. city of Dan, Josh. xxi. 24. (13) **Pirathonite**, so Ephraimite: *Pirathon* being mod. *Ferata*, vill. 6 m. W. S. W. of Shechem. (14) **nephews**, *R. V.*, "sons' sons." (15) **mount**, etc., a district of Eph. retaining this name from some settlement of Amalek, or battle with them.

A large family (vs. 14). — To an Englishman this may appear almost incredible, but we have a great number of similar cases. A man of property has as many wives as he thinks proper to support. Santherasega, Modeliar of Oodeputty, had two wives and six concubines, who bare to him thirty children. A friend of mine in Manila knew a man who was the father of forty children. — *Roberts.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-5. (1) **Philistines**,^a Ju. x. 7, first mentioned Ge. x. 14; xxi. 34. The name indic. their late arrival in the country — *the strangers.* — *Stanley.* Settled in the maritime plains, the low country, on the S. W. of Canaan. **forty years**, reckoning from the first invasion of the children of Ammon to the death of Abdon, we have a period of forty-nine years. But Samson judged Israel for twenty years (ch. xv. 20). Thus Samson's exploits may have fallen in with the judgeship of Elon in northern and of Abdon in central Palestine, and may even have commenced during the life of Jephthah. (2) **Zorah**, now *Surah*, 14 m. W. of Jerus. **Manoah**, rest. (3) **angel**, Ju. ii. 1. (4) **drink not**, etc., according to law, Nu. vi. 1-21. Sam.'s great strength was not to be thought due to artificial stimulus. (5) **no razor**, he was to be *wholly* dedicated to God. **Nazarite**, *R. V.*, Nazirite.^b The primary idea of the word is that of separation (see Num. vi. 1-21). The nature of the Nazirite vow is explained in the passage just cited. It communicated a kind of priestly character to the person who took it. Cf. Exod. xxix. 2. See also 1 Sam. i. 11; Amos ii. 11, 12. **begin to deliver**, only begin. This partly done by making Phil. a laughing-stock, so removing the fear of them.

Strength out of weakness. — I. The strong man was born at a time of great national weakness. II. Of a family weak in point of numbers. III. Was nourished upon weak diet. None should say his strength was artificially produced. Learn — 1. In time of weakness look to God for help and strength; 2. Let the strong maintain their strength by reliance upon God, not by trusting to adventitious aids.

A childless house (vs. 5). — This command was given to the wife of Manoah, the father of Samson, who had previously been sterile. Hannah, the mother of Samuel, was also sterile, "and she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if Thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of Thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget Thy handmaid, but will give unto Thy handmaid a man-child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head." (Numbers vi. 5; Acts xviii. 18). All who are married in the East have an intense desire for children. It is considered disgraceful, and a mark of the displeasure of the gods, to have a childless house. Under these circumstances, husband and wife perform expensive ceremonies; and vow that should the gods favor them with a son, "no razor shall come upon his head" (i. e. excepting "the corners") until he shall be ten or twelve years of age. In all schools boys may be seen with elf-locks of ten or twelve years' standing, giving a testimony to the solicitude, superstition, and affection of the parents, and a memorial of the favor of their deities. — *Roberts.*

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of history, but the soul's progress in holiness is worthy to be recorded by an angel's pen. — *Hervey.*

Elon, Abdon

"My soul blesses the Great Father every day, that He has gladdened the earth with little children." — *Mary Howitt.*

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Samson — his birth foretold

^a "The history of Sam.'s acts in the W. of Pales. synchronizes to a certain extent with those of Jephthah E. of Jordan."

^b A *Nazir-Elohim*, i. e. one belonging especially to God, and different fr. ordinary mortals, so long as he preserves inviolate the external sign and pledge under wh. he has been nurtured." — *Ewald.*

"God carries on His work gradually, and by several hands. One lays the foundation of a good work, another builds, and perhaps a third brings forth the top-stone." — *Henry.*

"O God, how justly do we raise our eyes from our tables unto Thee, which canst make water nourish and wine enfeeble us." — *Bp. Hall.*

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Manoah asks for guidance

α Lu. i. 15.

"When I see the strength of Manoah's faith, I marvel not that he had a Samson to his son; he saw not the messenger, he heard not the errand, he examined not the circumstances; yet now he takes thought, not whether he should have a son, but how he shall order the son which he must have." — *Bp. Hall*.

"There are circumstances under which everything depends upon a prompt use of time. Opportunities of all kinds are limited." — *Parker*.

his early discipline

"The child is not to be educated for the present—for this is done without our aid unceasingly and powerfully—but for the remote future and often in opposition to the immediate future. The girl and the boy must learn that there is something in the ocean higher than its waves—namely a Christ who calls upon them." — *Richter*.
With a heart given to Jesus, a child is a sun that cannot but shine, a fountain which cannot but send out streams, a flower which cannot but fill the air with sweetness.
If you were to-day to destroy all the world, with the single exception of one household, and that household the most pious and honorable that

6-9. (6) **man of God**, or prophet; this her first thought. **countenance**, or general aspect. **terrible**, impressive, solemnizing. (7) *Comp. John Baptist.* **a to the day of his death**, this particular is not mentioned in the report of the angel's speech, vs. 5. But it was doubtless said by him, and it was not thought necessary to record it twice. (8) **entreated the Lord**, in faith at once accepting the message, only asking further direction. **teach us, etc.**, more precisely. (9) **sat . . . field**, prob. in the position where the angel before met her, waiting for ans. to prayer.

Repetition of Divine favors. — I. God's promises are so precious that we wish to be assured of them. II. How are God's promises to be realized? 1. By interested attention to them. Manoah's mind is full of the message received by his wife. It is this pondering and waiting and searching spirit that it blessed. 2. By implicit faith. He does not question the reality of the Divine message. 3. By believing prayer. How earnest is this man! "Manoah entreated Jehovah." 4. By expectation and diligent watching for the answer. — *Muir*.

The mystery of childhood. — It is a mystery to us whether the acorn which is now wafted by the sportive winds into the cleft of the yawning precipice shall moulder to dust on its hard bed, or whether it shall take root, spring up, and in the lapse of ages become the stately oak to adorn the mountain's brow, or to form part of the noble vessel destined to plough the billows of oceans, or to yield material for ceiling the roof of palaces; — a mystery whether the grain of corn which is now borne under the plumage of the bird of passage shall drop into the pathless deep, and there perish amidst its restless waves, or whether it shall be carried to some distant desert land, there to grow up, and bear fruit, and, in the sweep of time, to cover the vast regions of the globe with the glorious honors of harvest; and it is a mystery whether the forest foliage which yesterday fell at your feet shall lie and rot amidst the rubbish of centuries, or whether it shall be deeply treasured up for geological ages in the bowels of the earth, until it petrify into that combustible mineral which shall warm the hearts and cheer the homes of unborn generations: and so it is a mystery whether the babe of a span long, who now lies in the lap of its mother's love, shall turn out for weal or for woe, shall prove a blessing or a curse to herself and to the world. — *J. Hutchinson*.

10-14. (10) **made haste**, anxious her husband should see the angel, and fearing lest he might soon depart. (11) **man**, not yet discerned as certainly more than a prophet. (12) **How shall we order, etc.**, *R. V.*, "what shall be the manner of the child and what shall be his work?" (13) **beware**, take care to avoid. (14) **of the vine**, the grape-bearing vine.

The early training of Samson (a S. S. address). — Sketch the character and circumstances of Manoah and his wife. In the prospect of having a child to train they are properly anxious. S. S. teachers are the subjects of similar anxiety when Providence places "young immortals" under their care. Their thought often is, "How shall we order?" etc. Such a thought — I. Implies on the part of the teacher or guardian of youth a deep sense of responsibility. This may arise from such as the following considerations: 1. Every child has an individuality of his own: needs special and distinct training: the same ordering and doing, will not suit all; 2. Every child has great possibilities and capacities wrapt up in its young soul: these have to be developed and directed; 3. Every child will, in great measure, become what the influences, rules, and teachings of his youth make him. Every child presents difficulties that unaided human strength and wisdom cannot successfully encounter and correct. II. Such a thought, if deep and sincere, will find expression in prayer. 1. Importance of personal and social prayer of teachers, etc.; 2. To offer such prayer there are many encouragements; 3. The answer to such prayer may be confidently expected. 4. As prayer was the parent's preparation for the work of training Samson, so it should be the teacher's chief preparation for his work; 5. But prayer was followed by constant endeavor. — *The Hive*.

Ordering of children. — The child's way needs ordering. Circumstances must be understood that discipline may fit the young life for its part. In our own time this represents a serious difficulty. To broaden life, to give it many points of interest, is well. Yet on the other hand how much depends on discipline, on limitation and concentration, the need of which we are apt to forget. Narrow and limited was the life of Israel when Samson was born

into it. Was there so much of restriction here as to make greatness impossible? Not so. To be an Israelite was to have a certain moral advantage and superiority. Through the limitations, fenced and guided by them, a soul might breathe forth to the upper air. Are we now to be afraid of limitations, bent on giving to youth multiform experience and the freest possible access to the world? Do we dream that strength will come as the stream is allowed to wander over a whole valley, turning hither and thither in a shallow and shifty bed? The natural parallel here will instruct us, for it is an image of the spiritual fact. Strength, not breadth, is the mark at which education should be directed.—*Expos. Bible.*

15-18. (15) ready a kid, offering a hospitality. Comp. Abraham^a and Gideon. (16) if thou wilt offer,^b these words were spoken to prepare the mind of Manoah for the discovery he was about to make, that his interlocutor was a supernatural being. Comp. Acts x. 25, 26; Rev. xix. 10. (17) thy name, comp. Jacob's question.^c (18) secret, R. V., wonderful.^d

Hospitality (vss. 15, 16).—I. Note the conduct of Manoah towards the angel. 1. Courteous; 2. Kind. II. That, also, of the angel towards Manoah. 1. Adapted himself to human senses in a familiar form; 2. Came to teach and bless. Learn—(1) Some have entertained angels unawares; (2) The angels that others thought they were entertaining have turned out to be very ordinary mortals.

Manner of showing gratitude.—A rich youth in Rome had suffered from a dangerous illness. On recovering his health, his heart was filled with gratitude, and he exclaimed, "O thou all-sufficient Creator! could man recompense thee, how willingly would I give thee all my possessions!" Hermas, the herdsman, heard this, and said to the rich youth, "All good gifts come from above; thither thou canst send nothing. Come, follow me." He took him to a hut where was nothing but misery and wretchedness. The father lay on a bed of sickness, the mother wept, the children were destitute of clothing, and crying for bread. Hermas said, "See here an altar for the sacrifice; see here the Lord's brethren and representatives." The youth assisted them bountifully; and the poor people called him an angel of God. Hermas smiled and said, "Thus turn always thy grateful countenance, first to heaven and then to earth."—*Krummacher.*

19-23. (19) with a meat offering, comp. Ex. xxix. 38-42. did wonderfully, as described in vs. 20. (20) Comp. case of Gideon.^e (21) knew, discerned he was a Divine messenger. (22) surely die, it was generally received idea that no man could look on God and live. (23) his wife said, with much wisdom and appropriateness. No signs of Div. wrath had appeared.

The fear of the vision of God.—The Divine vision was connected with a blessing to Manoah and his wife. The vision of God by the soul is itself the highest blessing; yet, as in the case of Manoah, it fills men with fear. I. The cause of the fear. 1. Mystery. 2. Guilt. 3. Unbelief. II. The remedies of the fear. 1. Self-possession. 2. Reflection. 3. Faith. 4. The acceptance of sacrifice.—*Adeney.*

Joy and fear.—Let us learn from this family scene that great joys often succeed great fears. Manoah said, The Lord intends to kill us; his wife said, Not so, or he would not have received a burnt-offering at our hands. And behold Samson was born, a judge of Israel, an avenger of mighty wrongs. Is it ever so dark as just before the dawn? Are you not witnesses that a great darkness always precedes a great light—that some peculiar misery comes to prepare the way for some unusual joy? If we could only lay hold of life in this way, and read it, not with unreasonable expectation of deliverance and joy, but with hopefulness, we should never become old, desiccated, or tuneless—to the last we should wear like old silver, to the very last there would be in us a light above the brightness of the sun.—*J. Parker.*

24, 25. (24) Samson.^f (25) move, Samson seems to have been subject to sudden impulses to exert his strength. All interior impulses are in the Bible ascribed to the agency of a good or evil spirit. camp of Dan, Mahaneh-Dan, comp. Ju. xviii. 11, 12. The movings of the Spirit showed themselves in indignation at his brethren's wrongs and in the early feats of strength. Eshtaol, on the border of Judah. Jos. xv. 33; xix. 41.

The Hebrew Hercules (vs. 24).—Notice—I. The circumstances of his birth.

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ever lived, in less than half a century we should see all the bad characteristics returning. Water cannot drown sin. Fire cannot burn out sin. Prisons cannot cure theft and cruelty. We must go deeper.

the offering to the angel

a Ge. xviii. 3-5.

b Ju. vi. 18-20.

c Ge. xxxii. 29.

d Is. ix. 6.

"It matters little that the rays of revelation seem to melt into the darkness of the Infinite, if only they shine bright and clear on one path of duty."—*Adeney.*

the ascent of the angel

e Ju. vi. 21.

"Step by step lifts bad to good, Without halting, without rest, Lifting better up to best; Planting seeds of knowledge pure Through earth to ripen, to heaven endure."—*Emerson.*

f "The deriv. of this name fr. shemesh, the sun, is of long standing among the Jewish expositors, and offers the best grounds for acceptance. Other

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explanations, mighty, bold, desolator, proposed by various expositors, fr. *Serarius* to *Keil*, appear to be without any historical motive." — *Lange*.

"The holy seed in all ages has been prone to cultivate intimacies and form alliances with the world of the ungodly." — *Bush*.

"People do not lack strength; they lack will." — *Victor Hugo*.

"If thou wouldst conquer thy weakness, thou must never gratify it." — *William Penn*.

"A man's soul will not grow fat, if he permit his neighbor's body to grow thin." — *Pounds*.

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he wishes to wed a daughter of Philistia

a Ge. xxxviii. 12-14; Jos. xv. 10; xix. 43.

"Situated on the undulating hills by which the mountain district is separated fr. the maritime plain, but reckoned among the cities of the Shephelah." — *Spk. Com.*

vs. 4. "God will not hear or endure commanding prayers. He that must have a temporal mercy, if he get it, may have a spiritual curse, but he is sure to have a temporal cross. So Delilah proved to Samson, who would not take his parents, counsel, but must have her whatever comes of it. But he paid dearly for his choice." — *Gurnall*.

II. The character of this deliverer. 1. His austerity of manners; 2. His great strength; 3. His strange humor. III. The great lessons of his life. 1. God's providence is equal to every human emergency; 2. The world should see that deliverance is from a Divine and not from a human source; 3. Physical strength and prowess may be allied with the meanest moral attainments; and therefore a man may be the weakest on the side where the true glory of manhood lies.

In the camp of Dan. — This was an encampment formed by the armed 600, who formed a temporary settlement, which afterwards became permanent, in a district near Kirjath-jearim, when they went out in quest of the acquisition of new territory. The account is given in chap. xviii. 11, 12, the date of which was more than 300 years anterior to the days of Samson. This place was somewhat higher up the sides of the mountain than Zorah, but only a few miles distant from the young hero's home. Thither he must often have climbed as to one of the centres where a few patriots, still left in the land, were wont to congregate, and from them he would hear, from time to time, of fresh deeds of barbarity and oppression that were perpetrated on the homesteads of Israel by the cruel enemies that occupied the plains below. Even at Zorah, every morning as he looked out at the door of his paternal dwelling, on the western slope of the mountains, his eye could take in not only the rich garden of the Shefelah, which belonged to his own tribe, but also a large sweep of the fertile fields beyond the borders, all over which the enemy spread their tents, or built their cities, and which, at one time, had been trodden by the foot of the dreaded giants. "Many a band of these cruel plunderers, doubtless, he would see marching up the glen beneath his father's house, and returning again laden with the spoils of his brethren; many an act of rapine and cruel outrage, or even barbarous murder, left a deep impress on his mind, and stirred within him thoughts of doing mighty deeds on behalf of the oppressed." — *Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1-4. (1) Timnath,* or Timnatha, present Tibneh, on border of Judah, but a town of Dan, 3 m. S. W. of Zorah. saw a woman, in the free eastern life of those ages women were neither veiled nor shut up in harems, but the negotiations for marriage were clearly carried on by the parents. (2) came up, to Zorah, an ascent of wild rocky gorges. (3) uncircumcised Phil., with such the true Israelite may not marry. For use of word as term of reproach, see 1 Sa. xiv. 6. (4) he sought, that is, the Lord, who was overruling this for the destruction of the Phil. for at that time, this fixes the date of the composition of the book at a time when the Philistines had entirely ceased to rule in Israel, i. e. in the middle of David's reign at the earliest.

Marriage. — This subject teaches us — I. That the people of God are liable to imperfections. II. That our lusts and passions are to be resisted. III. That care should be taken in forming friendships or alliances of any kind with the enemies of God, especially matrimonial. IV. That one single circumstance — one affection, one habit, one act — frequently influences one's whole destiny. V. That a crooked policy does not eventually profit. VI. That God frequently works good out of evil, or overrules evil for good; and that God's purposes are frequently accomplished by means of persons and events apparently least adapted, or even most opposed. VII. That though God may pardon our sins, their consequences in this life are frequently irremediable. — *J. Bigwood*.

The fatality of desire. — A sudden, unreasoning, and unreasonable passion is scarcely the augury one would expect for the career of a promised deliverer. A crisis in his moral history, a pivot upon which his whole subsequent life must turn. Sexual attachments are amongst the determining factors of human character and life, and the bases of society. Yet there are no circumstances of our life so independent of mere reason, and the power of the subjects of them. Still as a rule the outward realization of such attachments is within the control of the individual. Recognition should be made of God's share in producing them, and the matter should be laid before Him. If it could be written, how full of light upon the moral and intellectual history of the race would be an account of the intermarriages of nations, the *mésalliances* of individuals! — *Pul. Com.*

5-7. (5) vineyards, "such are still found in all these hamlets along the base of the hills, and upon the mountain sides."—*Thomson*. **young lion**, though not now found in Pales., names of places prove the lion once inhabited its forests and esp. the wild mountain passes of Judah. (6) **rent him**, without any weapon, or instrument. Probably under the Philistine dominion the Israelites were not allowed to carry arms. See 1 Sam. xiii. 19-22. (7) **talked with the woman**, now properly betrothed to him.

The lion-killer. — I. True love will brave great dangers. Love for Christ does not shrink from possible lions. II. Real courage does not run away from danger. The Christian soldier will stand up for Jesus. III. Genuine modesty does not boast of great exploits. IV. Kind thoughtfulness will conceal personal perils from the hearts of friends.

Samson's modesty. — With all his self-will he seems deeply to have loved his parents, and where there is love there will always be some measure of respect. Hence he would not like to horrify them with the recital of so wild a story as the encounter with the lion. It might fill their minds with troublesome suspicions as to what he might do next, and so he would forfeit their confidence. Many would have boasted of such an exploit, and blazoned it abroad through the world. That was not Samson's weak point. No one seems to have known of it for many months, until the solution of the riddle brought it out. — *Hom. Com.*

8-11. (8) **after a time**, Heb. custom required a space of time between betrothal and marriage, **aside**, out of the path. **swarm of bees**, in that hot climate a carcass is speedily dried up by the sun's heat, and putrefaction is thus arrested. "If one were to understand this of a putrid and offensive carcass, the narrative would lose all probability, for it is well known that bees will neither approach the dead body of man nor animal. But in the desert of Arabia the heat of the summer season often so dries up the moisture of the bodies of dead men and camels within twenty-four hours that they remain a long time like mummies, unaltered and without offensive smell." — *Rosenmüller*. (10) **for so used the young men to do**, apparently the explanation refers to the Philistine custom. (11) **saw him**, observed his strength. **companions**, with appearance of honoring him, but really in fear of possible excesses.

Good from strange sources. — We learn — I. That the trials we have conquered may become to us fountains of refreshment. II. The honey we procure from conquered lions will be of the sweetest we taste. III. The good we get from trials conquered may be made a source of refreshment to others.

Unexpected comfort. — In that typical age everything was full of instruction. There was a lesson in the discovery made so unexpectedly of honey in the carcass of the lion. After so hard a struggle, in which the Spirit of God came to his help, the result is a feast of honey! Honey is honey still, though found in the lion's carcass. In God's service "the bitter comes before the sweet," and that, says Bunyan, "makes the sweet the sweeter." Joseph's hard lines in being sold, and in leading a prison life for years, with all its privations and exhibitions of cold-heartedness from those around him, brought in the end a glorious vindication of character and improvement of circumstances. David's many and great trials furnished him with materials for writing his sweetest psalms, and made him the comforter and counselor of God's people in every age. After encountering the fiercest opposition from the enemies of the truth at Antioch, the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost. Some severe trials are made to turn men's dispositions into sweetness and all features of excellence. That is honey out of the lion's carcass. "How precious are Thy thoughts" — that is when taking a retrospect of God's way of leading us! — *Hom. Com.*

12-15. (12) **riddle**, favorite oriental amusement at festive entertainments. Sam's great deeds often attended with jokes. **sheets, etc.** R. V., "linen garments and thirty changes of raiment." (13) **Put forth**, accepting his challenge. (14) Sam. had kept his secret even fr. his parents. **seventh**, the Sept. and the Syriac read "fourth." (15) **take that we have**, or "make us poor," as in Gen. xiv. 11; Deut. xxviii. 42. This shows that the garments spoken of above were expensive ones.

Samson's riddle, or the slayer slain (vs. 14). — I. There is a lion lying in wait for all of you. In the form of — 1. Anger; 2. Falsehood; 3. Dishonesty. II.

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he slays a lion

vs. 6. "That which added much to the glory of Samson's triumph over the lion was that when he had done this great exploit he did not boast of it. Many would have made the whole country ring of it. Modesty and humility make up the brightest crown of great performances" — *M. Henry*.

he finds honey in the lion's carcass

a "This space of time was spent by the bride-elect with her parents, in preparation for the nuptials." — *Jamieson*. b LXX. and Josephus read, "When they were afraid of him." "And Samson had not found his honeycomb if he had not turned aside to see his lion, so we shall lose the comfort of God's benefits if we do not renew our perils by meditation." — *Ep. Hall*. "Temptations, when we meet them at first, are as the lion warred upon Samson; but if we overcome them, the next time we see them we shall find a nest of honey within them." — *Bunyan*. "The favors of Philistines have often some mischief or other designed in them." — *M. Henry*.

he proposes a riddle

c "He overflows with inexhaustible joyousness in word and deed, light-heartedness under the heaviest disasters, and sportive

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wit that accom-
panies him even to
the moment of his
self-chosen, tragic
end"—*Ewald*.

"Nor do young
people consider
what lions lurk in
the vineyards, the
vineyards of red
wines, as danger-
ous as snakes
under the green
grass."—*M. Henry*.

his wife
obtains the
answer

"Ashkelon lay off
the great road
from Egypt, and
was consequently
of small impor-
tance in Bib. his-
tory, and appar-
ently little
known."—*Ayre*.
*Ploughing with an-
other's heifer*.
"The saying de-
rives itself from
the occasional dis-
covery of hidden
treasure by the
plough, and the
superstitious belief
that the homebred
heifer knew where
the furrow ought
to be drawn,
because it has
been shown the
way before, when
the treasure was
hid."—*Hom. Com.*
"What pretense of
friendship soever
he make, a true
Philistine will soon
be weary of an
Israelite."—*Ep.
Hall*.

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he fires the
cornfields
of the
Philistines

a Ge. xxxviii. 17;
Lu. xv. 29.

b "These abound
in the neighbor-
hood of Gaza.
Sam. may have
caught them in
nets."—*Words-
worth*.

c "He put two
jackals together,
tail by tail, and
fastened tightly a
fire-match be-
tween them. At
nightfall he lighted
the fire-brand, and

You must slay the lion of temptation or he will slay you. III. Temptation overcome, a source of strength and happiness. Learn—(1) Dispatch temptations immediately. If we stop to reason with sin it will get the better of us; (2) We must depend upon God's help, and look to Him in prayer for His assistance in resisting sin.—*A. J. Gordon*.

The week of the marriage (vs. 15).—The marriage feast was of old frequently protracted to the length of seven days; for so long Samson entertained his friends at Timnath. To this festival Laban is thought by many divines to refer in his answer to Jacob's complaint that he had imposed Leah upon him instead of Rachel: "Fulfil the week of the marriage, and we will give thee this also." This feast was called the nuptial joy, with which no other was to be intermixed; all labor ceased while it continued, and no sign of mourning or sorrow was permitted to appear. It may be only further observed, that even in modern times none but very poor people give a daughter in marriage without a female slave for a handmaid, as hired servants are scarcely known in the oriental regions. Hence Laban, who was a man of considerable property in Mesopotamia, "gave unto his daughter Leah, Zilpah his maid, for a handmaid;" and "to Rachel his daughter, Bilhah his handmaid, to be her maid."—*Paxton*.

16-20. (16) wept, in intense passionate entreaty. (17) the seven days, or the rest of the seven days. No doubt she herself resented the conduct of her newly-made husband in keeping a secret from her, and could see also the signs of coming trouble in the growing indignation of her countrymen, before it broke out in the threats recorded in vs. 15. (18) sun went down, close of Eastern day. what, etc., they try to give the ans. as if they had guessed it. Sam's reply vaguely indic. he had found out their treachery. (19) his anger was kindled, it appears to have been shortlived (*see* ch. xv. 1), but at least it was not unnatural, and was no doubt deepened by the thought that these people were the oppressors of his countrymen. The revenge he took was by no means surprising in that warlike age, on the part of a young man conscious of supernatural strength and hating the nation with which he had nevertheless chosen to ally himself.—*Camb. Bib.* (20) his companion, one of the thirty, vs. 11. They prob. had loose notions of the sanctity of marriage.

A woman's tears are her arguments, which oftentimes prove more powerful than all the logic of the other sex. They reach the heart by a more direct route than the understanding. Alexander of Greece replied to one who sent him a long letter complaining of his mother's conduct, "One tear of my mother's will blot out a thousand such letters."—*Hom. Com.*

Samson did indeed act the part of honor in paying the forfeit to those who had nominally won it. But he took his own mode of fulfilling the conditions of the riddle. He paid the forfeit with Philistine blood and clothing. He virtually said, since you have unrighteously compelled me to pay, I shall do so at the expense of your own countrymen.—*Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

1-5. (1) wheat harvest, end of our April; the dry season. a kid, a common present. The kid was intended as a sort of admission that he had been too hasty in his displeasure, and that his wife had some ground of complaint against him. (2) hated her, Sam.'s conduct made this suspicion reasonable. The father treated Sam. considerably. (3) more blameless, etc. *R. V.*, "be blameless in regard of." He meant that being now free fr. oblig. to the Phil. he would not be treacherous if he did them a hurt. (4) foxes, or jackals, firebrands, torches wh. would burn slowly, but blaze freely when blown by the wind. (5) standing corn, this mode of inflicting vengeance on an enemy was very usual in early times. Herodotus (i. 17-19) tells us how the Lydian King Alyattes adopted this practice for twelve successive years to revenge himself on his neighbors, the Milesians.

Foxes and firebrands.—This circumstance has become classic. It vividly illustrates—I. The ingenuity of inspired vengeance. II. Little causes of mischief and great consequences. III. The mischief God's enemies entail upon themselves. It is unexpected, overwhelming, and vital.—*Muir*.

The cornfields of Shephelah.—The hill on the southeast, looking towards Hebron, cannot fail to be recognized as that up which the stalwart champion

carried the city gates (ch. xvi. 3). The cornfields now, all along the cultivated tract of the Shephelah, are just such fields as Samson entered when he tied the foxes or jackals, tail to tail, and grimly watched his own "facetious outrage," as the creatures ran amongst the standing grain, and kindled it into a blaze, while the firebrands frightened them into mad haste. Vineyards there, like those of Timnath and Sorek, still bear fruit. — *Stoughton*.

6—8. (6) Timnite, inhab of Timnah. burnt her, etc.,^a the fate she had tried to avoid by her treachery towards her husband came upon her at last. (7) Though, "you have punished my wife:" or, "if you mean avenging, I also can play that game." (8) hip and thigh, prov. expression, "cut them in pieces, so that one limb lay on another." — *Gesenius*. top, R. V., "cleft." rock Etam, recent discoverers have identified it with "Beit Atab," near Zorah and Eshtaol, but within the borders of Judah.

One evil leads to another. — I. See this proved by the history before us. II. It is often manifested in common life. No side quite so long as the other seems to have an advantage. The last blow, the last word, III. The ill effects of this. The party who dealt the last blow living in dread of retaliation; and he who received it nursing revenge. IV. Christ's law of forgiveness the only cure.

Revenge. — It is an evil omen that there should be such a ready tendency in the human heart to retaliation and revenge. We see it in the case of Samson, as well as in the Philistines. The shameful treatment he had received awakened in him a purpose of revenge against the whole tribe. While he stood alone, receiving scandalous treatment on the one side, they were instinctively drawing together in conspiracy against him on the other. Filled with the spirit of revenge, he resolved to make reprisals on the whole class, and accordingly used means to destroy the whole year's produce of food, for many miles round the district where he then was. It was sure to provoke retaliation. The community were roused to indignation, and with burning hearts inquired for the perpetrator. The story was soon told. But they were afraid to touch the person of him who had done them so grievous an injury, and therefore they vented their fury against those who had goaded him on to do it. The faithless wife and her father they burned with fire. This act anew kindled the flames of resentment in the breast of Samson, and furnished a justification for a new slaughter. — *Hom. Com.*

9—13. (9) went up, endeavoring to secure person of Samson. Lehi, the place so named here by anticipation. (10) against us, men of Judah had given no offense. (11) top, R. V., "cleft." (13) up, to Lehi.

Conciliation. — Note the state of Judah at this time under Philistia, and in dread. They needed a leader. They lacked faith in Samson, the only one who could have headed them. II. The proposition of Judah. To bind and deliver Samson. Yet these three thousand, with him at their head, might surely have done something better. Have there not been times when a timid church has bound its Master, or its principles, for the sake of an unholy peace? III. The self-denial of Samson. He would rather be in peril than Israel should suffer. But he knew what he would do.

Judah. — Notice the mournful apathy into which the men of Judah had sunk, that, though a golden opportunity was set before them, they had not the heart to strike a blow for their deliverance from the yoke of the oppressor. On the contrary, they seem so much in love with their chains that they find fault with their liberator, when he sets before them an open door, and bids them go free. They sell their champion to secure a false peace with the enemy. To such a depth of baseness do those sink who have cast off their God! They had become "sottish children, a people of no understanding." "They were stricken, but they did not grieve; they were consumed, but they refused to receive correction." "They had a revolting and a rebellious heart." They were not only absolutely helpless in themselves, but they had become objects of loathing to those who would try to lift them up. — *Hom. Com.*

14—17. (14) shouted, according to their custom,^b and in joy of securing their prisoner. flax, etc., half-burnt flax would have lost its fibrous strength (15) jawbone, in the fright of seeing him break asunder the cords, the Phil. left him free to catch up the nearest weapon. The panic favored him. (16) jawbone heaps upon heaps, literally, as margin, one heap, two heaps. Samson or his

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sent each pair successively down fr. the hills, into the plain of Philistia." *Jamieson*.

he smites the Philistines and dwells on the rock Etam

^a "Some take it that the Phil. burnt the wife and father-in-law out of revenge, as Sam's nearest relations. It is more prob. that they did it as an act of justice in favor of Sam., and in hope of pacifying his anger." — *Spl. Com.*

"When our hatred is violent, it sinks us even beneath those we hate." — *La Rochefoucauld*.

he is bound by the men of Judah

"If we be not as well ready to suffer ill as to do good, we are not fit for the consecration of God." — *Bp. Hall*.

"Men mighty-thewed as Samson was, dark-browed as kings in iron cast, broad-breasted as twin gates of brass." — *Joaquin Miller*.

"He only is great who has but habits of greatness; who after performing what none in ten thousand could accomplish, passes on like Samson, and tells neither father nor mother of it." — *Lavater*.

he slays the Philistines with a jawbone

b 1 Sa. xvii. 20.

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vs. 16. "With the jawbone of an ass I have killed a heap, even two heaps." — *Gesenius*. The word is left untrans. in Le. xxvii 16; Nu. xi. 32; Ez. xlv. 11, 13, 14, and is left *homer*, a measure containing ten baths; but there is good reason for believing our trans. correct.

"The exhibition of real strength is never grotesque. Distortion is the agony of weakness. It is the dislocated mind whose movements are spasmodic." — *Willmott*.

the water of
En-hakkore

"If a fool knows a secret, he tells it because he is a fool; if a knave knows one, he tells it whenever it is his intention to tell it; but women and young men are very apt to tell whatever secrets they know from the vanity of having been trusted." — *Chesterfield*.

"The wisest, though offended, will be the first to seek peace and the readiest to pass by a transgression." — *Haweis*.

B. c. 1120.

he carries off
the gates
of Gaza

α "Samson keeps

historian breaks out into poetry here. The deeds of Jewish heroes, like those of other nations, were largely celebrated in verse. There is a humorous play on the word *chamor*, wh. means both *ass* and *heap*. (17) *Ramath-lehi*, the height or eminence of the jawbone, according to some of the best ancient and modern interpreters.

Imperfect means made effectual by Divine inspiration. — It was but the jawbone of an ass, yet it slew as many as might have fallen in a battle. I. In the conflicts of truth it is of chief consequence that we be on the side of truth, and animated by the Spirit of God. II. Through God's blessing the grandest results have been produced by the rudest and simplest means. The preaching of the gospel by unlettered fishermen. "The solitary monk that shook the world" with the disused weapon in God's armory. The "simple gospel" and the evils of our age. III. Notwithstanding outward advantages, the enemies of God are certain in the end to be discomfited. — *Muir*.

Imperfect means. — It is the old story of the blowing with rams' horns, and the strong walls of Jericho fell down flat. David, the stripling, killed Goliath, the giant, with a sling and a stone. Moses brought the ten mighty plagues on Egypt through the stretching forth of the shepherd's rod. And the mightiest throne ever erected in this world, that on which the Prince of Darkness sits, received an irrecoverable blow from the use of the most despicable of all weapons — a cross! (Col. ii. 15). Sometimes the plainest truth, stated in the boldest form, by an uncultured person pierces through armor of triple brass with irresistible effect. The honest, unpretending spirit in which a thing is said tells more mightily on the heart and conscience than all the decorations of language, or all the logic of the schools. The real source of power that belongs to the gospel of Christ lies partly in the peculiar character of the truth contained in that gospel, and partly in the presence of the living Spirit of God going along with that truth to make it effectual. — *Hom. Com.*

18-20. (18) *athirst*, from violent exertion. Thou hast given, devoutly recognizing Div. aid. (19) *a hollow place* that was in the jaw, *R. V.*, "the hollow that is in *Lehi*." The word (*Machtesh*) here translated *hollow* is translated *mortar* in Prov. xxvii. 22, and is used of a valley, apparently near Jerusalem, Zeph. i. 11. It was no doubt a mortar-like cavity in the rock, which was in existence in the time of the historian, and had been handed down by tradition as the place where the miracle happened. — *Camb. Bib.* *En-hakkore*, "the spring of him that called." (20) *days of Phil.*, while they retained dominion over Israel.

En-hakkore (vs. 18, 19). — Spiritual warriors need Divine help as much to keep them after the victory, as in the struggle. Like Samson, the arm that has gained its trophies is too weak to keep them long, unless God interpose. I. Samson's distress. Mental anguish as well as physical exhaustion. His young wife faithless; she and her father burned; dark forebodings of future defeat. II. His argument: "Shall I die?" 1. After working such a deliverance; 2. He reminds God of His relationship to him; 3. He further pleads that his victory will be turned into defeat, unless God interpose. III. His relief; God caused a spring to rise at *Lehi*. It was — 1. Miraculous; 2. Appropriate: just what he needed; 3. Abundant: enough for others; 4. Effectual: it revived him; 5. Very simple: simplest means, in the Divine hand, work most marvelous results; 6. Opportune: just when he needed it, not before; 7. Commemorated; he named the place *En-hakkore*. God's goodness should be remembered in order to excite our gratitude, stimulate our faith, and fire our zeal. — *R. A. Griffin*.

En-hakkore (vs. 19). — All this passage affirms is that in the place where Samson then was, and which, from this transaction, he called *Lehi*, or the *Jawbone*, there was a hollow place which God clave, from whence a fountain flowed, which relieved Samson when ready to perish, and which continued to yield a considerable supply of water at the time this sacred book was written. — *Burder*.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1-3. (1) *Gaza*, Ge. x. 19; Jos. x. 41, xiii. 3. 35 m. S. W. of Zorah, a fortified stronghold of the Phil. harlot, Ge. xxxviii. 14, 15. Keil cites a striking passage from St. Ambrose here, "Samson when strong and brave strangled

lion, but he could not strangle his own loves. He burst the fetters of his foes' but not the cords of his own lusts. He burned up the crops of others, and lost the fruit of his own valor when burning with the flame enkindled by a single woman." "Of all the deliverers of Israel there is none of whom there are reported so many weaknesses, or so many miracles, as of Samson." — *Bp. Hall*. (2) quiet, silent; taking no action: feeling security in the fastened gates. (3) took the doors, etc., not lifting them off the hinges, but tearing up side-posts and all: doors refer to the leaves of the gate, posts to the side pillars, and bar to the inside fastening. Hebron, or the mountains of Hebron. Prob. a hill within an hour from Gaza.

The gates of Gaza. — I. Picture the scene. Philistines lying in wait, watching for morning to light them to their prey. The strong man walking off with the gates. The chagrin of Philistia. II. Illustrate it. 1. The truth bearing off its prison bars; 2. A Christian carrying off spoils from the enemy; 3. A sinner walking in darkness lightly beneath a load of sin.

Samson at Gaza. — Hebron is mentioned for the special reason that it was a centre or rallying point in the tribe of Judah. Samson's practical jest meant much more than the assertion of his own personal liberty. It implied the greatest dishonor that could be inflicted on any town of the enemy, for its mastery was symbolized by its gates (Gen. xxii. 17; xxiv. 60), and on this occasion to have the gates of the chief city of the Philistines brought even within sight of the central town of Judah was to imply the humiliation of subjection to Judah. — *Hom. Com.*

4, 5. (4) Sorek, near to Sam's home: not certainly identified. Delilah, delicate, languid, pining with desire. It is not stated whether Delilah was a Philistine or one of Samson's own countrywomen. It is a question whether Samson, with all his weakness, would have reposed such implicit confidence in her if she had been a Philistine. (5) lords, etc., Jos. xiii. 3. wherein . . strength, having succeeded at first through his wife, they employ same means again. afflict, or humble, not directly threatening death. eleven . . silver,^a amounted to about \$675, the whole, therefore, was \$3,375 — a considerable sum in those days.

Delilah. — I. If the enemy cannot overcome by force he will try craft. II. The strongest men have approaches to the secret of their strength. III. Those who have power for great deeds are often themselves overcome by weak instruments. IV. Every sin or secret pleasure may be a traitor and in the enemy's pay.

The secret of Samson's power. — The Philistines evidently thought Samson's power lay in the efficacy of some charm. It is this they seek to obtain. They are incapable of thinking of a higher influence. Samson accordingly plays with this superstitious fancy, giving at the same time in each of his answers a parabolic or riddle-like shadowing forth of the true secret. So Satan and his servants tempt the Christian by altering the outward circumstances of life, associations, habits, etc., through which the life works, but of which it is independent. Until the saint yields it up, the secret of his life with God is safe. — *Pul. Com.*

6-9. (6) Tell me, I pray thee, any one less foolish than Samson would have seen at once that these words were spoken with a purpose, and would have shaken himself free from the dangerous fascinations of the temptress. be bound, Sam. playfully accepts her idea and turns it into a joke. (9) Now there were men, etc., R. V., "now she had liers in wait abiding in the inner chamber." The Philistines, etc., more point in this if she were a Danite woman. his strength, i. e. the secret of it.

Where lieth thy strength? (vs. 6.) — Where lies the secret strength of faith? It lies in the food it feeds on; for faith studies — I. The promise. 1. What the promise is: an emanation of Divine grace, an overflowing of the great heart of God; 2. Who gave it: it considers not so much its greatness as its Author. It remembers that it is God, who cannot lie — God omnipotent, immutable. 3. Why it was given: for God's glory. II. The amazing work of Christ: as being a clear proof of the Father's intention to fulfil His word. III. The past faith's battles have strengthened it, its victories have given it courage. — *Spurgeon*.

Samson. — But it is in the painful transaction with Delilah that we chiefly see that presumptuous abuse of great gifts which precedes a great fall.

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his vow of abstinence fr. intoxication, but is all the weaker and wilder with regard to the love of woman, as if he could here make up for the want of freedom elsewhere." — *Ewald*.

"Neither is it safe to count upon the weakness of a y man's understanding who is thoroughly possessed of the spirit of revenge to sharpen his invention." — *Swift*.

Delilah

a Ju. xvii. 3.

One sin makes way for more; it keeps up the devil's interest in the soul; it is like a nest egg left there to draw a new temptation. — *Manton*.

"Custom of success makes men confident in their sins, and causes them to mistake an arbitrary tenure for a perpetuity." — *Bp. Hall*.

he is bound with green withes

"Every willing sinner is a Samson; let us not inveigh against his senselessness, but our own; nothing is so gross and unreasonable to a well-disposed mind, which temptation will not represent fit and plausible. No soul can, of his own strength, secure himself from that sin which he most detesteth." — *Bp. Hall*.

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Temptations, like Delilah, tell us a fair tale, but their end is to bring us asleep and pluck out our eyes.—*Adams.*

he is bound
with new
ropes, and
with his hair

a "The loom was of very simple construction; the woof was driven into the warp, not by a reed, but by a wooden spatula: the extremity of the web was fastened to a pin or stake fixed in the wall or ground; and while Del. sat squatting at her loom Sam. lay stretched on the floor, with his head reclining on her lap."—*Jamieson.*

he confesses
the secret of
his strength

vs. 17. "Et pro purpureo pœnas dat Scylla capillo!"—*Virg. Geor. i. v. 405.* "This punishment pursues the unhappy maid, and thus the purple hair is dearly paid."—*Dryden.* Does not the fable here alluded to by Virgil of the evil consequences accruing to Nisus by the loss of his hair, and his revenging himself on Scylla, remind us of Samson and his revenge on the Philistines?

he falls into
the hands of
the Philis-
tines

Unwarned by the previous treachery of Philistine women, unmindful of previous deliverances from imminent peril by the mercy of God, he gave himself up to the wantonness of self-confidence. Either not seeing or despising her designs for his destruction, he went on step by step toward his ruin, as an ox goeth to the slaughter; he tampered with his solemn vow as a Nazirite, which hitherto he had respected, and placed it at the mercy of a heathen harlot, and never woke from his delusion and presumption till he found himself a helpless captive in the hands of his enemies, deprived of his eyesight and of his liberty, an object of scorn, and, still worse, an occasion of blasphemy against God. The lesson is a striking one in every way, and it is one much needed; for nothing is more common, or more fruitful in falls and failures, than a selfish misuse of God's gifts, and a presumptuous confidence in the possession of them.—*Pul. Com.*

10-14. (10) **mocked me**, it appears that Sam. knew nothing of the men who watched, so he carried on the joke. (12) **thread**, not the same word as in vs. 9. There the word used signifies a slender twisted cord. Here the word means "sewing" thread. (13) **weavest**,^a using his hair as yarn. **seven looks**, plaited or braided into seven folds; not hanging loose. (14) **pin** . . **web**, the whole weaving apparatus.

The bonds of temptation.—I. The seven green withes, as—1. Sensuality; 2. Intemperance; 3. Self-confidence; 4. Levity; 5. Indolence; 6. Self-righteousness; 7. Scepticism. II. New ropes, as newly invented pleasures, etc., especially fitted to individual cases. III. Locks of hair; hitherto the bonds were of foreign substances; they are now part of himself. IV. Samson dallied with temptation; but V. In the strength that God gave he rent the bonds and escaped.

Samson's weakness.—Though he saw so apparent treachery, he yet fully betrays his life by this woman to his enemies. All sins and passions have power to infatuate a man, but lust most of all. Many a one loses his life, but this casts it away. We wonder that a man could become so sottish. Sinful pleasures, like a common Delilah, lodge in our bosoms; we know they aim at nothing but the death of our souls, yet we yield to them and die. Every willing sinner is a Samson.—*Hall.*

15-17. (15) **heart . . me**, confidence, opening of the heart, ever the true sign of love. (16) **pressed him**, with passionate entreaties. (17) **all his heart**, ceased to joke, and revealed his secret. Not expecting Del. to take advantage of his secret. **shaven**, Samson's Nazirite vow was to last his whole life, and upon its faithful observance his strength depended. "The superhuman strength of Samson did not reside in his hair as hair, but in the fact that Jehovah was with him."—*Keil.*

Samson's fall (vs. 17).—Learn hence—I. That fidelity is never to be expected from those who show an utter unfaithfulness to God, and have stifled and triumphed over conscience. II. That when the heart is infatuated by unlawful desire, repeated warnings of danger will be disregarded. III. That they who feel themselves unable to resist the importunity of their tempters should instantly fly from their dangerous presence.—*Bush.*

Strong in Him.—I was requested by a brother minister, who was unwell, to go and visit a dying boy. He told before some remarkable things of this boy. He was eleven years of age, and during three years' sickness had manifested the most patient submission to the will of God, with a singular enlightenment of the Spirit. I went to visit him. He had suffered the most excruciating pain. For years he had not known one day's rest. I gazed with wonder at the boy. After drawing near to him, and speaking some words of sympathy, he looked at me with his blue eyes—he could not move, it was the night before he died—and breathed into my ear these few words, "I am strong in Him." The words were few, and uttered feebly; they were the words of a feeble child, in a poor home, where the only ornament was that of a meek, and quiet, and affectionate mother; but these words seemed to lift the burden from the very heart, they seemed to make the world more beautiful than it ever was before; they brought home to my heart a great and blessed truth. May all of us be strong in Him.—*MacLeod.*

18-20. (18) **Money**, rather. *the money*, i. e. which had been promised, vs. 5. The Philistines faithfully fulfilled their engagement, but what became of Delilah and her ill-gotten gains we are not told. (19) **upon her knees**, a

very striking commentary upon Prov. vii. 22, 23. **began to afflict, turned to insult him**; testing the effect of her act. (20) **wist not, knew not, departed**, fr. one whose vow was now broken.

Samson's fall (vs. 20). — Introduction: — Samson's birth, glory, and deeds to the time of his fall. Learn from the story — I. The absolute necessity there is of our achieving a nobler morality, a higher level of religion, than is to be found in the mere conventional standards which are rife amongst us. II. That we should on no account sacrifice our convictions. III. That temptation comes gradually. IV. That there is something in our constitution which makes the subtle snares of sin all the more dangerous; with every sin there comes a blunting of that moral capacity by which we detect its presence. Conclusion: — (1) Cultivate your convictions; (2) Preserve the consecration of your whole life to God. — *W. B. Carpenter.*

Presence of God. — Samson was unconscious of the fearful loss he had sustained. So there are men who retain their honored position in Christian society and in the church while, even unknown to themselves, the source of the life which gave it them is ebbing away. As with the death which follows extreme cold, the very fatality lies in the fact that the more dangerous our condition is, the more numbed are our faculties to any feeling of distress. The man from whom God has departed has neither the keenness of conscience to discern the fact, nor the feeling of concern to take any notice of it. Samson does not know of God's departure till the Philistines are on him. — *Adeney.*

21—24. (21) **took him**, a number rushing upon him, still half afraid of him. **put out**,^a "Samson followed after the delights of the eyes, therefore the Philistines bored them out. Absalom was proud of his hair, therefore by his hair he was hanged." **fetters**, two chains; one on each foot. **grind**,^b as a slave. (22) Intended to indicate repentance and return of heart to God. (23) **Dagon**, fr. *dag*, a fish, the national god of the Phil. It had human hands and feet and body, but its form was that of a fish. **Our God, etc.**, the true God surely vindicates Himself when His glory is thus taken away. (24) **slew**, Heb. *multiplied our slain*.

Samson in the toils — Teaches us — I. The blinding nature of sin. II. The tender mercies of the wicked. III. The world's servile work. IV. The long suffering pity of God. V. The vain boastfulness of the ungodly.

Shaving. — That a man should be able not only to cut, but to shave off the hair, on which, during all Samson's life, razor had never before come, implies either that Samson slept very soundly, or that the man was very dexterous in his craft. In fact the Oriental barbers do their work with so much ease, as to render the shaving of the head (the head is usually *shaven* in the East) rather grateful than unpleasant. The most delicate sleeper would scarcely be awakened by it; and even those who are awake are scarcely sensible of the operation which they are undergoing. — *Pict. Bible.*

25—27. (25) **merry**, as feasts attended such sacrifices, doubtless merry with wine. **made them sport**, rather as margin, made sport before them. The word is translated *play* in 1 Sam. xviii. 7; 2 Sam. vi. 5, 21. It means generally to make merry. It is used of a sham fight (2 Sam. ii. 14), which, however became a real one before it was over. **pillars**,^d supporting the flat roof, and in front of the building. (26) **lean upon them**, for rest after his exertion. Had he been "making sport" when he laid hold of the pillars upon which the house rested, he could hardly have been visible to the people on the roof. (27) **the house was full**, not only was there a goodly company on the roof, but underneath it. The persons of highest rank were apparently under cover. Three thousand persons of lesser quality occupied the roof, while the people of the lowest grade were in the court-yard.

The boy who led Samson. — I. He was one of the Philistines, who probably took part in their sport. II. He was an element of their scorn. A boy is enough to lead one who had slain a thousand men. III. He was ignorant of the strength of him he led. IV. In leading out Samson to be a pastime for others, he was unconsciously leading on his own destruction. Learn — 1. Let boys beware how they join in the sports of the wicked; 2. The thing, or person or truth, they deride may be the instrument of their ruin.

The temple. — The celebrated architect, Sir Christopher Wren, says, that in considering what kind of fabric it must be that could with one pull be demol-

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"Thou temptest God to suffer thy locks to be cut, when thou art so bold as to lay thy head in the lap of a temptation." — *Gurnall.*

"It is better for Samson to be blind in prison than to abuse his eyes in Sorek; yea, I may safely say he was more blind when he saw licentiousness than now that he sees not; he was a greater slave when he served his afflictions than now grinding for the Philistines. The loss of his eyes shows him his sin, neither could he see how ill he had done till he saw not." — *Bp. Hall.*

his eyes are put out

^a Nu. xvi. 14; 2 Ki. xxv. 7; Je. xxxix. 7.

^b Ex. xi. 5; xii. 29; Is. xlvii. 2; La. v. 13.

^c Ac. xii. 20-23.

"If even a Philistine ascribes his victories to his idol gods, how much more are we bound to pay a similar tribute to our God, and give Him the glory of every great and good work done by us, in us or for us" — *Bush.*

he makes sport for his enemies

^d "The roofs in Gaza were then flat, as they are now. Most of the town is built on hills, wh. have declivities exceedingly steep. The temple was erected over one of these, and in such a position, if the central columns were taken out, the whole edifice would be precipitated down the hill in ruinous confusion." — *Thomson.*

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"Samson did not only pray that he might be avenged on his enemies, but set his hands to the pillars of the house."—*Gurnall*.

his death

"Promise was that I should Israel yoke deliver. Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves, himself in bonds under Philistian yoke. Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt Divine prediction, what if all foretold had been fulfilled, but through mine own default."—*Milton's Samson Agonistes*.

ished, he conceived to himself a vast roof of cedar beams resting at one end upon the walls, and centering at the other upon one short architrave that united two cedar pillars in the middle. "One pillar would not be sufficient to unite the ends of at least one hundred beams that tended to the centre; therefore, I say, there must have been a short architrave resting upon two pillars, upon which all the beams tending to the centre might be supported. Now if Samson by his miraculous strength pressing on one (or both) these pillars, moved it from its basis, the whole roof must of necessity fall."—*Hewlett's Bible*.

28--31. (28) O Lord God, rather, O Lord Jehovah. O God, here Samson says *Elohim*, thus using *three* different titles of God, as was frequently the case in moments of great solemnity. Compare *El Elohim Jehovah* in Josh. xxii. 22 and Ps. l. 1, where special emphasis is laid upon the Name of God. (29) middle pillars, indic. that there were others. (30) dead, etc., obs. the play on words, making the sentence a "touch of triumphant satire." (31) came down, taking advantage of the general excitement to get possession of Sam. 's body. Manoah, who had previously died. judged, as deliverer only, apparently not as civil ruler.

Samson's character and end (vs. 28).—Consider—I. His character. He was too much actuated by a spirit of—1. Vindictiveness; 2. Vainglory; 3. Lewdness and incontinence. II. His end. Improvement of the subject:—For—(1) Warning; (2) Encouragement.—*C. Simeon*.

Samson and Hercules.—The parallel between Samson and Hercules is in many respects very remarkable, and has been drawn out by Serdrins and others. The supernatural strength of each, the slavery to women, the tearing asunder of the lion, the violent death of each, partly voluntary and partly forced, are all points of strong general resemblance. But one of the most remarkable is the connection of Hercules with two pillars. The "pillars of Hercules" on each side the straits of Gibraltar, Mount Abila and Mount Calpe, were said to have been rent asunder by the strength of Hercules' arms. But the account given of a visit of Hercules to Egypt is still more remarkable, as compared with the history of the binding of Samson and the slaughter of the Philistines, as related in ch. xv. The following are the words of Herodotus: "The Greeks say that when Hercules went down to Egypt, the Egyptians surrounded him and led him in a procession to sacrifice him to Jupiter; that he kept quite still for a time, but that when they were commencing the sacrifice at the altar" (the first act of which was cutting off the hair) "he turned in self-defense, and by his prowess slew them all." The prevalence of the worship of Hercules among the Phœnicians, as e. g., at Tyre and Thasos, Phœnician colony, and the close connection of Egypt with Gaza, where the prowess of Samson was so well known, are points not to be omitted in considering the probability of some of the legends of Hercules being drawn from the history of Samson.—*Pul. Com.*

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Micah
he robs his
mother

"Honesty! A name scarce echo to a sound—honesty! Attend the stately chambers of the great—it dwells not there, nor in the trading world. Speaks it in councils? No, the sophist knows to laugh it thence."—*Harvard*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-5. (1) And there was a man, the date of the events which follow is fixed by ch. xx. 28 to have been much earlier than most which precedes it. mount Ephraim, Jos. xxiv. 30. Micah, word means, *who is like Jehovah*. (2) Blessed be thou of the Lord, not of course because of the theft; but because of the acknowledgment. eleven hundred, etc., sum noticed, ch. xvi. 5. (3) unto the Lord, Hebrew, "unto Jehovah." So soon had the precepts of the Law (Exod. xx. 4; Lev. xxvi. 1; Deut. iv. 16; xxvii. 15) faded from the minds of the people of Israel.—*Camb. Bib.* graven, etc., figures were first molten, and then finished off with graving tool. (4) two hundred shekels, some suppose that the other 900 shekels were spent in fitting up the chapel. (5) teraphim, Ge. xxxi. 19-35. sons, not a Levite.

Restitution.—Two Christian chiefs, Tati and Ahuriro, were walking together by the waterside, when they came to a place where a fisherman had been employed in making or sharpening hooks, and had left a large file (a valuable article in Tahiti) lying on the ground. The chiefs picked it up; and as they were proceeding, one said to the other, "This is not ours. Is not our taking it a species of theft?" "Perhaps it is," replied the other: "yet as the owner is not here, I do not know who has a greater right to it than our-

selves." "It is not ours," said the former, "and we had better give it away." After further conversation, they agreed to give it to the first person they met, which they did, telling him they had found it, and requested that if he heard who had lost such a thing, he would restore it. — *Ellis*.

6. The writer of the book evidently lived when there was a king. Comp. De. xii. 8; Ju. xviii. 1; xix. 1; xxi. 25; no settled government, restraining evil doers.

The law of the lawless. — I. A circumstance assumed. "No king in Israel." But was there really no king? There was, but unacknowledged — God was their King; they were rebels. II. An unlawful law of life, "right in their own eyes." Inclination no safe rule. Such "right" may be in the worst sense wrong, to self, one's neighbor, and God. III. The truest liberty is doing right in the sight of God.

No King. — We are told again and again in these latter chapters that "there was no king in Israel," so "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." What is the meaning of this? The meaning goes further back than the mere letter; there was no king in Israel, because in Israel there was no God. The Lord is King. You cannot have a king if you have not a God. There was no nominal renunciation of God, no public and blatant atheism, no boastful impiety; there was a deadlier heresy — namely, keeping God as a sign, but paying no tribute to Him as a King, worshipping Him possibly in outward form, but knowing nothing of the subduing and directing power of godliness. That is more to be dreaded than any intellectual difficulty of a theological kind. Intellectual heresies can do but little to impede the progress of the kingdom of truth: but dead consciences, prayerless prayers, mechanical formalities — these are the impediments which overturn for a time the chariot of Progress. This was the case in Israel. Where God is the king is. Not in any limited and measurable sense, as a man with a crown on, constituted of so much gold and so many precious stones; but a king in the sense of kingliness, sovereignty, authority, rule — the spirit of obligation and responsibility. You may have a king under any form of government. Republicanism itself is monarchical. You find the monarch everywhere — the right monarch where you find the right God. — *J. Parker*.

7-9. (7) *Bethlehem-judah*,^a Ge. xxxv. 19. family, tribe; Ju. xiii. 2. a *Levite*, who this Levite was we learn from ch. xviii. 30. According to Josh xxi. the descendants of Aaron only were settled in the tribe of Judah. But in the matter of settlement it is possible that the children of Moses may have been reckoned with the descendants of Aaron. — *Camb. B.* (8) *mount*, or hill country.

The Levite. — The times were undoubtedly sadly degenerate, and the whole Levitical order reduced to straits, yet it is scarcely conceivable that a Levite, for whom the law had made such express provision, Deut. xii. 19, saying, "Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth," should actually have been forced to wander for a maintenance. It was probably rather owing to a native waywardness of disposition. Nor is there anything related of this individual calculated to shield him from such an imputation. — *Bush*.

10-13. (10) *father*, a term of respect. See Gen. xlv. 8; 2 Kings vi. 21; xii. 14. So the Jews, and later still the Christians, in the East and West alike were accustomed to style their teachers. The title *Papa* or *Pope* (originally *father*) in the West confined to the head of the Roman Catholic church is in the East applied to every parish priest. — *Camb. Bib.* *ten shekels*, Wordsworth says, *a paltry pittance*, but this depends on the value of money in that age. (11) *as . . . sons*, treated him as one of the family; shows shame of his running away.^b (12) *his priest*, not the Lord's. Really no priest, as not of the family of Aaron.

Micah and his Levite (vs. 13). — The self-complacency of Micah may serve to reprove some popular delusions in religion of a later day. I. Confidence in external worship. II. Satisfaction with theoretical knowledge. Obedience is the life-blood of religion. It must be free and cheerful, extensive, sincere, constant, evangelical. III. Excuses for allowed sins. IV. False views of the character of God.

The lifelessness of formalism. — The artist may mold matter into forms of

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the law of the lawless

"Wish you to know if a soul is of free being and temper, put to the proof his respect for the magistrates." — *Rioutte*.

"A man must first govern himself, ere he be fit to govern a family; and his family, ere he be fit to bear the government of the commonwealth." — *Sir W. Raleigh*.

"The Spartans and Spaniards have been noted to be of small dispatch; *Mi venga la muerte de Spagna*; let my death come from Spain; for then it will be sure to be long in coming." — *Bacon*.

Micah and the Levites

^a The Septuagint reads, "Bethlehem of the family of Judah," leaving out the first Judah. "This wandering Levite was probably one of many who found no inheritance because the titles allotted to them were as yet unconquered," — *Expos. B.*

the Levite dwells with Micah

^b Ju. xviii. 18-20. "There never was any party, faction, sect, or cabal whatsoever, in which the most ignorant were not the most violent; for a bee is not a busier animal than a blockhead. However, such instruments are necessary to politicians; and perhaps it may be with states as with

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clocks, which must have some lead weight hanging at them, to help and regulate the motion of the finer and more useful parts." — *Pope*.

the Danites seek help of God through Micah

a "It was easier to surprise undefended houses and lands, than to contend with the five princes of Phil., and their numerous armies." — *Lange*.

b "The Heb. bears the sense, that they heard the voice of the Lev. a little way off in the chapel, where he was at prayers, and attracted by it, they turned aside, and entered the place." — *Spk. Com.*

He who hath no instructor in the paths of virtue, will never want a master to lead him into vice.

they spy out Laish

c Jos. xix. 47.

d 1 Ki. xxi. 3; 2 Ki. vii. 9.

"Better walk on rugged rocks than on slippery ice. If we lose our roll, it is in the Arbor of Ease, not in the Valley of Baca. Few Christians backslide while under the rod; it is usually when on the lap of plenty that believers sin." — *Spurgeon*.

enrapturing beauty, and makes us feel their elevating and purifying influences; but what is the marble Moses of a Michael Angelo, or the cold statue of his living Christ, compared to the embodiment of the Hebrew law and the spirit of Jesus in the sculpture of a holy life? What are all the forms of moral beauty in the Pharisee of religion, compared with the true and holy life of the heart of the devoted Christian? — *Thomson*.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1-6. (1) In those days, by a comparison with Josh. xix. 47, we find that this must have been at a very early period, probably not long after the death of Joshua. **Danites**, for their lot, see Jos. xix. 40-48; comp. Ju. i. 34. **not fallen, etc.**, bec. they had not conquered the Amorites and Phil.^a (2) **Zorah**, Ju. xiii. 25. (3) **knew the voice**,^b they probably heard the voice of the Levite chanting psalms or saying prayers aloud. (4) **thus**, as ch. xvii. 10. (5) **Comp. Ju. i. 1**, question suggested by sight of the *ephod, etc.* (6) **And the priest said**, probably gave this answer out of his own head, and it was as likely to turn out true as false. **before the Lord**, may be God *approves*, or only God *knows*.

Counsel sought of God (vs. 5). — I. Why we should ask counsel of God. 1. Because of our ignorance and short-sightedness; 2. It is the course God's people have ever adopted; 3. God alone can give the counsel needed; 4. Our best interests are involved in the counsel He can give. II. How must we ask, so as to secure the counsel we need? 1. With a deep conviction of our need; 2. With believing confidence in God; 3. With a resolution to follow the counsel He gives; 4. Through the person and advocacy of Christ. — *J. Burns*.

Seeking Divine guidance. — The Israelites usually asked counsel of God by the Ephod, the Grecians by their Oracles, the Persians by their Magi, the Egyptians by their Hierophante, the Indians by their Gymnosophistæ, the ancient Gauls and Britons by their Druids, the Romans by their Augurs or Soothsayers. It was not lawful to propose any matter of moment in the senate before their wizards had made observations from the heaven or sky. That which they did impiously and superstitiously, we may, nay, we ought to do in another sense, piously, religiously, conscionably; *i. e.* not to embark ourselves into any action of great importance and consequence before we have observed from heaven not the flight of birds, not the houses of planets, or their aspects or conjunctions, but the countenance of God, whether it shineth upon our enterprises or not, whether He approve of our projects and designs or not. — *Spencer*.

7-10. (7) **Laish, Leshem**,^c now Tell-el-Kadi. 4 miles fr. Cæsarea-Philippi, near sources of Jordan. **after the manner of the Zidonians**, from this hint we learn (1) that the Zidonians were a peaceful and mercantile community, and (2) that the era of the great military monarchies of Asia had not yet arisen, when rich trading nationalities were compelled to take measures for their own protection, and when Tyre found it needful to emigrate from the main land to the island fortress, afterwards so famous. This retreat to the island, according to Movers, began about the eighth century B. C. — *Camb. Bib.* (9) **the land**, the soil rich and productive. **are ye still**,^d trying to arouse interest. (10) **a large land**, *lit.* "the land is broad on the two hands," *i. e.* widely extended on all sides, not cooped up in mountains as the Danites were.

Laish (vss. 9, 10). — I. The observations which the spies made upon the city of Laish, and the posture of the inhabitants. It was — 1. Ill-governed; 2. Ill-guarded. II. The encouragement which from hence they gave to their countrymen. They represent the place as — 1. Desirable; 2. Attainable. — *M. Henry*.

The greatest danger. — When a city is compact round about with a wall that is impregnable, it will yet be open still towards heaven, and therefore cannot be out of danger if God be an enemy. For all their walls and bars, God could rain fire and brimstone upon the Sodomites out of heaven. Alexander asked the Scythians what they were most afraid of; thinking they would have said of himself, who was so victorious everywhere. But they answered, scoffingly, they were most afraid lest heaven should fall upon them. We, indeed, need not fear anything but this only, lest the heaven should fall upon us, lest God should be our enemy. — *Stoughton*.

11-13. (11) **appointed**, Heb. girded. (12) **Kirjath-jearim**,^a Jos. ix. 17. **Mahaneh-dan**, Ju. xiii. 25. (13) **mount Ephraim**, the hill country of Ephraim. **house of Micah**, situate near the route northward.

The Danite expedition. — There was an immediate migration of Danites to this fresh field, and in prospect of bloody work the men of Zorah and Eshtaol seem to have had no doubt as to the rightness of their expedition; it was enough that they had felt themselves straitened. The same reason appears to suffice in modern times. Were the aboriginal inhabitants of America and Australia considered by those who coveted their land? Even the pretense of buying has not always been maintained. Murder and rapine have been the methods used by men of our own blood, our own name, and no nation under the sun has a record darker than the tale of British conquest. — *R. A. Watson.*

14-17. (14) **houses**, the chapel prob. separate from the dwelling, and a cluster of houses may have gathered round it, vs. 22. **ephod**, proper priest's vestment.^b **consider**, the speech itself, no less than the action which was afterwards taken, is proof enough of the lawless condition of the country at the time. (15) **saluted him**, approaching in friendly way. (16) Immediately to protect the thieves. (17) **the priest stood**, etc., while his attention was engaged the gods were stolen; on the appearance of the five men with the stolen goods, the convers. took place.

Moslem superstition. — A leading point in the faith of the Mohammedan is a belief in the Divine origin of the Koran. He believes that the Koran was treasured up in the seventh heaven for all eternity, and was revealed to Mohammed by the angel Gabriel. It was written by the finger of God. It is a sin and a crime to translate or to print it; and although it has been printed by Moslems in Egypt, the orthodox Moslems of Syria regard the act with abhorrence. They write it, in letters of gold and bright colors, on the cornices and lintels of their rooms, but never along or near the floor. No Moslem will ever carry a copy of the Koran below his waist, or lay it on the floor. It must be laid on the shelf, or on an elevated cushion. They carry it written in elegant manuscript, handsomely bound, and commit large portions of it to memory. If the Moslem approaches idolatry in one respect more than in another, it is in his regard for this book. — *Bib. Treas.*

18-21. (18) **these**, the five spies who knew their way. After the Hebrew fashion, the writer emphasizes his previous account by a fuller detail. (19) **priest unto a tribe**, touching his ambition. (20) **glad**, self-interest was his ruling passion. He forgot his obligations to Micah. (21) **and put the little ones**, with a view to secure them in the case of a sudden attack by Micah and his neighbors. **carriage**, *R. V.*, "goods." **before them**, expecting pursuit.

Danites. — We have with us to-day, very much with us, certain Danites of science, politics and the press, who, if they could, would take away our God and our Bible, our Eternal Father and spiritual hope, not from a desire to possess, but because they hate to see us believing, hate to see any weight of silver given to religious uses. Not a few of these are marching, as they think, triumphantly to commanding and opulent positions, whence they will rule the thought of the world, and on the way, even while they deride and detect the supernatural, they will have the priest go with them. — *R. A. Watson.*

22-26. (22) **good way**, theft not instantly discovered. (23) **cried**, shouted after. **ailleth thee**, putting bold face on it. (24) **my gods**, etc., convicting himself of folly and idolatry. (25) Taking insolent advantage of their superior strength. (26) **went back**,^c feeling his theft returned on himself.^d

"*Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?*" — This was the truest thing to which Micah gave utterance in this short but sad history. The apparatus of images, ephod, teraphim, and priest, was really all the religion he had. In his heart of hearts he had none. When the externals were taken away he was left absolutely bare. He had the delusion that he was a religious man, and he could not afford to want the delusion. Alas! how many are in the same predicament. It is a fancy, not a power. It is all paper money with no gold in exchange; or rather when the cheque is presented, the reply is, "No effects." But the mere name of having something, such persons cannot want. When the consciousness breaks in on the soul that it is utterly religionless, in a moment the inward monitor is aroused, and the very thunder in the heavens is too feeble to echo the voice that rolls through the soul of the poor spiritual bankrupt! — *Hom. Com.*

B. C. 1406.

the camp of Dan

a The mod. *Kuriet et 'Aineb* is satisfactorily identified with this place. A poor village with a Latin church. Dr. Thomson believes it identical with Emmaus.

the spies rob the house of Micah

b Ex. xviii. 4-25; 1 Sa. ii. 18; xxii. 18; 2 Sa. vi. 14; 1 Chr. xv. 27.

"They that are against superstition often run into it of the wrong side. If I wear all colors but black, then I am superstitious in not wearing black." — *Selden.*

the Levite becomes priest of the Danites

"Hold thy peace" (vs. 19), see Job xxi. 5; xxix. 9; xl. 4. Pr. xxx. 32; Mic. vii. 16. "He who seldom speaks, and with one calm, well-timed word can strike dumb the loquacious, is a genius or a hero." — *Lavater.* "Apt words have power to 'suege the tumults of a troubled mind, and are as balm to fester'd wounds." — *Milton.*

Micah's complaint

c "Loving his life more than his gods." — *Wordsworth.*

d Ju. xvii. 2. "Weakness, fear, melancholy, together with ignorance, are the true sources of superstition. Hope, pride, presumption, a warm indignation, together with ignorance, are the true sources of enthusiasm." — *Hume.*

B. C. 1406.

Laish
destroyed

a Ge. xlix. 13.

b "In many Heb MSS. the letter *n* is suspended over the *m* and *s*, so as to introduce a correction from Moses to Manasseh."—*Spk. Com., Wordsworth.*

c 1 Sa. iv. 11; v. 1.

"Superstition renders a man a fool, and scepticism makes him mad."—*Fieiding.*

the story of
the Levite

If you ask me which is the real hereditary sin of human nature, do you imagine I shall answer pride or luxury, or ambition or egotism? No; I shall say indolence—who can conquer indolence will conquer all the rest.

he abides
with his
father-in-law

d Ge. xviii. 5.

Sin is like a river, which begins in a quiet spring, but ends in a tumultuous sea.

the inhospit-
ality of
Gibeah

e "These parties, given to account for their journey running so far into evening, wh. was the immediate cause of the horrible catastrophe which followed."—*Spk. Com.*

f Ge. xix. 1, 2.

27—31. (27) Laish, *vs.* 7. (28) deliverer, fr. whom help might be sought; the land about there thinly populated. Zidon,^a prob. its mother city. Beth-rehob, Nu. xiii. 21; Jos. xix. 28. (29) Dan, Jos. xix. 47. (30) son of, or descendant of. Gershom, Ex. ii. 22; xviii. 3. Manasseh,^b R. V., Moses. Manasseh had no son named Gershom, but Moses had. The unwillingness to admit so rapid a falling away in the family of Moses existed at a very early period, and appears from the fact that all best copies of the LXX. contain the emendation. (31) all . . . Shiloh, *i. e.* until captivity of the ark in time of Eli. This shows that the worship set up by Micah and conducted by the grandson of Moses was in deliberate opposition to the true worship of God in Shiloh.

Idolators can worship anything (*vs.* 31).—At Baitenzorg, a village of Java, Messrs. Tyerman and Bennett observed a street occupied exclusively by Chinese. They called at several of the houses and noticed an idol in each. In one they observed an engraving of the French emperor, Napoleon, in a gilt frame, before which incense was burning. The old man to whom the picture belonged, in their presence, paid it divine honors, bowing himself in various antic attitudes, and offering a prayer for blessings upon himself and family. When we asked him why he worshiped a European engraving, he replied, "Oh, we worship anything."

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1—4. (1) those days, soon after the death of Josh., *see* ch. xx. 28. concubine, inferior wife, often a slave; this not indic. immorality; woman had rights of a wife. (2) Bethlehem-judah, ch. xvii. 7. These fragments of early history, as well as the book of Ruth, are connected in some way with Bethlehem.

The pleasures of sin.—The Persian king gave Themistocles a goodly pension, assigning Magnesia, with the revenue of fifty talents for his bread, Lampsacum for his wine, and Myos for his meat; but all the while he fed high and drunk deep, he was infinitely afflicted and everything went cross to his undertaking, and he could not bring his ends about to betray his country; and at last he mingled poison with his wine and drank it off, having first entreated his friends to steal for him a private grave in his own country. Such are the pleasures of the most pompous and flattering of sins; their meat and drink are good and pleasant at first, and it is plenteous and criminal; but its employment is base; it is so against a man's interest, and against what is, and ought to be, dearest to him, that he cannot persuade his better parts to consent, but must fight against them and all their arguments.—*Bp. Taylor.*

5—8. (5) Comfort,^d the man could hardly resist enticements of meat and drink. (6) Be content, or willing. (7) urged him, as *vs.* 5. (8) afternoon, declining of day.

Until afternoon (*vs.* 8).—Hebrew, "till the day declined." In this way also do the people of the East speak when the sun has passed the meridian, "I shall not go till the sun decline;" "I must not go till the declining time."—*Roberts.*

9—15. (9) draweth,^e *etc.*, lit. "slackens to be dark," *i. e.* darkness will soon come on. This was the fact. They had not ridden above seven miles before they were obliged to think of shelter for the night. Rabbi Kimchi explains the phrase thus; the strength of the day is at noon, its slackening or weakening when light and heat become feebler, *i. e.* towards eventide. (10) But the man would not tarry that night, "his resolution at last breakes thorow those kind hinderances. . . . It is a good hearing that the Levite makes haste home. A good man's heart is where his calling is."—*Bp. Hall.* Jebus, Canaanitish name of Jerusalem. (12) a stranger, the Levite feared the lawless habits of the Phœnician cities, in which such proceedings as those at Gibeah were regarded as a way of doing honor to their gods. But the people of Gibeah had only too fully learned—even thus early—the lessons of unrestrained license taught them by their Phœnician neighbors. Gibeah, of Benjamin, now *Tuliel-el-Ful*, 5 m. N. of Jerusalem. (13) Ramah, 1 m. further N., now *El-Ram*. (14) Night decided them to stay at Gibeah. (15) sat . . . city, in the lawless times even hospitality was forgotten.^f

Punishment of inhospitality (vs. 15). — Jupiter and Mercury once visited a village, and, disguised in human form, sought entertainment, but in vain, till they came to the thatched cottage of the aged Baucis and Philemon. Before the strangers was spread the best the place afforded, with careful attention. The unwasted wine revealed to them the gods, to whom they would have sacrificed. "This inhospitable village shall pay the penalty of its impiety. You shall go free. Come with us to the top of yonder hill," said the gods. They obeyed, and beheld the country around sink into a lake, while their own house grew into a magnificent temple, in which they served as priests until transformed together.

B. C 1408.

"Provision is the foundation of hospitality, and thrift the fuel of magnificence." — *Sir P. Sidney*.

16-21. (16) sojourned, this not being his native place. (17) wayfaring man, as we should say, "the traveler." (18) house of the Lord, at Shiloh, where poss. his duties as a Levite were now calling him. (19) He was in good circumstances, and needed only shelter. (21) washed, etc., the customary E. refreshment.

the Levite is sheltered by an old man

"If a man be gracious to strangers, it shows that he is a citizen of the world, and his heart is no island, cut off from other islands, but a continent that joins them." — *Ld. Bacon*.

Exceptional hospitality. — I. Those who have been strangers themselves are best able to sympathize with strangers. II. The poor are often more hospitable than the rich. III. There is no place so wicked and unloving as to be without some witness to truth and goodness. — *Muir*.

Kindness to strangers. — The graphic picture of the old man returning from his work in the fields at even and taking note of the houseless strangers is the one relieving feature in the terrible story of that night's doings. Modern and Western habits may modify the form of our hospitality, but they cannot exonerate us from the duty to show similar kindness under similar circumstances. From the mythical gentleman who excused himself for not saving a drowning man because he had not been introduced to him, to the Yorkshire native, who, seeing a strange face in his hamlet, cried, "Let's heave a brick at him!" how common it is for people to limit their kindness to persons of their acquaintance! The parable of the good Samaritan teaches us that any one who needs our help is our neighbor (Luke x. 29-37). — *Adeney*.

"There is an emanation from the heart in genuine hospitality which cannot be described, but is immediately felt, and puts the stranger at once at his ease." — *Washington Irving*.

22-26. (26) merry, with feasting. sons of Belial, see De. xiii. 13. beat, the word itself (see Gen. xxxiii. 13), and especially the reflective conjugation which is used here, seem to imply an eager knocking or pushing at the door, such that each one strove as eagerly for himself as though no one else was doing so. The narrative henceforth bears a close resemblance to that in Gen. xix., but without the miracle. — *Cam. Bib.* old man, vs. 16. bring forth, as Ge. xix. 4, 5. Conduct indicating deepest moral corruption, and wildest lawlessness. (23) come . . house, and therefore had right to protection. folly, in Bib. with usual idea of wickedness.^a (24) so vile a thing, however much the Jewish law may have done to raise the position of women, they yet were in a very inferior position, as this sad history shows. Under our Christian civilization a man would be utterly disgraced who could descend to conduct like this. — *Cam. Bib.* (25) the man, i. e. the Levite; sacrificing his wife rather than himself.^b (26) fell down, and died.

sons of Belial

a Ge. xxxiv. 7; De. xxii. 21; Ps. llii. 1, etc.

b De. xxi. 14.

"When night darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons of Belial, flown with insolence and wine." — *Milton*.

Sons of Belial (vs. 22). — I. The appellation by which they are here distinguished. "Sons of Belial." Belial treated in the Bible as a proper name (De. xiii. 13; 1 Sa. ii. 12; xxv. 17), means worthlessness; from *beli*, without, and *yaal*, profit (*Gesenius*). The word Belial is rendered "wicked" in De. xv. 9. Belial is a New Test. name of the evil one (2 Cor. vi. 15). Compare this signification of the term and application of Belial to Satan with John viii. 38-44. II. The conduct attributed to them is an apt comment on the epithet applied to them. III. Those who in our day conduct themselves in a licentious and profligate way may be appropriately called Sons of Belial.

Horrible as this whole story reads and incredible as it may appear it is abundantly paralleled by the corruptions of modern times and of some in even Christian lands. Our newspapers prove to us that death by brutal and bestial outrage is not quite a thing of the past. Sodom has perished, yet sodomy lives. The waters that flow over the ruins of the one may well remind us of the death to which the other is doomed.

Religion and morality. — Let the fear of God be once extinct in the human breast, and reverence for man and for a man's own nature will inevitably perish too. Virtue cannot survive godliness. The spirit of man is fed by the Spirit of God. Extinguish the spiritual, and nothing of man remains but the corrupt flesh. And man without spirit is no man at all. It is in the cultivation of spiritual affections, in the constant strengthening of the moral sense, in steady resistance to the first beginnings of sin, and in steadfast cleaving to God, that man's safety lies. It is in the maintenance of religion that the safety of society consists. Without the fear of God man would soon become a devil, and earth would become a hell. — *Pulp. Com.*

B. C. 1406.

the divided
body

a "The single household implement, used not like our knives at our meals but for slaughtering and cutting up the animal into joints for eating."—*Spk. Com.*

b Hos. ix. 9; x. 9.

During the late Sepoy revolt the sign or signal was thus curiously transmitted. A chat-patty, or small cake, was passed from village to village, as in the olden time the fiery cross was borne with lightning speed from crag to crag in Scotland. Who ever received this sign, as the head of the village, and sent it on, was considered favorable to the cause.

"To endeavor to work upon the vulgar with fine sense is like attempting to hew blocks with a razor."—*Pope.*

the Levite
seeks advice
of Israelc 1 Sa. iii. 20; 1
Ki. iv. 25.

d Ju. x. 17, xl. 11.

"Ariston said that neither a bath nor an oration doth any good unless it purify the one the skin, the other the heart. That is good which doth good."—*Venning.*

27-30. (27) **went out**, it does not follow, because nothing is said about a search for his wife here, that he meant to leave her behind. The whole tenor of the narrative forbids us to suppose this. **hands . . . threshold**, as if she died in agony of entreaty. (28) **gat him**, Heb. "went." Nothing is said of his feelings here. But what they were may be gathered from what follows. His grief and indignation were shown in a manner terrible even to men in that rude age, as the sequel shows. **his place**, vs. 1. (29) **knife**,^a 1 Sa. xi. 7. (30) **such deed**, a report passed with the pieces, and excited universal horror. This event was long remembered.^b

The divided body (vs. 29). — The Levite designed hereby — I. To represent their barbarous usage of his concubine, whom they had better have cut in pieces thus than use as they did. II. To express his own passionate concern, and thereby to excite the like in them. — *M. Henry. National duty in relation to private wrongs.* — I. In our day, by means of the press, the widest publicity is given to every known atrocity of private life. A man has not to proclaim his own wrongs. II. Evil deeds should be regarded as violations of Divine law and involving all who, by silence, connive at them in the consequences of Divine anger. III. It is a public duty — 1. To take counsel — (1) How to prevent; (2) How to punish such crimes; 2. To speak — (1) The righteous sentence against the ill-doer; (2) The earnest prayer to Him who alone can keep us from sin.

The fiery cross. — In Scotland, in the last century, when a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the Fiery Cross, also Crean Tarigh, or the Cross of Shame, because disobedience to what the symbol implied inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal dispatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity to all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbors, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross, every man from 16 yrs. old to 60, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear, suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this war-like signal. During the civil war of 1745-6, the Fiery Cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours. — *Sir. W. Scott.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1-7. (1) **Dan . . Beersheba**, prov. expression for all Israel.^c **Gilead**, so including tribes E. of Jordan. The close connection between Israel beyond Jordan with the rest of Israel confirms the view that these events occurred soon after the death of Joshua. **unto the Lord**, no doubt the ark on occasions of importance like the present was moved from Shiloh. **Mizpeh**, not the town E. of Jordan,^d but in district of Benj., now *Nebi-Samwil*. (2) **that drew sword**, it was a military assembly, ready for active measures in case the Benjamites should refuse satisfaction. (3) **heard**, but did not join them. (4-7) compare ch. xix. 15-29.

National atonement. — There are times when a nation is stirred to its depths. Its consciousness is then a religious one. A solemn unity of sentiment pervades it, and prevails over all lesser differences. It is then ready and effective as the servant of the Lord. Observe. — The unifying influences. 1. A common detestation of crime. 2. A common danger. 3. The spirit of Jehovah.

Men aroused by strange means. — Men in strangest ways are aroused from spiritual stupor. A profane man is brought to conviction by the shocking blasphemy of a comrade. A man attending church and hearing a sermon from the text, "The ox knoweth his owner," etc., goes home unimpressed, but crossing his barnyard an ox comes up, and licks his hand, and he says, "There it is now; the ox 'knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib,' but I do not know God." The gardener of the Countess of Huntingdon was

convicted of sin by hearing the countess on the opposite side of the wall talk about Jesus. John Hardoak was aroused by a dream, in which he saw the last day and the Judge sitting, and his own name called with terrible emphasis, "John Hardoak, come to judgment!"—*Talmage*.

8-11. (8) **all . . . arose**, moved with excitement by the recital, and not remembering to inquire of the Lord. (9) **by lot**, appointing some to execute the intended punishment. (10) **fetch victual**, these arrangements show that the people (1) were accustomed to war, and (2) that it was expected, from the absence of the Benjamites from the assembly, that the warlike operations would take sometime. (11) **all . . . Israel**, except Benj.; they took the side of their own city.

Popular indignation.—I. Excited by a well-adapted form of appeal. All could understand the argument used. II. The appeal was addressed rather to human sympathies than to reason. The masses were taken with this kind of appeal. III. Resulted in complete union to punish evil-doers. IV. But all this was to avert a common danger, *i. e.* danger arising from anger of God.

The power of union.—Union is power. The most attenuated thread, when sufficiently multiplied, will form the strongest cable. A single drop of water is a weak and powerless thing; but an infinite number of drops united by the force of attraction will form a stream, and many streams combined will form a river; till rivers pour their water into the mighty oceans, whose proud waves, defying the power of man, none can stay but He who formed them. And thus forces, which, acting singly, are utterly impotent, are, when acting in combination, resistless in their energies, mighty in power.—*Salter*.

12-17. (12) **sent men**, the law required offer of conditions before besieging a city. De. xx. 10, 12. (13) **deliver, etc.**, this a very right and reasonable demand. **their brethren**, no doubt put in by the historian to heighten the reader's sense of the folly and obstinacy of Benjamin. (14) **But, R. V., "And."** (15) Comp. numbers given Nu. i. 36, 37; xxvi. 41. (16) **sling**, the sling was made of twisted or plaited thongs of leather. (17) Comp. Nu. i. 46; xxvi. 51.

Benjamin.—Who would not have looked that the hands of Benjamin should have been first on Gibeah; and that they should have readily sent the heads of the offenders for a second service after the fragments of the concubine? But now, instead of punishing the sin, they patronize the actors, and will rather die in resisting justice than live and prosper in furthering it! The abetting of evil is worse than the commission; this may be on infirmity, but that must be on resolution. Easy punishment is too much favor to sin; connivance is much worse; but the defense of it, and that unto blood, is intolerable.—*Bp. Hall*.

18-21. (18) They appear to have resolved first, and asked counsel afterwards. **house of God, R. V., "Beth-el."** We must either suppose (1) that Beth-el here means the tabernacle itself, or (2) that the tabernacle, after having been taken to Mizpah from the urgent need of immediate consultation with the oracle, was now removed out of the immediate proximity of the fight to Beth-el, "the rendezvous of the military portion of the community."—*Bertheau*. **first**, obs. they did not ask guidance in their scheme, or a Divine blessing on it. **Judah**, as leading tribe; and as connected with the Levite's wandering abroad, and getting into mischief. (19) **encamped**, Ex. xiii. 20; Ju. vi. 4. (20) **in array**, order for fighting.

Inquiry of God.—I. Before taking in hand any important business we ought to seek God's direction. 1. By asking counsel of Holy Scripture. 2. By seeking the counsel of a wise and honest friend who will give impartial advice. 3. By simple prayer. II. The advantage in all important undertakings of coöperation and the mutual assistance of friends.—*Pulp. Com.*

Israel's defeat.—Not without the suffering of the entire community is a great evil to be purged from a land. It is easy to execute a murderer, to imprison a felon. But the spirit of the murderer, of the felon, is widely diffused, and that has to be cast out. In the great moral struggle year after year the better have not the openly vile but all who are tainted, all who are weak in soul, loose in habit, secretly sympathetic with the vile, arrayed against them. There is a sacrifice of the good before the evil are overcome. In vicarious suffering many must pay the penalty of crimes not their own ere the wide-reaching wickedness can be seen in its demoniac power and struck down as the cruel enemy of the people.—*R. A. Watson*.

B. C. 1406.

the rest of
Israel
resolves to
punish
Benjamin

"The Thebans in their armies had a band of men they called the holy band, consisting of such only as were joined together in the bonds of love, as would live and die together; these they made great account of, and esteemed the strength of their armies. Such a holy band every society of Christians should be."—*J. Trapp*.

Israel's
summons to
Benjamin

"This is a region where such a mode of warfare would be cultivated in ancient times and be very effective. The stones for the sling are everywhere at hand, and the country is cut by deep gorges with impracticable banks . . . No other weapon would carry across these profound depths."—*Thompson*. 1 Ch. xii. 2.

Judah goes
first against
Benjamin

b Ju. xvii. 8; xix.

"There can be no end without means; and God furnishes no means that exempt us from the task and duty of joining our own best endeavors. The original stock, or wild olive-tree of our natural powers, was not given us to be burnt or blighted, but to be grafted on."—*Coleridge*.

"The means that Heaven yields must be embraced, and not neglected; else, if Heaven would, and we will not, Heaven's offer we refuse."—*Shakespeare*.

B. C. 1406.

Israel defeated a second time

Difficulty excites the mind to the dignity which sustains and finally conquers misfortune; and the ordeal refines while it chastens. "Affected dispatch is one of the most dangerous things to business that can be. It is like that which physicians call predigestion, or hasty digestion, which is soon to fill the body full of crudities and secret seeds of diseases. Therefore measure not dispatch by the times of sitting, but by the advancement of the business." — *Lord Bacon*.

Phinehas inquires of the Lord

a "They are no longer self-confident as before" — *Wordsworth*. Jos. viii. 4.

"Whenever a soul, in true humiliation, is brought low before God, the end of its calamities is at hand; the day of deliverance has already dawned." — *Bush*.

Baal-tamar

b "It is remarkable that the north road for Jerus. shortly after passing Tullel-el-Ful, separates into two branches, one running on to Bethin (Bethel) and the other diverging to the right to Jeba (Geba)." — *Smith's Dict of Bible*.
c "A place cleared of wood." — *Gesenius*.

22—25. (22) They should have made fresh dispositions. (23) **went up**, Bethel being only five or six miles away, they could go to and fro in the day. **until even**, no doubt, of the day of the first fight. The troops of Judah had been unskilfully handled and had fallen into confusion, and the Benjamites rushed from their hiding places and cut them down in their retreat. Hence a very great and rapid slaughter, early in the day, and a hasty retreat, after which a large number betook themselves to Bethel and spent the rest of the day in religious exercises. (24) **came near**, this time making the attack. (25) **out of Gibeah**, sallying forth under shelter of the slingers.

Defeated but not disheartened. — I. The ground of encouragement in the hour of defeat. That though defeated they had striven for the right. That their defeat was not proof that God disapproved their purpose. II. The course pursued in the time of defeat. They prepared for a fresh conflict. They inquired of the Lord. III. The result of the second battle. Defeat again. God prospers the right conditionally. Israel right in purpose but wrong in method.

Discouragements overcome. — Mr. Disraeli might well have given up after his first speech in the House of Commons: many men would never have opened their lips there again. There is a sublimity in his words, "The day will come when you will be glad to hear me," when we read it by the light of events. Galileo, compelled to appear to come down, did not give up. "Still it moves." The great Nonconformist preacher, Robert Hall, broke down in his first attempt to preach; but he did not give up. Mr. Tennyson might have given up had he been disheartened by the sharp reviews of his earliest volume. George Stephenson might also have given up, when his railway and his locomotive were laughed out of the parliamentary committee. Mr. Thackeray might have given up when the publishers refused to have anything to do with *Vanity Fair*. — *Boyd*.

26—30. (26) **and offered burnt offerings**, the religious observances were of a more solemn character on this second occasion. (27) **inquired**, same as express. vs. 23. (28) **Phinehas**, See Num. xxv. 7; Josh. xxii. 13, 30. No more consistent character meets us in Scripture than that of Phinehas, both in the burning zeal of his youth and in the respect which his steady adherence to duty won for him in later years, as evidenced by his being chosen for the head of the embassy mentioned in Josh. xxii. — *Camb Bib*. (29) **liers in wait**,^a not only seeking God, but also adopting more skilful plans. Comp. taking of Ai. (30) **children of Is.**, making the same appearance of attack as before.

The difficulty of punishing evil doers. — I. Private wrongs are public misfortunes and dangers. II. How hard it is to root out an individual or national sin. III. The sin of one is often due to the general spirit and condition of those around him; they also are guilty with him. IV. The duty of righting wrong must be carried out at whatever expense of trouble and loss. — *Muir*.

Humiliation improved. — When Robert Hall first appeared to address an audience in public, he discoursed for a few minutes with great propriety and eloquence; and then his ideas all seemed to desert him, and he was forced to cover his face with his hands, and sit down in unutterable confusion. A second attempt was equally unsuccessful on the following week. "If this does not humble me," he remarked, on retiring to his room, "the devil must have me." Afterwards it was often remarked that he was as noted for his humility as for his great eloquence and power in the pulpit.

31—34. (31) **house of God, R. V.**, "Bethel." **Gibeah in the field**, i. e. the outlying districts of Gibeah. Along both these highways the Israelites advanced.^b (32) **draw them**, so leaving Gibeah exposed to the ambush. (33) **Baal-tamar, place of palms**, here the main army of Is. was drawn up, meadows, bare, open place.^c (34) **battle**, going on some distance fr. Gibeah.

"They knew not that evil was near them." — How descriptive this of all men! Our misfortunes often overtake us unawares. There is no earthly security. The sinner especially should not encourage himself in fancied immunity. I. The uncertain nature of the future. II. The ignorance and heedlessness of sinners respecting God's judgments. III. How to be delivered from fear and the real evils of this ignorance. A righteous life the great safeguard. Christ's the only authoritative "Fear not." External evils will through Him minister to our eternal welfare and well-being. — *Muir*.

Dependence on God in danger.—A poor, simple-hearted man from St. Kilda was advancing, for the first time in his life, from his native rock to visit the world; and as he came towards the island of Mull, a world in itself in the estimation of the poor St. Kilda man, the boatmen commenced telling him the wonders he was so soon to see. They asked him about St. Kilda; they questioned him regarding all the peculiarities of that wonderful place, and rallied him not a little on his ignorance of all those great and magnificent things which were to be seen in Mull. He parried them off with great coolness and good humor; at length a person in the boat asked him if he ever heard of God in St. Kilda. Immediately he became grave and collected. "To what land do you belong?" said he; "describe it to me." "I," said the other, "come from a place very different from your barren rock; I come from the land of flood and field, the land of wheat and barley, where Nature spreads her bounty in abundance and luxuriance before us." "Is that," said the St. Kilda man, "the kind of land you come from! Ah, then, you may forget God, but a St. Kilda man never can. Elevated on his rock, suspended over a precipice, tossed on the wild ocean, he never can forget his God—he hangs continually on His arm." All were silent in the boat, and not a word more was asked him regarding his religion.—*N. McLeod.*

35-40. (35) the Lord smote, as elsewhere we have first a general account and then a more detailed one. (36) gave place, making show of yielding. (37) drew . . along, cf. ch. iv. 6. We have the same idiom in our expression, "draw" near. (38) sign, by wh. success of the stratagem might be known. (39) As vs. 31. (40) looked behind them,^b attracted to do so by the shouts of their foes.

The *Benjamites* being twice successful in pitched battles, thought they were to be successful all through, and that God was not frowning on their conduct. So is it with many. "These things thou hast done, and I kept silence, etc." (Eccl. viii. 11). Yet suddenly destruction cometh; "as fishes are caught in the net, or birds in the snare."—*Hom. Com.*

41-44. (41) amazed, terrified so as no longer to fight, their case was hopeless. (42) way of wilderness, toward Jericho, and the Jordan. out of the cities, the rest of the Benjamites, as distinguished from the men of Gibeah. (43) trode them, as grapes in wine-press. with ease, bec. of the panic wh. had seized them. (44) men of valour, soldiers, there was doubtless also destruction of non-combatants.

The *sinner's surprise and overthrow* (vs. 41).—This text may well remind us—I. That though often successful the sinner shall at length be overthrown. II. That his defeat shall come from those he has previously conquered. III. That his surprise will be proportionate to his confidence born of previous success. IV. That his final overthrow will leave him no comfort from former victories.

The *defeat of Benjamin.*—Here was more than a mere chastisement. It was almost an annihilation of a tribe in Israel. It was "the day of the Lord" for men convicted of great crimes, and now their sins came into remembrance. The men of Gibeah were swept away with the besom of destruction, and all the wicked in that sinning land were "cut down as the grass, and withered as the green herbs." The sword before, the fire behind, and the hosts of eleven tribes all around them, there was no escape. All perished, except a very small remnant, who took refuge in one of nature's strong fastnesses. An awful beacon to warn generations to come!—*Hom. Com.*

45-48. (45) Rimmon, mod. *Rummôn*, N. E. of Gibeah; there are caverns near. gleaned, a remarkable metaphor. The destruction after the battle was to the slaughter in the battle what the occasional gleaning of an ear of corn here and there is to the harvest itself. Gidom, not otherwise mentioned. (46) all, vintage and gleaning. (47) fled, etc., succeeding in effecting shelter in the caves. (48) turned again, from the slaughter of the army to the destruction of the city.^c This conduct admits of no justification, though they had been incensed by a shameless outrage and by the slaughter of many of their best troops.

The *rock of Rimmon* (vs. 45).—I. Whither shall Benjamin, discomfited, flee, but to the rock Rimmon? The word means, exalted. II. Whither shall man, pursued by his sins or his other enemies, flee, but to his exalted Rock—Christ? III. Observe the safety of those who reach the rock.

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"There is not a place beneath which a believer walks that is free from snares. Behind every tree there is the Indian with his barbed arrow; behind every bush there is the lion seeking to devour; under every piece of grass there lieth the adder."—*Spurgeon.*

Benjamin defeated

^a Jos. viii. 15, 19.
^b Jos. viii. 20.
A timid person is frightened before a danger, a coward during the time, and a courageous person afterwards."—*Richter.*

the flight of Benjamin

Proverbs about Danger.—Flying from the bull, I fell into the river.—*Spanish.* To shun Charybdis and strike upon Scylla.—*Latin.* A precipice ahead, wolves behind.—*Latin.* To be between the devil and the deep sea.—*English.* To be between the hammer and the anvil.—*French.* "That's a valiant flea that dares eat his breakfast on the lip of a lion!"—*Shakespeare.*

the rock of Rimmon

^c "The cities of Benj. are put under the ban and burned, like Jericho, and other cities of the enemy."—*Lange.* "The village Rimmon forms a remarkable object in the landscape; being situated on and around the summit of a con-

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cal chalky hill, and visible in all directions. There can be little doubt of its being the identical rock Rimmon, to which the remnant of the Benjamites fled after the slaughter of the tribe at Gibeah." — *Robinson, Bib. Res.* ii. 113, 120.

Israel's oath concerning Benjamin

α Ezra iii. 12, 13.

"The very name of *Israel* comprehends all the twelve tribes; with one of them blotted out, the rest would not be *Israel*." — *Spl. Com.*

β 1 Ki. viii. 64.

"There may be over-doing in well-doing. That is not good divinity which swallows up humanity." — *Henry*.
"The Urim and Thummim approved the punishment of Benjamin, but not the oaths and cruelty with which it was accompanied." — *Cassel*.

Israel's sorrow concerning Benjamin

γ 1 Sa. xi. 1-11; xxxi. 11-13; 2 Sa. ii. 4-6.

"Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience." — *Assembly's Catechism*.

punishment of Jabesh-gilead

The rock of Rimmon. — This was doubtless some strong rocky hold or fastness that took its name from the village of *Rimmon*, mentioned by Eusebius, fifteen miles north from Jerusalem. It appears that rocks are still resorted to in the East as places of security, and some of them are even capable of sustaining a siege. De la Roque says that the Grand Seigneur, wishing to seize the person of the Emir (Fakaddin, prince of the Druzes), gave orders to the pacha to take him prisoner; he accordingly came in search of him with a new army, in the district of Cheuf, which is part of Mount Lebanon, wherein is the village of Gesin, and close to it the rock which served for a retreat to the emir. The pacha pressed the emir so closely, that this unfortunate prince was obliged to shut himself up in a cleft of a great rock with a small number of his officers. The pacha besieged them for several months; and was going to blow up the rock with a mine, when the emir capitulated. — *Bagster*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-5. (1) **had sworn**, the oath is not recorded in the account of the meeting at Mizpeh, ch. xx. 1-11. (2) **house of God, R. V., "Bethel."** **wept sore,** their repentance as passionate and intense as their sin. (4) **built . . altar,** perhaps nothing more is meant than that they prepared there an altar for the tabernacle which had been brought thither. (5) **not up with**, responding to the call against Gibeah. **oath**, another rash oath, taken at the same time.

Israel mourning a lost tribe (vs. 3). — We observe — I. That here was a greater regard for the integrity of the nation than for the peace of a section. II. That the decimation of a tribe was mourned only as affecting *Israel's* entirety. III. That we, too, may be careful for the welfare of each section of the church as necessary to the harmony and completeness of the whole. IV. That the sorrow of *Israel* on this occasion may well reprove unholy sectarian rejoicing at the diminishing of neighboring churches.

Israel's sorrow. — They found but melancholy matter for triumph in their recent victory. It was an event not to be celebrated by the voice of joy and praise, but by that of lamentation and mourning and woe. Having satisfied their revenge, they now experience the truth of the remark, that "strong passions make work for repentance." Still they did well in appealing to God in their extremity. His infinite compassion allows us to have recourse to him to repair the breaches which our own folly and infatuation have made. Provided we are truly penitent in view of the past, we may say to him of the desolations we have wrought, "This ruin be under Thy hand," *i. e.* under Thy remedial, Thy restoring hand. — *Bush*.

6-9. (6) **And the children of Israel**, here as usual in this section, we have a fuller repetition of the former narrative. In the middle of vs. 8 the history is once more taken up. (7) **wives**, for the restoration of the tribe. This indicates how wholesale and desperate the slaughter had been. (8) **what one**, city, not tribe. **Jabesh-gilead**,^c now Ed-Deir, on the southern brow of *Wady-Jabes*, 12 miles N. of ford Jabbok. (9) **numbered**, by tribes and cities.

Repenting for others (vs. 6). — I. The sin of others may well lead us to repentance, because it shows us of what we ourselves are capable. II. Because the consequences of sin to others show us of what we are exposed to by reason of our own sin. III. Because fraternal feeling will find personal shame in the sin of other members of the house.

The devil's policy against repentance. — The great policy of the devil is either to enlarge God's mercy above the bounds of the law, or His justice above the bounds of the gospel; he either presents God's mercy in a false glass, to make sinners presume, or His justice to bring them to despair. Before sin is committed, he tells them it is a trifle, and will easily be pardoned; but when committed, then it is great, too great for pardon: and though he is the father of lies, they give credit to him, and conclude that their sins, their many and great sins, will never be pardoned; whereas mercy is revealed as the sanctuary of the distressed, the balm of the wounded, the refuge of the burdened, the cordial of fainting, the hope of living, the joy and reviving of dying sinners. — *Fuller*.

10-15. (10) **twelve thousand**, one thousand from each tribe, making it a representative act. They must, however, have made up contingents to represent Benj. and Levi. **smite, etc.**, for *this* barbarous command also there was no

warrant in the law. From this and other circumstances we may learn how far the law of Moses was in advance of the moral condition of those to whom it was given. (11) **woman, etc., i. e. married.** (12) **virgins,** so suitable for wives. **Shiloh,** to wh. ark seems to have returned. **land of Canaan,** a mark of accuracy which might escape us, did we fail to remember that Jabesh-gilead was *not* in the land of Canaan, but across Jordan. (13) **call peaceably,** proclaim peace. (14) **came again,** to their cities. (15) **breach,** through their wilful and desperate effort to punish the sin of a few.

The fearful need of war. —

War must be

While men are what they are; while they have bad
Passions to be roused up; while ruled by men;
While all the powers and treasures of a land
Are at the beck of the ambitious crowd;
While injuries can be inflicted, or
Insults be offered; yea, while rights are worth
Maintaining, freedom keeping, or life having,
So long the sword shall shine; so long shall war
Continue, and the need for war remain. — *Bailey.*

16-18. (16) The spoil from Jabesh left some two hundred men unprovided for. (17) **that a tribe be not destroyed,** "If God cares so much for individuals, how much more for a whole tribe?" (18) **sworn,** bad oaths are better broken. They schemed to accomp. their end without *appearing* to break oath.

War and peace in a church. — Also, being to preach at a town called Rothbury, there was a deadly feud between the inhabitants so that the men on both sides never met at church without bloodshed; and, therefore when one party came, the other used to stay away. But Mr. Gilpin being in the pulpit, both parties came to church; one party going into the chancel, and the other into the body of the church, armed with swords and javelins. Mr. Gilpin, though somewhat moved by this uncouth spectacle, yet went on in his sermon; but when their weapons began to make a clashing sound, and the one side drew near to the other, he came down from the pulpit, and, stepping to the ringleaders of either faction, labored to establish a peace; and when he could not prevail in this, yet he got a promise from them to continue the peace whilst he was in the church, and afterwards, whilst he was in those quarters; and so, going up again, he spent the rest of the time in disgracing that barbarous and bloody custom. At another time, coming to a church in those parts, before the people assembled, and, walking up and down, he spied a glove hanging up in the church: whereupon he inquired of the sexton the meaning of it, who told him that it was a glove of one of the parish, who had hung it up as a challenge to his enemy, with whom he would fight hand to hand, or with any that durst take it down. Mr. Gilpin requested the sexton to take it down, who replied, that he durst not. "Then," said Mr. Gilpin, "bring me a staff, and I will take it down;" which, accordingly, he did, and put it into his bosom; and in his sermon he took occasion to reprove these inhuman challenges, and reprove him in particular that had hung up the glove; showing him that he had taken it down, and that such practices were unbecoming Christians. — *Life of B. Gilpin.*

19-25. (19) **feast,** one of the three festivals, either passover, feast of tabernacles, or partic. feast peculiar to Shiloh. Hengstenberg maintains that the feast here mentioned is the passover and that the dances of the virgins are in commemoration of the rejoicing in Exod. xv. **Lebonah, el-Lubban,** 4. m. S. of *Nablous*. (20) **in wait,** hiding till opportunity comes. (21) **dances,** usual accompaniment of festivals, etc. (22) **brethren,** who took leading part in marriage negotiations. (23) **repaired,** the damages of the war. (24) **departed,** no further need of assembling. (25) **there was no king in Israel,** this remark, doubtless written during the prosperous and orderly reign of David or Solomon, is no doubt indicative of the writer's belief that no such disorderly proceedings as these could have taken place under the regular government of a king, and may be regarded as an expression of his thankfulness that his lot was cast in more settled times. — *Camb. Bib.*

No king. — This is the keynote, as it is the refrain of the whole book. The point raised is one of great significance in dealing with the foundations of

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The Athenian Ionians, according to Herodotus (i. 146), stole Carian women for themselves, and killed their fathers. Hence, he says, the Milesian custom, which did not permit women to eat with their husbands, or to call them by their names.

consultation concerning Benjamin

"The fate of war is to be exalted in the morning, and low enough at night! There is but one step from triumph to ruin."

— *Napoleon I.*
"If war has its chivalry, and its pageantry, it has also its hideousness and its demoniac woe. Bullets respect not beauty. They tear out the eye, and shatter the jaw, and rend the cheek." — *Abbott.*
"The measure of civilization in a people is to be found in its estimate of the wrongfulness of war." — *Helps.*

the law of the lawless

a 2 Sa. vi. 14; Ex. xv. 20; 1 Sa. xviii. 6.

"We never so truly hate sin as when we hate it for its own ugliness and deformity; as we never love God so truly, as when we love Him for His own beauty and excellency. If we calculate aright, as we shall find nothing better than God Himself, for which we should love Him: so neither shall we find anything worse than sin itself, for which we should hate it." — *John Smith.*

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None have better reason to rejoice than those who have been brought to weep sincerely and penitently over their sins. Their sorrow is like a cloud fringed with golden light—very soon all the cloud will give way to brightness.

society and the State—I. The evils arising from an excess of individualism amongst men. II. The necessity for some common external bond and sanction for conduct and life. — *Muir*.

The dancing of the women. — The Orientals generally have no places in their towns where assemblies may be held for festivity and dancing. It is therefore customary to hold such assemblies in some pleasant place in the neighborhood, in the gardens or plantations, or in small valleys if there be any. The approaches of the place where they assemble are now usually guarded by eunuchs to prevent intrusion. The different sexes never participate in each other's amusements; and this was the case in the times of the Bible; for we never read of any amusement or festivity in which they mingled; and if men had in this instance been present with the daughters of Shiloh, the Benjamites would not so easily have secured their prey. — *Pict. Bib.*

The Period of the Judges. — The moral character of the Israelites, as described in this book, seems to have undergone a sad change. The generation who were contemporaries with Joshua were both courageous and faithful, and free in a great measure from the weakness and obstinacy which had dishonored their fathers. Their first ardor, however, had somewhat cooled, and more than once they fell into a state of indifference which Joshua found it needful to rebuke. Perhaps the whole territory of Palestine was more than they needed or could usefully occupy. All found it more convenient to make slaves of their subjugated nations than to expel them. This policy was unwise. It was also sinful. The results were soon seen. Another generation arose. Living in the neighborhood of idolators, and with idolators even in their country, the Israelites copied their example, intermarried with them, and became contaminated with their abominations. The grand moral lesson of the whole narrative is given in the latter half of the second chapter. It is just, however, to add that the whole period must not be regarded as an uninterrupted series of idolatries. Some of the disorders mentioned affected only parts of the country, while the rest was in a better state. In addition to the many who, doubtless, remained faithful amidst all these corruptions, St. Paul reminds us of several illustrious examples of courageous fidelity, Heb. xi. 32. — *Angus*.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.

[679]

Introduction.

I. Title. RUTH, so called fr. name of that Moabitess whom Boaz married, and who became one of the ancestors of the Messiah (iv. 18-22, i. 4-6). **II. Author.** *Uncertain*; usually believed by the Jews to have been written by Samuel. It could not have been written before his time, as the genealogy, in iv. 17-22, shows. Some critics ascribe it to Hezekiah, and some also to Ezra. "The author's name (probably Samuel) is concealed, neither is it needful it should be known; for, even as a man that hath a piece of gold that he knows to be weight, and sees it stamped with the king's image, careth not to know the name of that man who minted or coined it; so we, seeing this book to have the superscription of Cæsar, the stamp of the Holy Spirit, need not to be curious to know who was the penman thereof" (*Thomas Fuller*). **III. Date.** It records certain events that happened in the time of the Judges; but at what particular time is unknown. **IV. Scope.** A sequel to the Book of Judges, and an Intro. to the Bks. of Samuel; its object is, plainly to estab. the fact of the descent of David, the progenitor of the Messiah; and, "perhaps, by the adoption of Ruth into the Jewish Church to intimate the future ingathering of the Gentiles" (*Litton*). **V. Characteristics.** This little bk. "consists of only 85 vers.; but these enclose a garden of roses as fragrant and full of mystic calyxes as those wh. the mod. traveler still finds blooming and twining ab. the solitary ruins of Israel and Moab, this side the Jordan and beyond. The significance and beauty of the brief narrative cannot be highly enough estimated, whether regard be had to the thought wh. fills it, the historical value wh. marks it, or the pure and charming form in wh. it is set forth" (*Cassell*).

Synopsis.

(According to Ayre.)

Sec. I.—Naomi's sojourn in Moab.....i.

Sec. II.—Transactions at Bethlehem

ii.—iv. 17.

Sec. III.—The pedigree.....iv. 18-22.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

1-5. (1) **Now it came to pass, etc., R. V.,** "And it came to pass when the judges judged." judges ruled, during time of confusion; precise date cannot be known. **famine**, caused by inroads of enemies, as Midianites. **Bethlehem-judah**, Ju. xvii. 7, 8. **Moab**, Ge. xix. 37; De. ii. 9, 10, not far distant. Its blue mountains are distinctly visible from the heights about Bethlehem. (2) **Elimelech, God is king. Naomi, pleasant. Mahlon, sick. Chillon, pining**: names reflecting the distress of time of their birth. **Ephrahtites**, see old name of Bethlehem.^b (3) **left**, widowed. (4) **women of Moab**, although the law^c would seem to forbid such marriages, there is nothing in the nature of condemnation nor the least hint of blame found in all the book. **Ruth, friend.** (5) **left**, bereft.

Family trials.—I. Heavy sorrows. Tell Naomi's tale. Husband gone. Sons gone. In a foreign land. No grandchildren to protect her, or urge her rights of inheritance. II. Heavy sorrows lightened by love and devotion. Show greatness of Ruth's love, and how much that we hold dear she gave up for Naomi's sake.

Pastoral poetry.—Dr. Franklin, it is said, was once in the company of several ladies of the English nobility, when the conversation turned upon pastoral poetry, in which the ladies took a most conspicuous part. After hearing their criticism on various authors, he proposed to read the translation of a pastoral for their amusement. He read, with a few verbal alterations, the book of Ruth. They were enraptured with the pastoral, and pronounced it the finest they had ever seen in any language. The doctor then gravely told them that he had read it from the Bible!

6-10. (6) **visited**,^d Ge. xxi. 1. It implies a return of mercy after a period of apparent forgetfulness on the part of God. (7) These daughters would hardly have proposed to return with her if they had not become *proselytes* to Judaism. (8) **Go, return**, Naomi feels how much they must sacrifice in following her fortunes. The mention of the *mother's* house, which the separation of the women's house or tent from that of the men facilitates, is natural in her mouth, and has more tenderness in it than *father's house* would have had. (9) **find rest**, obtaining husbands among their own people. (10) **they**, both together.

Lessons from Orpah.—I. It is possible to go a long way towards Christianity, and yet not to be a Christian. It will not do to be almost, we must be altogether, decided for Christ. II. It is possible to deceive ourselves, and to think that all is right, when in truth all is wrong with our souls. Hardly possible that Orpah played the conscious hypocrite. III. Our religion will not profit us at all unless it be characterized by perseverance to the end. No grace, however bright and precious, will take us to heaven without perseverance. — *Hom. Com.*

How many part with Christ at this cross-way! like Orpah, that go a furlong or two with Christ, till He goes to take them off from their worldly hopes, and bids them prepare for hardship, and then they fairly kiss and leave Him. — *Gurnall.*

11-14. (11) **your husbands**, according to Levit. law.^e It is not necessary to take Naomi's work literally. The application of the law in Israel extended beyond the brother and applied to the nearest relations, since Boaz was only a kinsman of Elimelech. (12) **too old**, not perhaps in age, but broken down with many sorrows, past such interests. (14) **kissed**, with a parting kiss. **clave**, clung to her. The difference between mere kindness of manner and self-sacrificing love is most vividly depicted in the above words.

But Ruth clave unto her (vs. 14)—I. Ruth's call; her call to be a child of God. She was born a heathen. But God had His eye upon her to bring her to Him. II. Ruth's choice, it was unexpected, had to be decided speedily. III. Ruth's crown. Read her history and see how she was blest.

"*You have seen a ship out on the bay, swinging with the tide, and seeming as if it would follow it: and yet it cannot, for down beneath the water it is anchored. So many a soul sways towards heaven, but cannot ascend thither, because it is anchored to some secret sin.*" — *Beecher.*

B. C. 1322.

the family of
Elimelech

a Ju. vi. 1-6.

b Ge. xxxiv. 16-19.

c De. vii. 3: xxiii.
8; Ne. xiii. 1-3.

"Oh, blows that
smite,
Oh hurts that
perce
This shrinking
heart of mine,
What are ye but
the Master's
tools
Forming a work
divine?"

"Afflictions are
but the shadow of
His wing." —
MacDonald.

B. C. 1312.

the return of
Naomi

d Lu. i. 68.

To live in this
Hebrew faith
would be life in-
deed; "the Lord"
was always so near
to the pious
Hebrew; all bless-
ings were counted
direct gifts from
the hand of "the
Lord."

Orpah
returns to
her people

e Deut. xxxiv. 5.

"None ever thirst
after God and
righteousness but
those who in some
measure already
enjoy the one and
possess the other."
— Thomas à
Kempis.

B. C. 1312.

Ruth cleaves to Naomi

a Nu. xxi. 29.

b Comp. 2 Ki. ii. 2.6.

"Away with all mere affection which kisses, but does not cleave to Christ!"

"Without a murmur I dismiss My former dreams of earthly bliss: My joy, my consolation this, Each hour to cling to Thee." — Mrs. Elliot.

"Death opens the gate of fame, and shuts the gate of envy after it; it unlooses the chain of the captive, and puts the bondsman's task into another man's hand." — J. Sterne.

Naomi and Ruth arrive at Bethlehem

c Ex. xv. 23.

"God alone instructeth how to mourn. He doth not trust this higher lesson to voice or hand subordinate. Behold! he cometh forth! O sweet disciple—bow thyself to learn the alphabet of tears." — Sigourney.

"Who has not known ill fortune never knew himself, or his own virtue." — Mallet.

Ruth gleanes in the fields of Boaz

d 1 Ki. vii. 21; 2 Chron. iii. 27.

e Le. xix. 9, 10; xxiii. 22; De. xxiv. 19.

See Thomson's *Seasons*, "Autumn," line 177 ff.

15-18. (15) **her gods**, R. V., "her god."^a (16) **Intreat**,^b or force me not; be not against me in this. (17) **do so to me**, freq. form of imprecation, 1 Sam. xiv. 44; xx. 13; 1 Kings ii. 23. (18) **stedfastly-minded**, had really set her heart on it.

Ruth's choice (vss. 16, 17). — The choice is — I. Full and unlimited; the God of Israel is her choice, and His people. II. Affectionate. See in Ruth's language all the eagerness and fervor of holy love. III. Determined. IV. Final. It is made for life. V. Made in spite of many discouragements. — *Belfrage*.

Ruth. — Her vow has stamped itself on the very heart of the world; and that not because of the beauty of its form simply, though even in our English version it sounds like a sweet and noble music, but because it expresses in a worthy form, and once for all, the utter devotion of a genuine and self-conquering love. It is the spirit which informs and breathes through these melodious words that makes them so precious to us, and that also renders it impossible to utter any fitting comment on them. They shine most purely in their own light. — *Coar*. *The go-back corner*. — The converted freedman gave happy expression to his decided adhesion to Christ when he said, "I have got safe past de *go-back corner*. I'm goin' all de journey home. And if you don't see me at de first of them twelve gates up dere, just look on to de next one, for I'm bound to be dere." Alas! for thousands in our congregations; they never get by the *go-back corner*. — *Cuyler*.

19-22. (19) **moved**, her return *all alone* excited greatest sympathy with her. **they said**, "they" in the Hebrew is feminine. "The women of Bethlehem said." (20) **Mara**, *bitter*.^c (21) **full**, with husband and two sons. **empty**, all three gone, only a relative by marriage her companion. The very reverse of Jacob's experience as given in Gen. xxxii. 10, "with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." **testified against me**, the sight of her old home renews the bitterness of her grief; these the expressions of an overwhelmed heart. (22) **barley harvest**, beginning of harvesting operations.

Naomi. — I. Love makes life full. Why, I thought they went out poor? Yes. Seeking bread? Yes. Yet Naomi's description is true and beautiful. We are "full" when we have that which makes home, home indeed, and we are poor if, having all wealth of means, we have not love. Well, indeed, has it been said that "the golden moments in the stream of life rush past us, and we see nothing but sand; the angels come to visit us, and we only know them when they are gone." We never know how empty life is till the loved are lost to us. II. The Lord is the disposer of all events. "The Lord hath brought me home." We talk of Providence when all goes well with us, when the harvests are ripened, and the fruits hang on the wall. But we must not limit Providence to the pleasant. The Lord "takes away" as well as gives. — *Pulpit Com*.

Bless the Lord. — It is said that, in the order of reading at the family altar, when the late John Angell James was about to conduct worship after a severe bereavement, the Psalm to be read was the hundred and third. The good man stopped, tears rolled down his face; and then, gathering up his strength, he said, "Why not? It is the Father!" and he read on, "Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-3. (1) **a mighty man of wealth**, the same phrase is properly rendered "mighty man of valor," Judg. vi. 12; 1 Kings xi. 28. **Boaz**,^d = *strength is in him*. The phrase describing him appears to indicate energy and vigor of character, rather than merely wealth. (2) **glean**, Le. xix. 10. Moses commanded that the dropped ears, etc., should be left for the poor, stranger, and widow.^e **grace**, permission to glean. (3) **hap**, or chance; she did not know of Boaz, or seek his field intentionally.

Ruth going to glean. — I. True affection shows itself in deeds as well as words. II. True affection disregards all pride. III. True affection never makes excuses. Ruth might have said — 1. Why should I glean? Your kinsman is rich; 2. I have never done so before; 3. Naomi is no real relation of mine; 4. Surely I have sacrificed enough for her already.

"Who knoweth whether God hath raised thee up, who art the best of thy

kindred, to this very intent that thou mightest be the treasure and the store-house to supply the want of others which are allied unto thee?" — *Fuller*.

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"Blindfolded and alone I stand,
With unknown thresholds on each hand;
The darkness deepens as I grope,
Afraid to fear, afraid to hope:
Yet this one thing I learn to know
Each day more surely as I go,
That doors are open'd, ways are made,
Burdens are lifted, or are laid,
By some great law unseen and still,
Unfathom'd purpose to fulfil
Not as I will." — *Helen Hunt*.

Thou cam'st not to thy place by accident. It is the very place God meant for thee. — *Trench*.

Hail! ye small sweet courtesies of life,
For smooth do ye make the road of it. — *Sterne*.

"He that is taught to live upon little, owes more to his father's wisdom, than he that has a great deal left him, does to his father's care." — *Penn*.

4-7. (4) **The Lord be with you**, the same salutation as that addressed by the angel to Gideon, Judg. vi. 12; adopted in our familiar "good-bye." — *Bib. Com.* (5) **servant**, *lit.* young man. **damsel**, young unmarried woman. So Boaz thought. (6) **Man's ans. indic.** but imperfect knowledge. (7) **let me glean**, as a Moabitess she had asked special permission. **tarry'd a little**, indic. she wasted no time, so eager did she seem to get food. **house**, shed or booth.

Boaz visits his harvest men

Boaz and the reapers. — I. The living presence. The Lord with us means courage and consolation — courage to face difficulty, and consolation in all times of depression and disheartenment. II. The harvest toil. "Said unto the reapers." It is hard work everywhere in the glaring heat to put in the sickle, and to gather up the sheaves. We may learn from the spectacle the blessed lesson of our duty in relation to others. Let us try to cheer and inspire. We little know what a word of cheer does for others. Encouragement is like fresh strength to weary hearts. III. The kind response. The benediction of Boaz awakens a corresponding benediction from the reapers. The harp answers to the hand that sweeps it. Men are to us very much what we are to them. "The Lord bless thee." We need never despair of this reward. Love begets love. Confidence begets confidence. Blessing awakens blessing. This is what we long and pray for — cessation of war between capital and labor, and mutual benediction. — *Pul. Com.*

"The greatest thing," says some one, "a man can do for his Heavenly Father, is to be kind to some of His other children."

Gleaning barley. — Traveling on the plains of Bethlehem, I was struck by and equally delighted with the sight of the reapers in the fields cutting barley, and after every company were women and children gleaning, just as Ruth did when Boaz came to look after his laborers. In the evening may be seen some poor woman or maiden, that has been permitted to glean on her own account, sitting by the roadside, and beating out with a stick or a stone what she has gathered, just as Ruth did. I have often watched this process in various parts of the country. The meals, too, are quite in keeping, the dipping her morsel in the vingar, and the parched corn. — *Thomson*.

Men become as strongly attached to others by the benefits they render as by the favors they receive. Grace humbles even mighty men of wealth to utter the law of kindness to the poor and needy. — *Macgowan*.

8-12. (8) **Hearest**, or hast thou not heard. Boaz intends to fix the permission already given. **my daughter**, a kind phrase, indicating at the same time Boaz's mature age. **maidens**,^a close following the reapers, Ruth would glean more. (9) **touch thee**, interfere with, or be rude to thee. (10) **fell, etc.**,^b Eastern attitude of reverence. **Why have I found grace**, compare David's expression of surprise at God's favor to him, 2 Sam. vii. 18, 19, and Luke i. 43. (11) Boaz made fuller inquiries than we have narrated. (12) **under whose wings**,^c De. xxxii. 11.

Boaz speaks kindly to Ruth

The wings of the Almighty (vs. 12). — I. They were swift wings under which Ruth had come to trust. II. They were very broad wings. They covered up all her wants, all her sorrows, all her sufferings. There is room under those wings for the whole race. III. They were strong wings: mighty to save, mighty to destroy. IV. They were gentle wings. Here stay then; for under these wings is the only safe nest. — *Talmage*.

^a Some think the women bound sheaves. Others, as Robinson, say the women were only gleaners. They would hardly then be called by Boaz, *my maidens*.

^b Ge. xxxiii. 3.

Faithfulness in little things. — It is related that when Phidias, the great sculptor, who carved statues for one of the temples in antiquity, was laboring with minute fidelity upon the hair on the back of the head of one of the his-

^c Ps. xvii. 8; xxxvi. 7; Matt. xxiii. 37. "Hospitality is an expression of Divine worship." — *Talmud*.

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"Ask the man of adversity how other men act towards him; ask those others how he acts towards them. Adversity is the true touchstone of merit in both; happy if it does not produce the dishonesty of meanness in one, and that of insolence and pride in the other." — *Greville*.

Boaz protects Ruth

a "A quantity of the best ears, not too ripe, are plucked with the stalks attached. These are tied into small parcels, a blazing fire is kindled with dry grass and thorn bushes, and the corn-heads are held in it until the chaff is mostly burned off. The grain is thus sufficiently roasted to be eaten." — *Thomson*.

Ruth confides in, and is advised by Naomi

b "The *goel* had the right of redeeming the inheritance of the person; of marrying the widow; and of avenging the death. (See *Le. xxv. 25-31, 47-55; De. xxv. 5-10*)." — *Spk. Com.*

Naomi counsels Ruth

True rest can only be obtained as

toric figures, which was to be elevated from the pavement to the very apex of the building, or placed along the frieze, some one expostulated with him, saying, "Why do you take such great pains with the hair? it is never to be seen." His simple reply was, "The gods will see it." So he labored thoroughly in the minutest things, not for the eyes of men, but for the eyes of the gods. — *Beecher*.

"My times are in thy hand !

I know not what a day
Or e'en an hour may bring to me,
But I am safe while trusting Thee,
Though all things pass away ;
All weakness, I

On Him rely,

Who fixed the earth and spread the starry sky."

13-17. (13) *friendly, to the heart*, in what he had said of her casting in her lot with Naomi. *not like, etc.*, being a foreigner. (14) *vinegar*, sour wine mingled with oil. To dip the morsel or sop, whether it were bread or meat, in the dish containing the vinegar was, and still is, the common custom in the East. *parched corn*, common food of country. *left*, had some over, see *vs. 18*. (15) *among the sheaves*, close up to reapers. *reproach*, Heb. *shame her not*. (16) *of purpose*, on purpose. (17) *beat out*, with a stick or a stone. *ephah*, about a bushel, comp. *omer*, *Ex. xvi. 16, 18, 22, 36*.

And she did eat, and was sufficed (vs. 14). — When Jesus is the host, none go empty away. He satisfies our head, our heart, our hope, and our desire; He fills our conscience, our judgment, our memory, and our imagination. — *Spurgeon*.

Blessed to give. — He who lifts another's load, who soothes another's smart, who brightens a life that else would be dark, who puts a music within a brother's soul, though it be only for a passing moment, wakes even a sweeter music within his own, for he enters on earth into his Master's joy, the joy of a redeeming, self-sacrificing love. — *Exp. Bib.*

18-23. (18) *reserved*, of her share of the bread and parched corn. (19) *blessed be he, etc.*, her mother-in-law saw at once, from the quantity of corn Ruth had brought home, and from the bread and parched corn in addition, that she had some special favor shown her. (20) *next kinsman, goel*, or redeemer.⁶ (21) *all my harvest*, gleanings of wh. would supply the two women for a long time. (22) *meet thee not*, her being found in another field would show slight of Boaz's kindly treatment, and grieve him. (23) *wheat*, a month later.

Naomi's prayer for Boaz (vs. 20). — From this note — I. That prayer in and by every true member of the church hath been only made unto God. II. That it is the Lord that doth bless and make happy. III. That the Lord will bless the merciful. IV. That the poor's reward unto the rich for their works of charity is their prayer to God for them. — *R. Bernard*.

Where have I gleaned? — It is a good question for us to ask ourselves in the close of every day, "Where have I gleaned to-day? What improvements have I made in knowledge and grace? What have I done or obtained that will turn to a good account?" — *Hom. Com.*

"Sum up at night what thou hast done by day;

And in the morning what thou hast to do.

Dress and undress thy soul; mark the decay

And growth of it; if with thy watch, that too

Be down, then wind up both; since we shall be

Most surely judged, make thy accounts agree." — *Herbert*.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-4. (1) *rest, resting place*, ch. i. 9. This suggestion came to Naomi on hearing of Boaz, her kinsman, and the family *goel*, as she supposed. It was a home to which Naomi pointed, a home for her daughter's heart. (2) *he winnoweth*, obs. how in those simple times the master shared in the work. The straw was not so much valued as now, the grain threshed out, *etc.*, on the

field for convenience of *storing*. to-night, for sake of evening breeze. **threshing-floor**, piece of hard, trodden ground, near the fields. (3) **raiment**, her best. (4) **uncover his feet**, lie down at his feet, and claim a kinsman's right to share his coverlet.

Christ and His church. — The church must put on her best attire when she comes to Christ. She is brought to the King in raiment of needle work, in the Psalms (xiv. 14); she puts on her beautiful garments, in Isaiah (lii. 1); she is adorned as a bride for her husband in raiment pure and white, in the Apocalypse (Rev. xxi. 20). — *Wordsworth*. *Divine aid in difficulty*. — Just one woman working alone, did I say? Nay! there was One who toiled with her: One who stood invisible by her side, saying, "Fear not, I am with thee, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." — *H. M. Monthly*. *Winnowing at night*. — In these regions much of the agricultural labor is performed in the night. The sun is so hot, and so pernicious, that the farmers endeavor, as much as possible, to avoid its power. Hence numbers plough and irrigate their fields and gardens long after the sun has gone down, or before it rises in the morning. The wind is also generally stronger in the night, which might induce Boaz to prefer that season. From the next two verses we learn that he took his supper there, and slept among the barley. Corn, in the East, is not kept in stacks, but after being reaped, is in a few days threshed on the spot. The threshing-floor is a circle of about forty feet in diameter, without wall or fence. Under these circumstances, it is necessary for some of the people to sleep near the corn till all shall have been threshed and taken home. — *Roberts*.

5-9. (5) **will do**, though prob. strange customs whose purport she did not fully understand. (6) **floor**, vs. 2. (7) **merry**, with joy of harvest; but not drunken. **end . . . corn**, the reapers slept in the field for convenience of nearness, and to protect the grain. (8) **turned himself**, *lit. bent forward*, to see what was touching his feet. (9) **spread**,^a *etc.*, the phrase indicates the acknowledging of the woman as his wife. **near kinsman**, ch. ii. 1, 20.

The near kinsman (vs. 9). — I. Christ is our near kinsman — 1. By birth: He took our nature; 2. By condescending love: He came to His own; did not disown them; 3. By self-sacrificing grace: loved us to the end; 4. By present thoughtful care: He is the Lord of Providence. II. Let the poorest, and most friendless — like the widowed Ruth — learn to trust Him.

Spreading the skirt (vs. 9). — The prophet Ezekiel, in describing the Jewish church as an exposed infant, mentions the care of God in bringing her up with great tenderness, and then, at the proper time, marrying her; which is expressed in the same way as the request of Ruth: "I spread my skirt over thee," . . . "and thou becamest mine." Dr. A. Clarke says, "Even to the present day, when a Jew marries a woman, he throws the skirt, or end of his talith, over her, to signify that he has taken her under his protection." I have been delighted at the marriage ceremonies of the Hindoos, to see among them the same interesting custom. The bride is seated on a throne, surrounded by matrons, having on her veil, her gayest robes, and most valuable jewels. After the thāli has been tied round her neck, the bridegroom approaches her with a silken skirt (purchased by himself), and folds it round her several times over the rest of her clothes. The request of Ruth, therefore, amounted to nothing more than that Boaz should marry her. — *Roberts*. *Christ's willingness to receive*. — It is our melancholy and miserable misapprehension, that we fancy there is some reluctance on Christ's part that needs to be overcome, some repulse in His mind that we need to do away with, and that we have to persuade and urge Him to do what we yearn to have done, to forgive us all our sins, and to blot out all our iniquities. This is a great mistake; ten thousand times more willing is Christ to receive you, than ever you were to make application to Him. — *Cumming*.

10-13. (10) **more kindness**, the first kindness was her faithfulness to her husband and her mother-in-law; the last was her willingness to accept Boaz for her husband,^b advanced in years as he was. The rectitude of Ruth's conduct, and the virtue of Boaz, are apparent through the whole story. — *Bib. Com.* (11) **city**, gate. **virtuous**, if not, he might be released fr. the obligation. (12) **nearer than I**, on whom duty of marrying her rested. (13) **until the morning**, when she might return safely to Naomi.

Ruth the virtuous (vs. 11). — Observe — I. Ruth's industry. She accompanies

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Christ obtained it, through labor. — *Chas. Kingsley*.

Put meekness in thy mind, Love, charity, obedience and true duty!

— *Shakespeare*.

Live pure, speak truth, right wrong,

Else wherefore born!

— *Tennyson*.

Nothing is so strong as gentleness,

Nothing so gentle as real strength.

— *St. Francis de Sales*.

One by one thy duties wait thee,

Let thy whole strength go to each;

Let no future dreams elate thee,

Learn thou first what each can teach.

— *Adelaide Proctor*.

Ruth's obedience to Naomi

a Eze. xvi. 8.

Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see

The distant scene; one step enough for me. — *Newman*.

"Live blameless; God is near."

He serves all who dares be true. — *Emerson*.

The secret of being loved is in being lovely; and the secret of being lovely is in being unselfish.

The most delicate, the most sensible of all pleasures consists in promoting the pleasure of others. — *La Bruyère*.

The part of a kinsman

b Comp. law

De. xxv. 5-10.

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O wives and mothers! be wise before it is too late! Live so as to enjoy every day of your life. Ten years hence, or even to-morrow, you may die. Live so that your presence will gladden the lives of your dear ones more than anything your hands can win for them. "Thou shalt stand a deity, sweet woman! and be worshiped."—*Ford*. "A maiden never bold, of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion blushed at itself."—*Shakespeare*.

Naomi advises patience

"A good heart is no less afraid of a scandal than of a sin."—*Bp. Hall*. "We speak with awed tenderness of our guardian angels; but have we not all had our guiding angels, who came to us in visible form, and, recognized or unknown, kept beside us on our difficult path until they had done for us all that they could."—*Lucy Larcom*. "In the man whose childhood has known caresses, there is always a fibre of memory that can be touched to gentle issues."—*Georg Eliot*.

Boaz challenges the near kinsman

α Comp. *Ge. xviii. 32; Ju. vi. 27; 1 Sa. i. 8; Eccles. vii. 19*. Among mod. Jews ten men are necessary to constitute a synagogue.

"The expectations of life depend upon diligence; and the mechanic that would perfect his work must first sharpen his tools."—*Confucius*.

Naomi to the land of Israel, but not to live on public charity, or become the humble pensioner of affluent relatives. It is work, not charity, she asks. II. her humility: willing to engage in any honest work, however humble, she bends like a reed to the blast. III. Her affection to Naomi: she stays when her sister leaves.

A fortunate suppliant.—In the inclement part of the winter of 1782, a poor girl stood curtsying at the kitchen window of an elderly gentleman, in the environs of the metropolis, who observing the distressed object, and the severe weather to which she was exposed, ordered her to be taken into the kitchen, to be well warmed and fed. When she was going away, the weather was so stormy that the gentleman ordered a bed to be made up for her. Next morning, by the master's directions, the servants put her into decent clothing, and she was sent into the parlor, to thank and take leave of her kind benefactor. The gentleman made some inquiries respecting her, and found that she was of a respectable family; and finding her willing to go to service, agreed to take her into his house. Here, by industry and good behavior, in a few years, she rose from the office of kitchenmaid to that of housekeeper, when the old gentleman was taken dangerously ill. Her gratitude then redoubled her attentions toward him. Finding himself growing worse, he made his will; and, with the exception of a few trifling legacies, left her the whole of his property, amounting to several thousand pounds.—*Percy Anec.*

14-18. (14) **one . . another**, meaning in the first appearance of dawn, before others were about. (15) **vail**, prob. mantle, or loose cloak; the veil, however, was large, like "a sheet, and it was wrapped round the face and head, concealing all but one eye." **six, etc.**, twice as much as her gleanings. (16) **Who . . thou**, or, "How hast thou fared?" *R. V., margin*. (17) **empty**, without a gift. (18) **Sit still**, wait for further tidings.

A name famous in Israel (vs. 14).—Boaz—I. An upright man (iv. 1-12). II. A good master (ii. 4). III. A thoughtful benefactor (ii. 5-17). IV. An ancestor of the Messiah.

Female influence.—A remarkable instance of the influence of the female sex over minds likely to be swayed by it, occurred in the case of John Banér, an élève of the great Gustavus Adolphus, and one of the greatest generals Europe ever produced. This brave man owed much of his glory to his first wife, and tarnished it by his second. While the wife whom he brought from Sweden lived, he was successful in every undertaking; she accompanied him in every campaign, and was always found to console and cheer him in every danger and difficulty, and to urge him onward wherever glory was to be gained. After her death, Banér became smitten with a lovely young German princess, whom he married; this circumstance proved the grave of all his military fame, for she soon rendered him as effeminate as herself; and six weeks after his marriage he died of grief at having tarnished his fame as a general by a gross neglect of his military duties.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

1-5. (1) **gate**, De. xxv. 7. The place of concourse, of business, of justice, such an **one**, his name purposely not given. (2) **ten men**,^a necessary to make a lawful assembly. Among modern Jews ten are necessary to constitute a synagogue. (3) **selloth, etc.**, prob. should be *has sold*. Land might be sold, on lease, terminating with next jubilee; but the *goel* or redeemer of a family, could, by purchase, at any time free the land again. (4) **thought**, resolved. **to advertise thee**, *R. V.*, "to disclose it unto thee." **redeem it**, so fulfil his duty. (5) **buy it**, by marrying Ruth, according to Levirate law.

Ho! such an one! turn aside (vs. 1).—I. Here is a noticeable blank in history. Curiosity would like to know some names that doubtless for wise reasons the Bible withholds. II. It may be sometimes necessary to record events that are discredit to the chief actors; and in such cases it may be well to conceal names. III. Too great care about one's worldly interests may occasion loss of that which most concerns one. IV. The faithful, though costly discharge of duty, may lead to true and abiding fame.

Luck and labor.—Luck is ever waiting for something to turn up. Labor, with keen eyes and strong will, will turn up something. Luck lies in bed, and wishes that the postman would bring him the news of a legacy. Labor

turns out at six o'clock, and, with busy pen or ringing hammer, lays the foundation of a competence. Luck whines. Labor whistles. Luck relies on chance. Labor on character.—*Cobden. Aristides.*—Aristides being judge between private persons, one of them declared that his adversary had greatly injured Aristides. "Relate rather, good friend," said he, interrupting him, "what wrong he hath done thee, for it is thy cause, not mine, that I now sit judge of."—*Percy Anecdotes.*

6-8. (6) **mar**, by investing money in what would belong not to himself, but to any son Ruth might have, or he might object to her Moabitish origin. (7) **changing**, transfer of rights fr. one to another. **confirm**, make irrevocable. **plucked** . . . **neighbour**, comp. De. xxv. 9, mitigated in this case. (8) **he drew**, *i. e.* Boaz.

Taking off the shoe.—At a Jewish marriage I was standing beside the bridegroom when the bride entered; and, as she crossed the threshold, he stooped down, and slipped off his shoe, and struck her with the heel on the nape of the neck. I at once saw the interpretation of the passage in Scripture respecting the transfer of the shoe to another, in case the brother-in-law did not exercise his privilege.—*Kitto's Illustrations.* The simple object in taking off the shoe, was to confirm the bargain: it was the testimony or memorial of the compact. In Deuteronomy it is mentioned that the brother of a deceased husband shall marry the widow, but should he refuse, then the widow is to "go up to the gate unto the elders and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother." Then the elders were to call the man, and if he persisted in his refusal, the woman was to come forward "and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face; was to answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house. From that time the man was disgraced, and whenever his person or establishment was spoken of, it was contemptuously called "the house of him that hath his shoe loosed." To be spit at in the face is the most degrading ceremony a man can submit to. This was done by the widow to her husband's brother, and she confirmed his ignominy by taking off his shoe. But this taking off the shoe may also allude to the death of her husband, whose shoes, were taken off and of no further use to him. An affectionate widow never parts with her late husband's shoes: they are placed near her when she sleeps, she kisses and puts her head upon them, and nearly every time after bathing she goes to look at them. These, therefore, are the "testimony," the melancholy confirmation of her husband's death.—*Roberts.*

9-12. (9) **elders**, vs. 2. **people**, no doubt a crowd gathered. **Chilion's** wife, tho' living, by remaining in Moab, had renounced her rights. (10) **Ruth**, in the result Ruth appears persistently faithful to her duty to her deceased husband. Boaz appears as conscientiously obedient to the law of Moses, and as discharging all the duties of kindness to the dead and the living in an exemplary manner. **my wife**, so this virtually a marriage ceremony. (11) **Lord make, etc.**, the marriage blessing. **wh. two**,^b regarded as the mothers of Israel. **worthily**, virtuously. (12) **Pharez**,^c comp. Ge. xxxviii.

A public benediction (vs. 11, 12).—I. Upon whom it was pronounced. Boaz an upright man. Note the difference between him, and those who are sometimes the objects of public praise. II. What it included. Domestic and material prosperity are desired for him. III. The admonition with which it was accompanied, "Do thou worthily," etc.

Marriage.—What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined for life—to strengthen each other in all labor, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent, unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting?—*George Eliot. Ancient Eastern marriage ceremony.*—The marriage ceremony was commonly performed in a garden, or in the open air; the bride was placed under a canopy, supported by four youths, and adorned with jewels according to the rank of the married persons; all the company crying out with joyful acclamations, Blessed be he that cometh. It was anciently the custom, at the conclusion of the ceremony, for the father and mother, and kindred of the woman, to pray for a blessing upon the parties. Bethuel and Laban, and the other members of their family, pronounced a solemn benediction upon Rebecca before her departure. And in times long posterior to the

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"A good intention clothes itself with sudden power."—*Emerson.*

the kinsman declines to redeem his right

a "In acknowledgment that he, to whom the shoe was given, might tread on the property as his own, by the same right as he, who gave the shoe, had formerly trodden upon it."—*Wordsworth.*

"Let us be such as help the life of the future."—*Zoroaster.*

The moment a man can really do his work, he becomes speechless about it. All words become idle to him—all theories. *Ruskin.*

It is not written, blessed is he that feedeth the poor, but he that considereth the poor. A little thought and a little kindness are often worth more than a great deal of money.—*Ruskin.*

Boaz marries Ruth

b Ge. xvi. 2, xxx. 3, marg.

c "His house was far more numerous and illustrious than that of his twin brother, Zerah."—*Spk. Com.*

"Were a man not to marry a second time, it might be concluded that his first wife had given him a disgust to marriage; but by taking a second wife, he pays the highest compliment to the first, by showing that she made him so happy as a married man that he wishes to be so a second time."—*Johnson.*

B. C. 1312.

"If you would have the nuptial union last, let virtue be the bond that ties it fast." — *Rowe*.

age of Isaac, when Ruth the Moabitess was espoused to Boaz, "All the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel; and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem." After the benedictions, the bride is conducted with great pomp to the house of her husband; this is usually done in the evening. — *Paxton*.

Obed

The best way of training the young is to train yourself at the same time; not to admonish them, but to be seen always doing that of which you would admonish them. — *Plato*.

13-17. (13) a son, so were the sorrows of the past wiped out. (14) kinsman, *goel*, Boaz is meant probably. The women bless God for not having left Naomi without a *goel*, on occasion of the birth of Obed, because it was that birth alone which gave effect to the *goel's* office. his name, *R. V.*, "and let his name be famous," the name of the child just born. Possibly some clause has been omitted for the sake of brevity. (15) loveth thee, indic. Ruth's continued kindness to Naomi. (16) nurse, repaying Ruth's goodness to her child. (17) born to Naomi, as living head of the family.

Ruth's happiness. — I. Ruth, a wife. Boaz took her and she became his wife. II. Ruth, a mother: "the Lord gave her conception." III. Ruth still a daughter-in-law, and the same that she always was to Naomi. IV. Ruth hereby brought in among the ancestors of David and Christ, which was the greatest honor. — *Henry*.

But one upon earth is more beautiful and better than the wife, — that is the mother. — *L. Scheffer*.

Filial affection. — A widow, who had been left with an only son, when she became aged, was much distressed at the thought of being under the necessity of going to the poor-house, or of living on alms. Her son was now eighteen years of age; he was healthy and strong; and he assured her that while he was able to work for her she should be obliged to nobody. He therefore took a little cottage for her on the edge of the forest, carried her to it, and got into the service of a farmer in the neighborhood as a day laborer. His mother lived nine years after this; during which time he maintained her with great cheerfulness and kindness; nor had she ever assistance from any other person. He denied himself every little indulgence wh. young men of that age often take, th. he might maintain his mother. — *Whitecross*.

genealogy of Boaz

a Mat. i. 3, 4; Lu iii. 33.

18-22. (18) generations, descendants. This list is imperfect; comp. lists in 1 Chr. ii. 9-12; Mat. i. 3-5. Hezron, Ge. xvi. 12; Nu. xxvi. 21. (19) Ram, *Aram.* 1 Chr. ii. 9, 25. Amminadab, Ex. vi. 23. (20) Salmon, *Salma*, 1 Chr. ii. 11, 51, 54. (21) Boaz, whose mother was *Rahab* of Jericho. Matt. i. 5.

Be the day short, or seem so long, At length it ringeth its even-song.

— *Heywood*.

Children. — How often the children are messengers of God, bringing new life into the household as here. There is a fountain of love enclosed in the heart of the aged, and it only needs the tiny infant fingers of some dear one's child to unloose it. — *Hom. Com.*

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

[691]

Introduction to the two Books of Samuel.

I. Title, Samuel, called in the LXX. the 1st and 2d Bks. of Kings, or of the Kingdoms; called in the Vulg. 1st and 2d Bks. of Kings; called by Jerome the Bks. of the Kingdoms. In the Heb. MSS. the Bks. of Sam. are represented as one Bk., entitled "The Bk. of Samuel," or "Samuel." **II. Author** unknown. The books were prob. compiled from more ancient sources not later than ab. 700 B. C. **III. Contents.** "The 1st Bk. of Sam. contains the hist. of the Jewish church and polity fr. the birth of Sam., during the judicature of Eli, to the death of Saul, the first K. of Israel: a period of ab. 100 years, fr. B. C. 1117 to 1017. **IV. Scope.** *Twofold.* 1st. To continue the hist. of the Israelites under the last two Judges, Eli and Sam., and their first monarch Saul, and the reason why their form of government was changed fr. an aristocracy to a monarchy. 2d. To exhibit the preservation of the Church of God amidst all the vicissitudes of the Israelitish polity; together with signal instances of the Divine mercy towards those who feared Jehovah, and of judgments inflicted upon His enemies" (*Horne*). "The Bks. of Samuel bear distinct evidence of being, to a certain extent, a compilation from earlier sources. The only source actually named is 'The Bk. of Jasher,' *i. e.* The Bk. of the Upright,' from which David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, entitled 'The Song of the Bow,' is quoted. If the conjecture that that book was a collection of historical poems be well grounded, it is possible that the other poetical compositions contained in the Bks. of Samuel may have been borrowed from it. These poems consist of — (1) Hannah's Song of Thanksgiving (1 Sa. xi. 1-10); (2) David's Lament (2 Sa. i. 19-27); (3) David's Dirge (2 Sa. iii. 33, 34); (4) David's Song of Thanksgiving (2 Sa. xxii.); (5) The Last Words of David (2 Sa. xxiii. 1-7). There is no reasonable doubt that these are genuine poetical utterances of the persons whose names they bear, and that the occasions of their composition are correctly assigned." — *Canon Venables*.

Synopsis.

(According to Horne.)

PART I.—Judicature of Eli.

- Sect. i.* Birth of Samuel, etc. i., ii.
Sect. ii. Call of Samuel. iii.
Sect. iii. Death of Eli. iv.

PART II.—Judicature of Samuel.

- Sect. i.* The Ark. v., vi.
Sect. ii. Reformation of worship. vii.
Sect. iii. Saul anointed, etc. viii.—xi.
Sect. iv. Samuel's resignation of supreme
judicial power, etc. xii.

PART III.—The History of Saul.

- Sect. i.* Prosperity xiii., xiv.
Sect. ii. Rejection of Saul. xv.
Sect. iii. David to death of Saul. xvi.—
xxviii.

- (a) David anointed king. xvi.
Victory over Goliath. xvii.

- (b) Persecutions by Saul. xviii.
David's flight. xix.
Jonathan's friendship. xx.
David in Nob and Moab. xxi.—
xxii. 1-4.

- Priests of Nob—Abiathar, xxii.
5-23

- (c) Keilah liberated. xxiii. 1-6
David in Ziph and Maon. xxiii.
7-29

- Engedi. D. spares Saul. xxiv.
Nabal. xxv.
Saul spared again. xxvi.
David at Gath. xxvii.

Sect. iv. Last acts of Saul.

- (a) Witch of Endor. xxviii.
(b) Philistines and David. xxix.
(c) David and Amalekites. xxx.
(d) Suicide of Saul. xxxi.

(According to Keil and Delitzsch.)

SECT. I.—Judicial Office of Samuel.

- (a) The times and doom of Eli. .i., ii.
(b) The call of Samuel. iii.
(c) Fulfilment of doom of Eli. . . iv.
(d) Chastisement of Philistines. .v.—
vii. 14.

SECT. II.—Election to reject. of Saul.

- (a) Saul elected. viii.—xii.
(b) His reign and rejection. xiii.—xv.

SECT. III.—Decline of the Kingdom.

- The anointing of David, and his
conflicts with Saul, etc. xvi.—
xxxi.

(According to Ayre.)

PART I.—The hist. and administration of Samuel. i.—vii.

PART II.—The estab. of monarchy and hist. of Saul's reign. viii.—xxx.

Including

- i. Saul's advancement and adminis-
tration till his rejection. viii.—
xv.
ii. His downward course till his death,
xvi.—xxx.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

1-3. (1) **Ramathaim**, dual form of *Ramah*,^a meaning either the two hills, or the upper and lower city. There were five cities with this name. Probably the Arimathæa of the gospels. **Elkanah**, *acquired by God*. **Jeroham**, etc., 1 Chr. vi. 26, 27. **Ephrathite**, R. V., "Ephraimite." This refers to Elkanah and designates the country where he lived, not his tribe, cf. Josh. xxi. 20. (2) **Hannah**, *grace, favor*. **no children**, the trial which Hannah had to bear was peculiarly heavy, as is well known, to a Hebrew woman: To have no child was not only a disappointment, but seemed to mark one out as dishonored by God. — *Exp. B.* (3) **yearly**, *lit.* from year to year. **Lord of hosts**, this title of Jehovah which, with some variations, is found upwards of 260 times in the O. T., occurs here for the first time. It is probably with reference to the idolatrous worship of the Host of Heaven that the title *the Lord of Hosts* was given to the true God, as asserting His universal supremacy. (See Neh. ix. 6.) — *Spk. Com.* **Shiloh**, Jos. xviii. 1. **Eli**, of family of *Ithamar*. **two sons**, etc., Eli had made his sons priests, while he acted simply as judge. How long a space of time elapsed between the rude heroism of Samson's days and Eli's orderly government in church and state we do not know, but the difference in the condition of things is vast. — *Pulp. Com.*

The names of women and slaves (vs. 2). — The names the Eastern people give to women and slaves appear to us to be oftentimes not a little odd; something of the same kind may, however, be remarked in the Scriptures, though they are there more frequently of the devout kind. The author of the *History of Ali Bey* mentions a female, whose name, *Laal*, signified ruby. One of the wives of Elkanah, the father of the prophet Samuel, seems to have been named in the same way, for such was the meaning of the word *Peninnah*. The plural word, *peninim*, signifies rubies, or precious stones that are red (Lam. iv. 7). If both these ladies were called by names that in their respective languages signified a ruby, probably both one and the other were so denominated, either from the floridness of their complexion, or, on the contrary, to a ruby tint, for it may be understood either way. — *Burder*.

4-8. (4) **portions**, the offerer received back part of his peace-offerings; these he and his friends ate at a social feast. (5) **worthy**, or double portion; Eastern way of showing special favor.^c (6) **adversary**,^c rival. (7) **Read, and so she did year by year**. (8) **better**, etc., reminding her of his special tenderness and goodness. Cf. Ruth iv. 15.

Suffering brought on by causing others to suffer. — To suffer in the tenderest part of one's nature is no doubt a heavy affliction. But to have a heart eager to inflict such suffering on another is far more awful. Young people that sting a comrade when out of temper, that call him names, that reproach him with his infirmities, are far more wretched and pitiable creatures than those whom they try to irritate. It has always been regarded as a natural proof of the holiness of God that He has made man so that there is a pleasure in the exercise of his amiable feelings, while his evil passions, in the very play of them, produce pain and misery. Lady Macbeth is miserable over the murdered king, even while exulting in the triumph of her ambition. Torn by her heartless and reckless passions, her bosom is like a hell. The tumult in her raging soul is like the writhing of an evil spirit. — *Exp. Bib.*

9-11. (9) **had eaten**, comp. vs. 7. Evidently Hannah sat down to the feast, but had no heart to eat much. **by a post**, his seat was put at entrance of the inner court. **temple**, tabernacle. (11) **vowed a vow**,^c seeking to urge her prayer, by devoting her child wholly to God. As a Levite he would only serve God fr. 30 to 50; Samuel was to serve God all his days. **Razor**, Nu. vi. 5, the Nazirite vow, also perpetual.

A praying mother. — I. A burdened heart: Having a family was regarded by Jewish women as a sign of God's favor and blessing, so it was a cause of reproach to have no family. In this case the reproach was kept up by the second wife. II. The burden rolled on God: We read about "Casting care on God." How shall we do it? As Hannah did; by fervent, earnest, believing, heart prayer. III. A time of waiting for God: Who may not always answer at once. In what spirit should we wait and watch unto prayer? Hannah's spirit of strong and cheerful faith. Quite sure that the

B. C. citr. 1117.

Elkanah and his wives

^a "Ramah in the land of Zuph, among the mountains of Ephraim." — *Ewald*

b 1 Chr. xxiv. 3.

"There is no better heritage than a good name that a father can bequeath to his children, and there are few influences on society more wholesome than the fame of its worthies. The names of Luther and Knox, of Hampden and Washington, of Schwartz and Eliot, are still doing good in the world. Nor is there in a family any richer heirloom than the memory of a noble ancestor." — *J. Hamilton*.

the grief of the childless Hannah

^c Ge. xliii. 34. ^d "Observe the evil effects of polygamy." — *Wordsworth*.

"Nothing is so glorious in the eyes of mankind, and ornamental to human nature, setting aside the infinite advantages which arise from it, as a strong, steady, masculine piety."

Hannah's prayer for a son

^e For length of service required of the Levites see Nu. viii. 24, 25.

For vows of women, see Nu. xxx. 6-16.

"Against diseases here the strongest fence is the defensive virtue, abstinence." — *Her- rick*.

B. C. cir. 1117.

"Intemperance is a dangerous companion. It throws people off their guard; betrays them to a great many indecencies, to ruinous passions, to disadvantages in fortune; makes them discover secrets, drive foolish bargains, engage in play, and often to stagger from the tavern to the stew." — *Jeremy Collier*

"If you do not know what the hunger is you do not know what the prayer is. You cannot feel as Hannah did without you have been in great straits, and when for the time you have been the willing victim of a glowing and grand desire." — *Peop. Bib.*

Eli reproves Hannah

Good Parents.—Abraham (Gen. xviii. 19); Jacob (Gen. xxiii. 32, etc.); Joseph (Gen. xlviii. 13-20); mother of Moses (Ex. ii. 2, 3); Manoah (Jud. xiii. 8); Hannah (1 Sam. i. 28); David (2 Sam. xviii. 5, 33); Shunammite (2 Kings iv. 19, 20); Job (i. 5); mother of Lemuel (Prov. xxxi. 1); nobleman (John iv. 49); Lois and Eunice (2 Tim. i. 5).

"Destruction lurks within the poisonous dose, a fatal fever, or a purpled nose." — *Soame Jenyns*.

Hannah's pious reply

"Beware, so long as you live, of judging men by their outward appearance." — *La Fontaine*.
 "A man may smile, and smile, and be a villain." — *Shakespeare*.

Lord does hear prayer, and will be sure to give us the blessing, if it is best. IV. Waiting-time ending at last in a precious gift: A son; wiping away Hannah's reproach; a better gift than she thought; what Samuel became.

The vow of the Nazirites.—With her prayer she also makes a twofold vow in case her request is granted. The son given her is, first, to serve not for a stipulated number of years, as was the law with the Levites (Num. iv. 3), but for life; and, secondly, he is to be a Nazirite. We gather from Num. vi. 2 that Moses found this singular institution in existence, and only regulated it, and admitted it into the circle of established and legalized ordinances. Essentially it was a consecration to God, a holy priesthood, but not a sacrificing priesthood, nor one by right of birth, as the Aaronic, but personal, and either for a limited period, or for life. During the continuance of the vow, a Nazirite might (1) partake of no produce of the vine, signifying thereby abstinence from self-indulgence and carnal pleasure. He might (2) take no part in mourning for the dead, even though they were his nearest relatives, because his holier duties raised him above the ordinary joys and sorrows, the cares and occupations of every-day life. Lastly, no razor might come upon his head, the free growing hair being at once the distinctive mark by which all men would recognize his sacred calling, and also a sign that he was not bound by the usual customs of life. By Hannah's first vow Samuel was devoted to service in the sanctuary, by the second to a holy consecrated life. This institution remained in existence unto our Lord's days; for John the Baptist was also consecrated to God as a Nazirite by his mother, though not as Samuel, also given to minister in the temple.—*Pulpit Com.*

12-14. (12) marked, noticed, watched. (13) lips moved, involuntarily, as if framing the prayer she offered. (14) drunken, this expression hints at one of the evils of that age, wh. was not uncommon at the feasts. It must have been terrible for her to find, when the high priest spoke to her, that it was to insult her, and accuse her of an offense against decency itself from which her very soul would have recoiled. Well meaning, but weak and blundering, Eli never made a more outrageous mistake. — *Exp. B.*

A praying mother.—Children who are blessed with parents that pray for them should be very thankful, as they are delivered from many evils into which others fall. Augustine, who lived many hundred years ago, and was a very eminent preacher and writer, had a mother who was eminent for piety, and endeavored to instil into his infant mind the doctrines of Divine truth, recommending what she taught by a holy life. But he was sinful, and was led away by evil companions into great transgressions. His mother continued to pray constantly and earnestly for him. She applied to a good Christian minister to talk with him, who, after much conversation, assured her that her prayers and tears could not be lost. Those prayers were indeed at length heard; the preaching of another minister brought him to a state of seriousness and prayer, and he became a very holy and useful man.

Misinterpretation of spiritual phenomena.—In the days of martyrdom those who faced death with joyful courage, being filled with the power of the Spirit of God, were sometimes charged by their enemies, or by those who had never drunk at the same fountain of Divine comfort, with being in league with the devil and with being supported by him. Uncommon spiritual phenomena, like any uncommon phenomenon in the natural world, are always liable to be wrongly interpreted and to be attributed to a wrong source by those who are utterly ignorant in such matters. Festus could only account for Paul's enthusiasm concerning Jesus of Nazareth by — "*Paul, thou art beside thyself, much learning doth make thee mad*" (Acts xxvi. 24). — *Hom. Com.*

15-18. (15) drunk neither, in such a way as to cause what you have noticed. poured out, in passionate entreaties. (16) Belial, i. e., a worthless or wicked woman. grief, R. V., "provocation," cf. vs. 6. De. xiii. 13. (17) thy petition, whatever it may be. (18) find grace, think of me more worthily.

Not to judge by appearances. —

Judge not; the workings of his brain
 And of his heart thou canst not see;
 What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
 In God's pure light may only be

A scar, brought from some well-won field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield.
The look, the air, that frets thy sight,
May be a token, that below
The soul has closed in deadly fight
With some infernal fiery foe,
Whose glance would scorch thy smiling grace,
And cast thee shuddering on thy face!—*Proctor.*

B. C. *chr.* 1117.

"How little do they see what is, who frame their hasty judgments upon that which seems."—*Southey.*

19—23. (19) worshipped, with a parting act of devotion. (20) wherefore, *R. V.*, "and." Samuel, heard of God.^a Hearing prayer is the law of His kingdom. Old Testament and New alike bear witness to this. Every verse of the Psalms proclaims it. Alike by precept and example our Lord constantly enforced it. Every apostle takes up the theme, and urges the duty and the privilege. — *Exp. B.* (21) yearly sacrifice, *vs.* 3. vow, not prob. a special one. Or he might intend to fulfil that made by Hannah. (22) not up, until she could fulfil her vow as she contemplated. weaned,^b that so he might be left. for ever, for his whole life. (23) establish his word, *i. e.*, "the Lord fulfil his designs," of wh. the "birth of Samuel was the promise and the prelude."

the birth of Samuel

^a *Fr. shama*, to hear, and *El*, God.

Saving the children. — A few years ago, a steamer was coming from California. The cry of "Fire, fire!" suddenly thrilled every heart. Every effort was made to stay the flames; but in vain. It soon became evident that the ship must be lost. The only thought now was self-preservation. The burning mass was headed for the shore, which was not far off. A passenger was seen buckling his belt of gold around his waist, ready to plunge into the waves. Just then a pleading voice arrested him, "Please, sir, can you swim?" A child's blue eyes were piercing into his deepest soul as he looked down upon her. "Yes, child, I can swim." "Well, sir, won't you please to save me?" "I cannot do both," he thought, "I must save the child and lose the gold. But a moment ago, I was anxious for this whole ship's company: now I am doubting whether I shall exchange a human life for paltry gold." Unbuckling the belt he cast it from him, and said, "Yes, little girl, I will try to save you." Stooping down, he bade her clasp her arms around his neck. "Thus child; not so tight as to choke me. There, hang on now, and I will try to make to the land." The child bowed herself on his broad shoulders, and clung to her deliverer. With a heart thrice strengthened, and an arm thrice nerved, he struck out for the shore. Wave after wave washed over them; but still the brave man held out, and the dear child held on, until a mighty mountain billow swept the sweet treasure from his embrace, and cast him senseless on the bleak rocks. Kind hands ministered to him. Recovering his consciousness, the form of the dear child met his earliest gaze, bending over him with more than angel ministrations, and blessing him with mute but eloquent benedictions.

^b *Heb.* mothers, as elsewhere in the E. usually suckled their children till the age of two years complete, sometimes till the age of three. The Persians suckle boys two years and two months, and girls two years."—*Spk. Com.*

"They who provide much wealth for their children, but neglect to improve them in virtue, do like those who feed their horses high, but never train them to the menage."—*Socrates.*

24—28. (24) three bullocks, the Sept. and the Syriac read, "one bullock of three years old." The proportion of flour however better agrees with three bullocks. We may conjecture that one was intended for a burnt-offering, one for the "sacrifice in performing a vow," and one for a peace-offering. See *Num.* xv. 8. — *Cam. B.* bottle, *i. e.* a skin-bottle. wine, *Nu.* xxviii. 14. (25) bullock, for burnt-offering. (26) thy soul liveth, form of oath peculiar to this book and *Kings*. (27) petition, *vs.* 11. (28) lent, *R. V.*, "granted," the word *lent* spoils the meaning. Hannah really in these two verses uses the same verb four times, though in different conjugations, and the same sense must be maintained throughout. Her words are, "For this child I prayed, and Jehovah hath given me my asking which I asked of him; and I also have given back what was asked to Jehovah; as long as he liveth he is asked for Jehovah." — *Pulp. Com.* he worshipped, several ancient authorities read "they worshipped."

Samuel is brought to Shiloh

A young minister, when about to be ordained, stated that at one period of his life he was nearly an infidel. "But," said he, "there was one argument in favor of Christianity which I could never refute, — the consistent conduct of my father."

The gift and the loan (*vs.* 27). — The child Samuel — I. Was asked of the Lord. From the story observe — 1. It must be quite lawful to ask from God things which He has not expressly promised in His Word; 2. Children are gifts of God, and very sweet blessings; 3. Let children learn lessons from their names. II. Was lent to the Lord. Remark — 1. That we can give to God only what we first receive from Him; 2. We ought to give to God again all we receive from Him; 3. When we ask earthly good, it should be with the view of serving; 4. When God borrows, it is for our advantage. — *Edmond.*

"'Tis education forms the common mind; just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined."—*Pope.*

B. c. 1117.

There is one wish ruling over all mankind, and it is a wish which is never in a single instance granted; each man wishes to be his own master. It is a boy's beatific vision, and it remains the grown-up man's ruling passion to the last. But the fact is, life is a service—the only question is, Whom will we serve? — *F. W. Faber.*

"God so loved that he gave." He lives to give. We are not his children if we do not in our little degree throw back in feeble imitation that infinite giving. — *Joseph Parker.*

Hannah's song of praise — she extols the knowledge of God

a Comp. songs of women in Ex. xv. 20, 21; Ju. v.; and Lu. i. 46-55.

b Ps. xviii. 2, 31, 46; xix. 14; xxviii. 1.

"To exalt the horn" signifies "to raise to a position of power or dignity." *Cp.* Ps. lxxxix. 17; cxlviii. 14. The figure is probably derived from horned animals, tossing their heads in the air, and there is no allusion to the horns worn by woman in the East at the present day. — *Cam. B.*

Hannah.—Note—*I.* The vows which she made in sorrow were conscientiously performed. This indicates — 1. The sincerity; 2. warmth; 3. The self-denying character of her devotions. *II.* The answer which God vouchsafed to her prayer was returned to Him as an offering. This act — 1. Expresses the liveliest sense of her obligation; 2. Requires the exercise of the strongest faith; 3. Indicates right views of God's service. *III.* The pious aspirations of her heart met with the most gratifying response. — *T. H. Hughes.*

Samuel :—

"The boy was vowed
Unto the temple service. By the hand
She led him, and her silent soul, the while,
Oft as the dewy laughter of his eye
Met her sweet serious glance, rejoiced to think
That aught so pure, so beautiful, was hers,
To bring before her God.

I give thee to thy God — the God that gave thee
A well-spring of deep gladness to my heart!
And precious as thou art,
And pure as dew of Hermon, he shall have thee,
My own, my beautiful, my undefiled!
And thou shalt be his child.

Therefore, farewell! — I go, my soul may fail me,
As the stag panteth for the water brooks,
Yearning for thy sweet looks.

But thou, my first-born, droop not, nor bewail me!
Thou in the Shadow of the Rock shalt dwell,
The Rock of Strength. — Farewell!" — *Mrs. Hemans.*

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-3. (1) **prayed**, her words are both a prophecy and a song.^a **mine horn**, this fig. is first used here; see 2 Sa. xxii. 3. **mouth is enlarged**, for triumph and joy. **thy salvation**, Hannah gloried in her son chiefly as the answer and gift of God. (2) **rock**,^b applied to God's first De. xxxii. 4, etc., "conveys ideas of strength, permanence, immutability, and withal of protection and shelter." (3) **Talk**, etc., as in ch. i. 6, 7. **arrogancy**, undue assumption of importance.

The song of Hannah. — A brief analysis will help to explain the connection of thought. "JEHOVAH is the sole author of my deliverance. He shall be the theme of my song.—There is none to be compared with Him for holiness, power, faithfulness; be silent before him, all ye proud boasters! He knows your thoughts and weighs your actions.—Observe the vicissitudes of human fortune: the haughty are humbled, the humble exalted: this is JEHOVAH'S doing: for He is the Almighty Governor of the universe. He guides and guards His saints, and destroys the wicked.—May He finally discomfit his adversaries, judge the world, and establish the kingdom of His Anointed One!" — *Cam. B.*

Types and emblems of praise. — 1. Praise is the *rent* we owe to God; and the larger the farm, the greater should be the rent paid, — *G. S. Bowes.* 2. The word rendered *Praise* primarily signifies the *irradiations* of a luminous body. The high ambition of a penitent soul is that of becoming a reflector, from which the glories of the Sun of Righteousness may be more widely diffused on the world. — *Salter.* 3. The whole course and series of Divine Providence toward the saints is like a music book in every leaf whereof there is a song already pricked for them to learn and sing to the praise of their God. — *Gurnall.* 4. By an ingenious contrivance near some of the collieries, the full and empty carriages or vessels being connected together, those which have been emptied are from time raised up an ascent by the descending of those which are full. In this way let the descent of God's mercies raise your empty vessels to receive again from his inexhaustible treasury all that you need. — *Bickersteth.*

4—7. (4) bows, etc.,^a Hannah reaches beyond her own circumstances to use highly poetic and figure language. (5) full, rich and powerful. hired, etc., as vs. 36. and Eze. xiii. 19. ceased, from hunger. seven,^b not exactly seven, but many. (6) to the grave, fig. for the lowest condition of degradation and misery.^c (7) maketh rich, De. viii. 18.

The fall of Cardinal Wolsey. — Men, even the best of men, thanked God for that fall. Not that it gave them pleasure to see a poor wretch who had been clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, reduced to so pitiful a plight; but because they felt it a righteous thing and a wholesome thing that so proud and so wicked a career should be terminated by a conspicuous manifestation of the displeasure of God. The best instincts of men's nature longed for a check to the monstrous pride and wicked avarice of that man; and when that check was given, and given with such tremendous emphasis, there was not an honest man or woman in all England who did not utter a hearty "Praise God!" when they heard the terrible news. — *Exp. Bib.*

The accuracy of Divine judgment. — There is a machine in the Bank of England which receives sovereigns, as a mill receives grain, for the purpose of determining wholesale whether they are of full weight. As they pass through, the machinery, by unerring laws, throws all that are light to one side, and all that are of full weight to another. That process is a silent but solemn parable for me. Founded as it is, upon the laws of nature, it affords the most vivid similitude of the certainty which characterizes the judgment of the great day. There are no mistakes or partialities to which the light may trust; the only hope lies in being of standard weight before they go in. — *Arnot.*

8—11. (8) Comp. Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. pillars, etc.,^d fig. taken fr. a palace or temple. Foundations. The word rendered pillars is rare, being found only here and in ch. xiv. 4. In both places the ancient versions are uncertain, as to its signification, but in the latter it can only mean a crag, or mass of rock. If then, the rock masses of the earth are Jehovah's, and he can lift up and poise upon them the inhabited world, how much more easily can he raise up a man! — *Pulp. Com.* (9) silent, i. e. perish. by strength, of self-reliance, and self-effort, as opposed to trust in God.^e (10) thunder, ch. vii. 10. his king, prophetic of time when there would be a king, or refer, to Messiah. exalt the horn, as vs. 1. (11) minister, in way indic. in vs. 18, sharing in the usual services of the Levites, who waited on the priests. before, under his general supervision, not as a personal servant.

Strength by the way (vs. 9). — The way is — I. Rugged: no smooth, level highway, but rough and hilly. II. Intricate: it winds and turns in directions apparently the opposite of that which leads to the heavenly city. III. Dark: were it not for the pillar-cloud the travelers would despair. IV. Dangerous: a land of deserts and of enemies. V. Lonely: the crowds of earth walk in other paths. VI. Sad: through much tribulation they are to enter the kingdom. — *Cameron.* *The saints' keeper* (vs. 9). — I. The Christian as a traveler: three dangers. 1. Wandering; 2. Stumbling; 3. Failing through weakness. II. What God will do for His saints: "keep," etc. 1. Guidance; 2. Preservation from sin; 3. Protection. How He will do this. By — 1. Constant watchfulness; 2. Infusion of grace and strength; 3. Sometimes removing the hindrances; 4. Strengthening principles of grace. IV. Why He will do so. Because — 1. He has set His love upon them; 2. Their holiness is of great value in His sight; 3. They are very costly objects of affection; 4. He has solemnly engaged to do so.

Honoring the worthy poor. — When it was his purpose to present His church with an unrivalled picture of the Christian pilgrimage, its dangers and trials, its joys, its sorrows, and its triumphs, the artist appointed to the task was John Bunyan, the tinker of Elstow. When the object was to provide a man that would open the great continent of Africa to civilization and Christianity, and who needed, in order to do this, to face dangers and trials before which all ordinary men had shrunk, he found his agent in a poor spinner-boy, who was working twelve hours a day in a cotton mill on the banks of the Clyde. "Poor and pious parents," wrote David Livingstone on the tombstone of his parents at Hamilton, when he wished to record the grounds of his thankfulness for the position in life which they held. "I would not exchange my peasant father for any king," said Thomas Carlyle, when he thought of the gems of Christian worth that had shone out all the brighter amid the hard conditions of his father's life. — *Exp. Bib.*

B. C. cir. 1111.

she notes
the changes
in human
life

a Comp. Ps.
xxxvii. 24; cxlv.
14; Mi. vii. 8.

b Ru. iv. 15; Ps.
cxlii. 9; Je. xv. 9.
c De. xxxii. 39.

In Jehovah's hand
are the issues of
life and death,
prosperity and adversity.
All history
illustrates this
truth. Hezekiah
is recalled from
the gates of the
grave; Job is tried
by affliction; David
is taken from the
sheepfolds to be king; Nebuchadnezzar sinks to the level of a beast.

Samuel left
in the care
of Eli

d "The will of God
is the base or column on wh. the
earth rests." —
Wordsworth.

e Zec. iv. 6; 2 Co.
xii. 9.

The reason why
answers to prayer
are not oftener
immediate is because
our faith
does not call for
an immediate answer.
True faith
is not surprised at
instant answers,
nor dismayed if
they be delayed.
Dan. ix. 20-23; x.
12; Ps. cxlv. 18;
19; Acts iv. 31;
Luke xviii. 1-7;
xxi. 36; Eph. vi. 18.
"All of us, who
are worth anything,
spend our
manhood in un-
learning the follies
or expiating the
mistakes, of our
youth." — *Shelley.*

"A drunkard is not
profitable for any
kind of good service." — *Plato.*

B. C. cir. 1111.

the godless
sons of Elia Comp. Le. vii.
31-35; De. xviii. 3.

Plato, seeing a child do mischief, went and corrected the father for it; and a recent writer truly remarks: Childhood is like the mirror, catching and reflecting images all around it. Evil or idle words uttered by parents may operate upon a young heart like a careless spray of water thrown upon polished steel, staining it with rust which no after scouring can efface.

Samuel
ministers to
the Lordb Ex. xxviii. 4-35;
Ju. viii. 27; xvii. 5;
xviii. 14-20.

c "Worn under the ephod, and appears to have reached the feet. It had a hole for the head, and slits in the sides for the arms to come through, but no sleeves. The *meil* was also worn by kings, princes and nobles." — *Spk. Com.* Comp. Le. viii. 7.

Hooker used to say, "If I had no other reason and motive for being religious, I should earnestly strive to be so for the sake of my aged mother, that I might requite her care of me, and cause the widow's heart to sing for joy."

Samuel
grows in
favor with
God and
man

d "Women dedicated to service of the sanctuary." — *Wordsworth* "An institution of holy women of a strictly ascetic order." — *Jamieson*,
e Lu. ii. 52.

12-17. (12) sons of Belial, cf. i. 16. (13) seething, boiling. fleshhook, to take the portion belonging to the offerer, as well as that due to the priest.^a (14) all, not confining themselves to the part appointed for the priest. (15) burnt the fat, Le. vii. 23-25, 31, the fat was burnt by the priest, not by the offerer. (16) presently, immediately, at least on same day. The priests acted violently, refusing to make any conditions. (17) young men, i. e. *Hophni and Phinehas*. men abhorred, it being connected with such violence, and dishonored by such attendants,

The headship of the church. — Nothing is more dishonoring to Jesus Christ than a church that is apostate, and worldly and unconsecrated. A man died some years ago, a very eminent literary man, who had a magnificent head, lofty-browed and intellectual, but by a sad misfortune, he had that head upon a crippled body. He was a dwarf, a hunch-back, and you could not look upon him without pity. "What a splendid head!" you would say, "but alas, that it rests upon such an unsightly form!" Shall Jesus Christ be so dishonored that he shall have a body unsanctified and mis-shapen, concerning which the angels might exclaim, "Alas, what a noble head, but what an ignoble body!" — *A. J. Gordon*. *The way to honor* (see vs. 30). — God is the fountain of all honor. It is the height of honor to be honored by God; all those — and only those — who honor God, God will honor. And God is not only graciously forward, but under engagements to honor them that honor him. He says, "I will." If God be the fountain of all honor, and if the height of honor be to be honored by God, and if all those — and only those — who honor God, God will honor, then it must needs follow of itself that it is the shortest way to true honor to honor God. — *D. Evance*. (1659).

18-21. (18) ministered, prob. doing such things as light the lamps, clean the furniture, play the cymbals, and especially wait on the aged Eli. linen ephod, usual dress of priests.^b (19) little coat, Heb. *meil*,^c Ex. xxviii. 31. yearly sacrifice, as ch. i. 3, 7, 21. (20) lent, ch. i. 27, 28; R. V., margin, "for the petition wh. was asked for the Lord." (21) grew, comp. Lu. ii. 40, 52.

The child-priest (vs. 18). — I. Samuel grew before the Lord. In — 1. The Lord's sight; 2. The Lord's smile; 3. The Lord's strength. II. Samuel ministered before the Lord. It was not mere outward service he gave. His young heart was right with God. III. Samuel grew in favor with God and men. God loved this child; and showed his love in many ways. Good men, also, loved Samuel. Conclusion: — For all children let me wish three things. I am anxious that you should — (1) Grow; (2) Work; (3) Be loved. — *T. Edmond*.

A child's attendance at church. — The Rev. John Brown was born in 1722, in the county of Perth, in Scotland. In a narrative of his experience, he remarks, "I reflect on it as a great mercy, that I was born in a family which took care of my Christian instruction, and in which I had the privilege of God's worship morning and evening. About the eighth year of my age, I happened in a crowd, to push into the church at Abernethy, on a Sacrament Sabbath. Before I was excluded, I heard a minister speak much in commendation of Christ; this, in a sweet and delightful manner, captivated my young affections, and has since made me think that children should never be kept out of church on such occasions." — *Whitecross*.

22-26. (22) heard, "used to hear constantly and habitually." assembled, R. V., "did service."^d See Ex. xxxviii. 8. (23) Too mild a way of treating such scandalous sin. (25) if a man, etc. if a man sin against a man, then Elohim shall judge him: but if a man sin against Jehovah, who shall intercede for him? For man's offenses against his fellow-man, there is a third superior party to arbitrate and rectify the wrongs, namely God, or God's representative, the duly appointed judge: but for man's offenses against Jehovah, there is no third superior party to intercede as a mediator. — *Camb. B.* (26) Words applied by Luke to Christ.^e Samuel is contrasted with young priests.

The sons of Eli (vs. 25). — See how the text bears on — I. The extent of God's mercy. Here were two men notorious in wickedness. And if these had only hearkened to their father's reproofs they would have been saved. How great then must God's mercy be. II. The vindication of God's justice. These men were entreaty-proof. Even the kindest, gentlest, almost too deferential of remonstrances, they despised. They both defied God's justice and contemned His mercy. — *Homilist*.

Samuel's ministry.—Samuel did not merely worship and enjoy spiritual training; he ministered before the Lord, and did what he could to make himself useful. "Perhaps," says Matthew Henry, "he attended immediately on Eli's person—was ready to him to fetch and bring as he had occasion; and that is called ministering to the Lord. He could light a candle, or hold a dish, or run on an errand, or shut a door; and because he did this with a pious disposition of mind, it is called *ministering to the Lord*, and great notice is taken of it." We have not now a tabernacle such as there was in Shiloh, nor have we such services as Samuel was called upon to render; but in the church of God there is sphere wide enough for the most active energy, diversified enough for many workers, and simple enough for the youngest to undertake. Common obedience and everyday life, too, receive a consecration from the godly motive. Children, by their infant prayers, have ere now awakened a parent's long silent heart. An infant's hymn has awakened the hardened, and the example of a believing boy has occasioned an older mind to inquire, "What must I do to be saved?"—*Steel.*

27—30. (27) *man of God*, Ju. xiii. 6, 8; ii. 1, a prophet. *thy father, i. e. Aaron.* in . . house? in bondage to. (28) *all the offerings, etc.*, a bountiful provision, the overreaching of wh. plainly showed the covetousness of Eli's sons. (29) *kick ye,*^a fig. taken fr. the overfed beast, wh. becomes unmanageable, and refuses to draw, seeking to throw off the yoke. (30) *for ever,*^b God designs His priesthood to run in Aaron's family permanently. Ex. xix. 9. *be it far fr. me*, God's promises are always conditional upon man's faithful co-operation. "The faithlessness of Eli's sons had broken the covenant."

The way to the highest honor.—I. What it is to honor God. We honor God when—1. Thoughts of Him are sweet to us; 2. His honor is precious in our eyes, and His glory the continual object of desire; 3. We think ourselves honored by His service; 4. We engage ourselves to the utmost for Him, and yet acknowledge our unprofitableness; 5. We ascribe our successes to Him; 6. We seek only the honor that comes from Him as our reward. II. How God honors them that honor Him. He—1. Gives them honorable employment; 2. Keeps them unblemished in adversity and prosperity; 3. Gives them high esteem in the hearts of the faithful; 4. Honors them when others dishonor them; 5. Gives them a sweet and precious name after death; 6. honors them in their posterity. — *W. Strong.*

The pious divinely honored.—He whose heart cleaves to God will show it in his daily conduct. He will honor the Lord with his substance, and with the first-fruits of all his increase. He will worship God with his family, and teach his children "the fear of the Lord." In his place or station he will make it his aim, and hold it his chief end, to glorify God. And without any vaunting or ostentation, he will show his colors—avow his faith and hope openly. The boy king, Edward VI., showed his colors when he sat—alas! for how short a time—on the English throne. So did Sir Matthew Hale on the bench, and Robert Boyle in the royal society, and William Wilberforce in the highest circles of political life. So did Dr. Arnold among the boys at Rugby, and Dr. Arbercrombie and Sir James Simpson among their patients in Edinburgh; Samuel Budgett in his counting-house at Bristol, and General Havelock among his troops in India. These men were not in what are called religious offices; but, in such offices or positions as Providence assigned to them, they bore themselves as religious, God-fearing men. And others there are in places and callings more obscure who are quite as worthy of esteem; those who, in houses of business among scoffing companions, in servants' halls, in work-shops, in barrack-rooms, in ships' forecables, meekly but firmly honor the Lord, and ennoble a lowly calling by fidelity to conscience and to God. — *Pulp. Com.*

31—36. (31) *thine arm*, fig. for strength.^c *an old man*, a great punishment, as length of days was regarded as a great sign of honor. (32) *see an enemy*, R. V., "behold the affliction of my habitation." This seems to refer to the neglect which the tabernacle suffered owing to the loss of the ark, even while the nation was prospering under Samuel and Saul. Such neglect would be a punishment on the house of Eli, because the high-priest for the time would lose his position and influence. — *Cam. B.* (34) *a sign*, and a beginning of the fulfilment, ch. iv. 11. (35) *faithful priest*,^d Samuel is meant, not in

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"It is the order of God to govern the world with two hands, which are justice and mercy. If you take away one of them, you maim Him. It is the condition of human and Divine things, where contraries are ever counterbalanced by contraries." — *Caussen.*

Eli reproved by a man of God

^a De. xxxii. 15. Sept. renders this passage:—"Why have ye looked upon my offering with a shameless eye?"

^b The *for ever* is limited by the continuance of the anointed kings of Israel.

"As the lips burning with thirst drink of the fresh, pure water flowing from the rock, so should the soul thirst after, and drink of the flowing crystal streams, which proceed from the Infinite Fountain of Life." *John Bate.*

"The best way to win renown is not to work for it, not to think of it, but to work for something higher; to work for God and work for man, forgetting self, and by and by, it will be found that both God and man are helping us." — *R. D. Hitchcock.*

doom of house of Eli foretold

^c Ex. vi. 6; Zec. xi. 17; Lu. i. 51.

^d 1 Ki. ii. 27.

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Alexander Severus, the Roman emperor, would never suffer any office of trust or power to be sold, remarking that he who bought would also sell. It was one of the maxims of this monarch that the majesty of the empire was to be supported by virtue, and not by the ostentatious display of wealth or power.

his personal relations, but as the representative of the whole prophetic order. **mine anointed**, refer. to the *Kings* of Is. or to Messiah. (36) **crouch to him**, Zadok and his descendants in office.

The decadence of the priestly office. — It is here clearly implied — I. That the office of priest should not be sought for the sake of material emolument. II. That those who seek it for “a piece of silver and a morsel of bread” must have a low view of the nature and dignity of the office. III. That this low view of the office will be associated with great servility: “crouch.”

A faithful pastor. — Some years ago, the Rev. Dr. Henry Peckwell stepped into a dissecting room and touched one of the dead bodies, forgetting that he had just before accidentally cut his finger. He became diseased, and the doctors who were called in pronounced the accident fatal. At that time worship was held at the tabernacle, Moorfields, on a Friday evening. Conscious of his approaching death, the good man ascended the pulpit, and preached in so powerful a strain as to make many of his audience weep. At the conclusion, he told his hearers that it was his farewell sermon — “not like the ordinary farewell sermons of the world, but more impressive, from the circumstances, than any preached before. My hearers shall long bear it in mind, when this frail earth is moldering in its kindred dust!” The congregation could not conjecture his meaning, but on the following Sabbath an unknown preacher ascended the pulpit, and informed them that their pious minister had breathed his last on the preceding evening.

B. C. cir. 1105.

the call of
Samuel

—
the first call

a“Prophetic vision not open, extended, but contracted on account of sin.” — *Wordsworth.*

“There was no vision promulgated or published.” — *Spk Com.*

“None that were publicly known to have visions.” — *Mat Henry.*

b Ge. xxvii. 1.

c Ex. xxvii. 20, xxx. 8; Le. xxiv. 2.

the second
call

God's Word is like God's world — varied, very rich, very beautiful. You never know when you have exhausted all its secrets. The Bible, like nature, has

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-4. (1) **child**, Josephus says, then twelve years old. He served God through attending on Eli. **precious**, special communications fr. God were infrequent. **no open vision**,^a God had withdrawn Himself back fr. sight bec. of national and priestly sins. There are in Hebrew two words for vision: the one used here refers to such sights as are revealed to the tranced eye of the seer when in a state of ecstasy, while the other is a vision seen by the natural eye. — *Pulp. Com.* (2) **wax dim**, not with sleep, but with old age.^b So Eli needed an attendant like Sam. near him. (3) **lamp**, “the seven-branched candlek., fed with oil every evening;”^c designating the exact time. The morning would be near before the lamp went out. **temple**, word used in this book for the tabernacle, ch. i. 9. (4) **Here am I**, usual response to a call.

The child Samuel. — Samuel was — I. The child of much prayer. She who prayed for him to be, did not fail to pray for him to be **holy**. II. A consecrated child. Given, not only to God, but also to the temple service. III. A converted child: “the Lord was with him.” IV. **tempted child**. He had contact with Eli's sons. V. An honored child. Honored by a vision from God. — *R. A. Griffin.*

Religious training fits for work. — The sailor's child is first taught to handle an oar in the sheltered cove before his father's cottage, in sight of home and within reach of his mother's eye. But this easy exercise is to fit him in after years to move out into the wide ocean and face the perils of the storm, and with a skilful hand pilot his vessel safely over a dangerous sea. The home-life of every well-trained child is a calm and peaceful bay, in which, encircled by loving laws and gentle words, he is being fitted to fight the difficulties and temptations of life outside the charmed circle. In due time he moves out into the vast sea of life, and finds himself in a world altogether different from his childhood's home; but the holy influences that were around him there have fitted him for taking his place and doing his work in the world, so as to glorify God and bless himself and others. — *Hom. Com.*

5-7. (5) **ran**, mark Samuel's alacrity to obey the aged Eli. (6) **thou didst**, no idea of the prophetic office seems yet to have dawned on Sam. (7) **know the Lord**, by special and personal *revelations*. Expression does not deny that he had relig. instruction, or personal piety.

Personal knowledge of God (vs. 7). — I. There may be great religious privileges and much religious instruction without a personal knowledge of God. II. Those who are the subjects of those privileges, etc., are favorably placed for securing this personal knowledge of God. III. In order to personal knowledge the Divine call must be yielded to. IV. Of this call, to know and serve God, we are all the subjects.

How obedience saved. — On one of the railroads of Prussia a pointsman was just taking his place in order to turn a coming train, then in sight, on to a different track, to prevent a collision with a train approaching by a loop line in a contrary direction, when he suddenly discerned his little son playing directly in front of the rapidly advancing engine. What could he do? He might spring to his child and rescue him, but he could not do this and turn the points in time, and for want of that, hundreds of lives might be lost. Although in sore trouble, he could not neglect his greater duty; but crying to his son, "Lie down!" he went to his post. The child, accustomed to obey, did as commanded, and the heavy train thundered over him. Little did the passengers dream, as they found themselves quietly resting on the siding, what terrible anguish their approach had carried to one noble heart. The father rushed forward to where his boy lay, fearful lest he should find only a mangled corpse, but to his joy he found the child alive and unharmed. His prompt obedience had saved him. *Value of promptitude.* — Energy usually displays itself in promptitude and decision. When Ledyard, the traveler, was asked by the African Association when he would be ready to set out for Africa, he promptly answered, "Tomorrow morning." Blucher's promptitude obtained for him the cognomen of "Marshal Forwards" throughout the Prussian army. When John Jervis, afterwards Earl St. Vincent, was asked when he would be ready to join his ship, he replied, "Directly." And when Sir Colin Campbell, appointed to the command of the Indian army, was asked when he could set out, his answer was "To-morrow," an earnest of his subsequent success. For it is rapid decision, and a similar promptitude in action, that so often wins battles. "Every moment lost," said Napoleon, "gives on opportunity for misfortune." — *Smiles.*

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something for every class of mind. Look at the Bible in a new light, and straightway you see some new charms.

"I will hazard the assertion, that no man ever did or ever will become truly eloquent, without being a constant reader of the Bible, and an admirer of the purity and sublimity of its language." — *Fisher Ames.*

8-10. (8) *perceived, etc.*, at first he thought the boy was dreaming. (9) Obs. how wisely Eli left the whole matter to God, and attempted no explanations of what he thought the voice was. (10) *and stood*, this appears to indicate some bodily presence as well as a voice. *as . . . times, i. e.* as before.

Divine calls (vs. 10). — Consider the ways in which Divine calls come to us. I. Perhaps it may be the loss of some dear friend through which the call comes. II. Something occurs to force us to take a part for God or against Him. III. We get acquainted with some one whom God employs to bring before us truths which were closed on us before. IV. We may be in the practice of reading the Scripture carefully, and trying to serve God; and its sense may, as if suddenly, break upon us in a way it never did before. V. It may happen that we find ourselves, how or why we cannot tell, much more able to obey God in certain respects than before. — *J. H. Newman.*

The listening soul. — The self-resigning soul is still and silent before the Lord: lust and corrupt interests, which make a continual noise and clamor in the unregenerate and unresigned by their importunate solicitations, and fill them with din and tumult, are here quieted and silenced; and therefore such a soul is better prepared to hear God coming to it in the "still small voice" (1 Kings xix. 12), as once He did to Elias. Those soft and gentle whispers of the Spirit, those inward manifestations of Himself, are best discerned and attended to in this solemn silence. When the wind is high, and beats upon the windows and doors of the house, it is hard to hear what is said within. All tumultuous and boisterous passions must be calmed, and the soul be in a state of due stillness and tranquillity, to hear what God speaks to it. — *Worthington.*

11-14. (11) *tingle*,^b as if smitten with a sharp blow. The appalling catastrophe thus predicted was the impending defeat of Israel by the Philistines, the death of Eli's sons and Eli himself, the capture of the ark, and the desolation of the national sanctuary. — *Cam. B.* (12) *will perform*, see ch. ii. 27-36. *when I begin, etc.*, proverbial way of saying, I will do it thoroughly. (13) *made themselves vile*, *R. V.*, "did bring a curse upon themselves." *restrained*, it was inexcusable in Eli to allow them to remain. If he had had a right sense of his office he would never for one moment have allowed the interest of his family to outweigh the claims of God. — *Exp. B.* (14) *sacrifice nor offering*, bloody nor unbloody sacrifices.

A strange coincident (vs. 13; also ch. viii. 1. 3). — Samuel declared to Eli God's judgments against him and his sons. Samuel in his old age had the bitter grief of seeing his own sons turn aside from the right way. See these

the third call

a "The glory of the Lord was revealed unto him." — *Targum.*

"Opportunity is like a favoring breeze springing up around a sailing vessel. If the sails be all set, the ship is wafted onward to its port; if the sailors are asleep or ashore, the breeze may die again, and when they would go on they cannot: their vessel stands as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean." — *U. Mag.*

Jean Paul says: "The smallest are nearest God, as the smallest planets are nearest the sun."

God's message to Samuel

b² K¹. xxi. 12; Jer. xix. 3.

c I will go through with the performance from first to last.

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"Parents cannot do God's work, and God will not do theirs; but if they use the means, God will not withhold his blessing." — *A. Clarke.*

And if, in love and wisdom, He should take the things most dear to me, Yet I resigned unto His will, Would praise His name rejoicing still. — *J. A. Torrey.*

'Tis a mercy to have that taken from us which takes us from God. — *Venning.*

Samuel tells the Lord's words to Eli

α Ex. xxvi. 36; xxxvi. 37.

"But peace! I must not quarrel with the will of highest dispensation which herein haply had ends above my reach to know." — *Milton.*

"The question is, not whether God is on our side, but whether we are on the side of God, for He is always in the right." And, we may add, always on the winning side as well.

It is one thing to be childlike and another to be childish.

two families and learn — I. That children are often a source of bitterest distress to the best and holiest parents. II. That parents are not punished by God for their children's sins, unless they have neglected their duty towards them. III. That whatever the conduct of the parents, if the children sin they must suffer the penalty themselves. IV. That men may be placed amidst the most desirable influences, may have the brightest examples, may be surrounded by the most likely circumstances, and after all be far from the kingdom of heaven. — *R. A. Griffin.*

Evidence of parental neglect. — A gentleman once observed an Indian standing at a window, looking into a field where several children were at play. The gentleman asked the interpreter what was the conversation. He answered, "The Indian was lamenting the sad estate of these orphan children." The interpreter inquired of him why he thought them orphans? The Indian with great earnestness replied, "Is not this the day on which you told me the white people worship the Great Spirit? If so, surely these children, if they had parents, or any person to take care of them, would not be suffered to be out there playing and making such a noise. No! no! they have lost their fathers and mothers, and have no one to take care of them!" — *Whitcross.* *The doom of Eli's house.* — It was night in the sanctuary. The high priest slept in one of the adjacent chambers, and the attendant ministers in another. In the centre, on the left of the entrance, stood the seven-branched candlestick, now mentioned for the last time, superseded in the reign of Solomon by the ten separate candlesticks, but revived after the captivity by the copy of the one candlestick with seven branches, as it is still seen on the arch of Titus. It was the only light of the tabernacle during the night, was solemnly lighted every evening as in the devotions of the Eastern world, both Mussulman and Christian, and extinguished just before morning, when the doors were opened. In the deep silence of that early morning, before the sun had risen, when the sacred light was still burning, came through the mouth of the innocent child the doom of the house of Ithamar. — *Stanley.*

15-18. (15) opened the doors, evidently one of Sam.'s ministries. The door was prob. the *hanging curtain* covering the entrance. *vision*, it is something more than a voice; there was an objective presence; it is called, not *hazon*, a sight seen when it a state of ecstasy, but *mareh*, something seen when wide awake, and in the full, calm possession of every faculty. — *Pulp. Com.* (16) Eli called, no doubt observing how the boy seemed to shrink from him. What . . . thee? in the Heb. the word "Lord" is wanting. Eli would hear the message first before he ascribed it to Jehovah. (17) God do so to thee, Ru. i. 17. (18) every whit, the whole communication. It is the Lord, Eli convinced of the Divine authorship, submits without a murmur to the fearful judgment. Eli was memorable for the passive virtues. He could bear much, though he could dare little. He could submit, but he could not fight. We find him here meekly recognizing the Divine will. — *Exp. B. let . . . good*, comp. Job. i. 21, ii. 10.

Eli's submission to the Divine rebukes. (vs. 18). — Consider — I. The fidelity of Samuel. II. The resignation of Eli. Learn — (1) The importance of exerting our influence for God; 2. The comfort of being interested in the Gospel of Christ. — *Simeon.*

Eli's behavior to Samuel. — We are touched by this behavior of Eli. First we are touched by his bearing toward Samuel. He knows that God has conferred an honor on Samuel which He has not bestowed on him, but young though Samuel is he feels no jealousy, he betrays no sign of wounded pride. It is not easy for God's servants to bear being passed over in favor of others, in favor of younger men. A feeling of mortification is apt to steal on them, accompanied with some bitterness toward the object of God's preference. This venerable old man shows nothing of that feeling. He is not too proud to ask Samuel for a full account of God's message. He will not have him leave anything out of regard to his feelings. He must know the whole, however painful it may be. He has learned to reverence God's truth, and he cannot bear the idea of not knowing all. And Samuel, who did not wish to tell him anything, is now constrained to tell him the whole. "He told him every whit, and hid nothing from him." He did not shun to declare to him the whole counsel of God. Admirable example for all God's servants! How averse some men are to hear the truth! And how prone are we to try to soften what is disagreeable in our message to sinners — to take off the sharp

edge and sheathe it in generalities and possibilities. It is no real kindness.
— *Exp. Bib.*

B. C. cir. 1105.

19-21. (19) his words, prophetic words. (20) Dan . . to Beersheba, Ju. xx. 1. (21) appeared again, drawing near again; now there was a faithful one through whom he might speak. He continued to reveal Himself to Samuel by the Word of the Lord. The state described in vs. 7, was henceforth reversed. Samuel now knew the Lord, and the Word of the Lord was revealed unto him. — *Spk. Com.* word, etc., “by prophetic inspiration.

Early piety (vs. 19). — I. The way by which you may endeavor to win the hearts of your children to God. 1. The first lesson to be taught the child is — to obey; 2. Establish and maintain a constant intercourse between your little one's heart and God; 3. Teach your child its dependence on its Creator for life and all enjoyment; 4. Teach it that God is holy, and, consequently, displeased with sin. II. Some dangers which lie in the path. 1. Do not neglect to cultivate amiable and honorable feelings in your child; 2. Be not too eager for your children to say that they hope they have commenced a life of piety; 3. Be not too ready to believe that their hearts are changed; 4. When you have once cherished hope of their piety be very slow to abandon it; 5. Take care lest the influence of your example, or of some of your measures of government, should encourage evil principles in their hearts; 6. Above all things, be honest and sincere in your efforts to promote their piety. III. Motives to fidelity in the discharge of these duties. 1. God has placed in your hands an influence over your children which is almost boundless; 2. The influence which you now exert upon them will react, after many years, with prodigious power upon yourselves; 3. Remember that you will soon be separated from them. — *J. Abbott.*

Revealed (vs. 21). — This is perhaps with one exception, the earliest use of the word which has since become the name for all Divine communication. On one or two occasions the idea is conveyed in a more precise form, “The Lord uncovered the ear” (chap. ix. 15), a touching and significant figure, taken from the manner in which the possessor of a secret moves back the long hair of his friend, and whispers into the ear thus laid bare the word that no one else may hear. The term “revelation,” thence appropriated in the theological language both of the East and West, when thus seen in its primitive form, well expresses the truly philosophical and universal idea which ought to be conveyed by it. — *Stanley.*

Samuel
recognized
as a prophet

“Ever and anon amidst the crimes and terrors of the narrative of that troubled time, . . . the scene of the Sacred Story reveals to us, in successive glimpses, the one peaceful, consoling, hopeful image, and we hear the same gentle undersong of childlike, devoted, continuous goodness.” — *Stanley.*

“The childhood shows the man, as morning shows the day.” — *Milton.*

When a friend observed to him that we must run deeper and deeper in grace's debt, he replied, “Oh, yes; and God is a good creditor: He never seeks back the principal sum, and indeed, puts up with a poor annual rent.” — *Life of Rev. John Brown, of Haddington.*

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

1-4. (1) And . . Israel, because Sam. spake by the word of Jehovah, all Israel recognized the prophetic quality. Narrative of this ch. gives the fulfilment of Sam.'s first prophecy, ch. iii. 11-14. Philistines, who appear just now to have made a new incursion. The history is silent about the Philistines from the days of Samson. The last we have heard of them was the fearful tragedy at the death of that great Judge of Israel, when the house fell upon the lords and the people, and such a prodigious slaughter of their great men took place. From that calamity they seem now to have revived. — *Exp. B.* Eben-ezer, this name subseq. given to the place.^a Aphek,^b as Jos. xv. 53, not as 1 Sa. xxix. 1. (2) in array, fit posture to fight. (3) people, i. e. the army wh. had returned discomfited to the camp. There was no organized standing army. elders, a council was held, but neither Eli, nor Sam., were consulted. fetch the ark, either as compelling God's help, not praying for it; or thinking power lay in the symbol.^c (4) dwelleth,^d allusion to Shekinah appearing over mercy-seat. The idea is not that of Jehovah's habitation, but of his seat in state as Israel's King. In bringing the ark they brought to the camp the throne of Jehovah, as the theocratic Ruler. — *Pulp. Com.*

The ark and the judge. — The practical thoughts suggested by this passage may be associated with two principal objects. I The ark of the covenant. 1. The ark at Shiloh: (a) Its godless guardians, holding office for the sake of power and emolument; (b) Not led by their sacred duties to cultivate holiness of heart and life; (c) Considering, when commanded to convey the ark to the camp, the will of man rather than of God; 2. The ark in the camp — (a) Regarded by the Israelites with vain confidence; they thought more of the form than of the spirit of religion; (b) Regarded by the Philistines with

Israel
defeated
by Philistia

B. C. cir. 1095.

a 1 Sa. vii. 12.

b “Situate toward the western frontier of Judah, not very far from Mizpeh, of Benjamin.” — *Spk. Com.*

c Comp. Nu. x. 35; Jos. iii. 11-13.

d Ex. xxv. 22.

“Such an application of the ark was not without example before or after; but it is evidently described as against the higher spirit of the religion which it was intended to support.” — *Stanley.*

B. C. cir. 1095.

"Fear is the last of ills: in time we hate that which we often fear."—*Shakespeare*.

All persons are not discreet enough to know how to take things by the right handle.—*Cervantes*.

the ark brought into the camp of Israel

a Word used by Phil. is *Elohim*, the general name for God, not *Jehovah*, the covenant name.

b Ex. xv. 14.

c Lat., *quietare*, to dismiss, fr. *quietus* quiet, so to meet the claims upon, or expectations entertained of.

See 1 Cor. xvi. 13. Quit in the sense of acquit, to discharge a duty, and so to free oneself fr. the obligation of it, "seem to defend yourself; now quit you well."—*Shakespeare*, "Lear," ii. 1.

"Fear is the tax that conscience pays to guilt."—*Sewell*.

the ark captured by the Philistines

d 1 Sa. ii. 34.

e 2 Sa. xviii. 19-31.

f 2 Sa. i. 2; Job ii. 12.

g "An official chair, similar to those of the ancient Egypt judges, richly carved, superbly ornamented, high, and without a back."—*Jan. leson*.

superstitious dread. II. The aged judge. 1. A father disappointed in his children; 2. A priest overruled in his authority by his sons and the elders; 3. A civil ruler trembling for the fate of his country; 4. An old man—father, priest, judge—awaiting in fear news of the battle; 5. An aged man suddenly struck down by bad news too suddenly told. Learn—(1) Filial disobedience is followed by neglect of religious duty and reverence; (2) We may maintain the form, and neglect the spirit, of true religion. The form without the spirit will not avail us (iii. 14). We may have the ark of God, but is our heart right with God.—*S. S. World*.

Belief in a symbol.—Even superstitious men believe in a supernatural power. And they believe in the possibility of enlisting that power on their side. And the method they take is to ascribe the virtue of a charm to certain external objects with which that power is associated. The elders of Israel ascribed this virtue to the ark. They never inquired whether the enterprise was agreeable to the mind and will of God. They never asked whether in this case there was any ground for believing that the symbol and the reality would go together. They simply ascribed to the symbol the power of a talisman, and felt secure of victory under its shadow.—*Exp. Bib.*

5-9. (5) *earth rang*, as vibrating with the noise. "The appearance of the ark roused, as with spasmodic effort, the sinking spirit of the army." (6) *Hebrews*, the name by which Israel was known to foreigners. (7) *God is come*, the Israelites' God.^a (8) *that smote*, remembrance of the great deliv. fr. Egypt still lingered among the nations.^b *all the plagues*, R. V., "with all manner of smittings." i. e., with utter destruction; ref. to overthrow of Pharaoh's host; cf. Ex. xiii. 20; xiv. 3. (9) *quit*,^c behave yourselves, servants, tributary vassals.

Night and morning.—1. A morning scene. Describe the two armies assembled for battle. Help the description by 1 Sam. xvii. 1-3. As usual, near enough to taunt one another. Then getting the battle in order, and some hours of hand-to-hand fighting. All this is man's skill and bravery, without God. 2. A night scene. Triumph and feasting in Philistine camp, wailing and alarm in camp of Israel. Earnest consultation what was to be done. Plans suggested, but no penitent seeking of God. 3. Next morning's scene. Plan resolved on and put in operation. Ark brought out. Sons of Eli in charge. Eli very anxious. Israel shouting, as if they already had victory. They had with them only God's symbol, not God. 4. Next night's scene. Defeat. Lost ark. Dead priests. Dreadful accident to old Eli. Sad fruits of wrong-doing.—*Hive*.

Napoleon and his soldiers.—As Napoleon's soldiers were standing on an eminence, gazing upon the pyramids of Egypt, just before he made his descent upon the Mamelukes, he cried out, "Soldiers, from the summits of yonder pyramids, forty ages survey your conduct; act like heroes." Ye Christians! fighting for truth and heaven, under the command of Jesus, from the summits of the everlasting hills in heaven, and from the blazing thrones of eternity, ten thousand angels and saints, with the Almighty Sovereign for whom you are fighting, are surveying your conduct. Be strong. Quit you like men. Be valiant for the truth. "Act like heroes."

10-13. (10) *they fled*, the defeat of previous day was disheartening, but temporary, this was overwhelming and final. *tent*, in those days the Israelites dwelt in tents, and to flee "every man to his tent" means that they fled away in every direction, each to his own home. It is in this indiscriminate flight that an army suffers most.—*Pulp. Com.* (11) *slain*,^d let us hope, defending the ark to the last. (12) *there ran*, information was in those days conveyed by swift runners.^e *clothes . . . head*, "the two Oriental signs of grief and dismay."^f (13) *seat*,^g in usual place, at entrance of city, or beside gateway of sanctuary. *cried out*, the usual Eastern *wail*, in time of calamity.

Eli's seat—*Eastern chairs* (see also vs. 18).—Eli therefore sat on an elevated seat. Seats from which even a man old and heavy could fall and injure himself, are not now employed in the East, and do not appear to have been in use among the Hebrews. Eli's seat would appear to have been a sort of throne-seat, peculiar to him as a mark of his dignity. From the absence of any mention of other than such seats, as well as from many direct intimations, it appears sufficiently probable that the Israelites sat, as the Orientals now do, on mats, rugs, etc., laid upon the ground, or indeed seated themselves on the bare ground.

14-18. (14) **came in**, to the place where Eli was, to give message direct to him. (15) **ninety and eight**, an age involving great helplessness, and prob. heavy weight of body. (16) **to-day**, showing the battle had been fought not very far off. (17) In the man's eagerness he does not attempt to break the tidings gradually. (18) **fell . . off**, in sudden stroke of anguish: heartbroken at the news concerning the ark.

Eli's death. — In felling an aged oak many a stroke of the hatchet may be dealt before there is any sign of its fall, but at length the woodman gathers all his strength for a final stroke, which, following upon all that have gone before, lays it even with the ground. So it is with men and the strokes of adverse providence — they stand upright after having received many a heavy blow, but one may come at last which, finding their courage and patience weakened by the trials of the past, crushes them altogether. Job bore up manfully against repeated and heavy blows, but at last a stroke fell which laid even this brave and patient man prostrate like a fallen tree. Eli had seen many a sad day in the course of a life which covered nearly a century, but he had never seen a day like this. Even now he bore calmly the news of Israel's defeat, and even that of the death of his sons, but the tidings that the ark of God was taken was too much to bear and live — this stroke killed him. — *Hom. Com.*

19-22. (19) **bowed herself**, sank on her knees. (20) **Fear not**, endeavoring to cheer her and divert her thought to the joy of her son. **answered not**, as a mother might be expected to. (21) **Ichabod, no glory**. "The connection will be made clearer by a literal translation as follows. And she called the child I-chabod, (saying, [The] Glory is departed from Israel). with reference to the ark being taken, and with reference to her father-in-law and her husband. And she said, [The] Glory is departed from Israel, because the ark of God was taken." — *Cam. B.* (22) **departed**, properly "is gone into captivity."^a

Birth of Ichabod. — Poor, good woman! with such a husband she had no doubt had a troubled life. The spring of her spirit had probably been broken long ago; and what little of elasticity yet remained was all too little to bear up under such an overwhelming load. But it may have been her comfort to live so near to the house of God as she did, and to be thus reminded of Him who had commanded the sons of Aaron to bless the people, saying, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee and be gracious to thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace." But now the ark of God is taken, its services are at an end, and the blessing is gone. The tribes may come up to the feasts as before, but not with the bright eye or the merry shouts of former days; the bullock may smoke on the altar, but where is the sanctuary in which Jehovah dwelt, and where the mercy-seat for the priest to sprinkle the blood, and where the door by which he can come out to bless the people? Oh, my hapless child, what shall I call thee, who hast been ushered on this day of midnight gloom into a God-forsaken and dishonored place? I will call thee Ichabod, for the glory is departed. The glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken. — *Exp. Bib.*

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1-5. (1) **Eben-ezer**, see ch. vii. 12. **Ashdod**, "then perhaps reckoned the capital of their five little kingdoms." — *Ewald*. **Azotus** in Sept. and Acts viii. 40, now *Esdud*.^b (2) **Dagon**, Ju. xvi. 23. **set it by**, as a trophy of victory. (3) **fallen**, as if bowing to the symbol of Jehovah.^c (4) **the head, etc.**, the parts of Dagon that were like a man were broken off; only the ignoblest part, the stump, or fishy part, was left, lit. *only Dagon was left*: Dagon fr. *dag*, a fish. (5) **tread on, etc.**, a custom prob. continued to reign of Josiah at least.^d

Dagon and the ark (vss. 3-5). — This remarkable and mysterious event may be looked upon — I. As prophetic of the future downfall of idolatry. II. As instructing us how this will be accomplished — not by the sword, but by making known the will of God. III. Once overthrown, no attempt to establish idolatry shall succeed.

Dagon. — One of the chief Philistine deities. "With regard to the image of Dagon, compounded of a man and fish, i. e. of a human body with head

B. C. cir. 1095.

the death of Eli

"The career of Eli is supposed to have begun during the Philistine oppression, and 20 years before the death of Jair. Jair ruled on the east of Jordan, and Eli in the southern part of Canaan. Samson is supposed to have begun his active career two years before the death of Eli, and to have died 21 years later. Two years after Samson began his career, judging west of Canaan, Samuel began his as judge, succeeding Eli." — *Heroes and Judges.*

birth of Ichabod

a "The ark, being the visible centre of the theocratic system of Israel, its capture was the departure of Israel's glory, and is spoken of as the 'captivity of the land,' see Ps. lxxviii. 60, 61." — *Wordsworth.*

"If parents were really faithful to their children there would be very few unconverted adults." — *Baxter.*

Importance of Children. — "Fragile beginnings of a mighty end." — *Hon. Mrs. Norton.*

Dagon falls before the ark

b Jos. xiii. 2.

c "Dagon in his own temple fell down like a prisoner before his conqueror, or like a suppliant before his God." — *Wordsworth.*

d See Zeph. i. 9.

B. C. cir. 1095.

We need not fear for God's honor though His ark may be in the hands of His enemies. He knows how to make the wrath of men to praise Him, and to make defeat His best victory. Gen. i. 20; Ex. ix. 16; xviii. 11; Ps. lxxvi. 10; Dan. iii. 19, 20, 28; Acts, ii. 36.

Philistia is troubled because of the ark

a Jos. xiii. 3.

'Site of Gath not certainly known; it was prob. in interior of Phil., ten miles E of Ashdod, at a place now called *Tell-es-Safieh*, and about the same distance S. E. of Ekron.' — Porter.

"Fear is the white-lipped sire of subterfuge and treachery." — Mrs. Sigourney.

the ark sent to Ekron

b 2 Kl. 1. 2.

c Their bodies plagued with loathsome disease, and their fields wasted by a fearfully increasing multitude of all-devouring mice.

"In politics, what begins in fear usually ends in folly." — Coleridge.

what shall we do to the ark of the Lord?

d Comp. Ex. vii 11; Da. ii. 2.
e "Three modes

and hands, and a fish's tail, see Starke's *Gaza* and Layard's *Nineveh*, where there is a bas-relief from Khorsabad, in which 'a figure is seen swimming in the sea, with the upper part of the body resembling a bearded man, wearing the ordinary conical tiara of royalty, adorned with elephant's tusks, and the lower part resembling the body of a fish.' — Starke. As the bas-relief represents (according to Layard) the war of an Assyrian king with the inhabitants of the coasts of Syria, most probably of Sargon, who had to carry on a long conflict with the Philistian towns, more especially with Ashdod, there can hardly be any doubt that we have a representation of the Philistian Dagon here. This deity was a personification of the generative and vivifying principle of nature for which the fish, with its innumerable multiplication, was specially adapted, and set forth the Giver of all earthly good." — Keil.

6-9. emerods, R. V., "tumours;" probably *boils*, which are a characteristic symptom of the oriental plague. This explanation agrees better with the infectiousness and fatality of the scourge. — Cam. B. (7) **hand is sore**, diseases of this kind usually regarded as direct punishment of gods for sins of sacrilege. (8) **Gath**, they sent it to this place, supposing some bad luck attached to its presence in Ashdod. Gath was prob. between Ashdod and Ekron. (9) **small and great**, as we say, rich and poor, a general outbreak of painful and shameful disease. **emerods . . parts, R. V., "tumours break out upon them."**

So let Dagon fall. — Soon after the commencement of the ministerial labors of the Rev. S. Kilpin, of Exeter, several trivial circumstances gave an entire change to his style of preaching. He was in the habit of studying closely, and writing nearly the whole of his sermons, to which he made reference during the time of their delivery. Thus furnished, he visited some part of Wales. Immense congregations assembled. He was told that they did not like any but extemporaneous preaching. For this he was not prepared; but by condensing his subject he lessened the appearance of his notes. With a trembling hand, he placed his remarks in the Bible, so neatly that his fears vanished. This, however, was followed by a hard cough, which, to his dismay, released the concealed paper, and sent it into a current of air, where it floated as a kite over the heads of the people. He breathed a momentary prayer for aid, when with good humor he said, "So let Dagon fall; we will endeavor to seek higher assistance." This pleased the congregation; he was enabled calmly to collect his thoughts, and the sermon was made a blessing.

10-12. (10) **Ekron**, now *Akir*, the most N. W. city of Philistia, where Beelzebub was worshipped.^b (11) **Send away**, fr. the country, back again to its home. The same two visitations^c followed the ark to Ekron. **deadly destruction, R. V., "deadly discomfiture."** (12) **the cry**, wail of grief and despair, Ge. xviii. 20.

Religion a trouble to the ungodly (vs. 10). — I. What the ark of God really was intended to be, and for whom. II. What it was to the Philistines, and why. III. What was needful in order that the ark might be a blessing and not a curse. IV. Are there not some to whom the Bible is as the ark to these Philistines!

A Socinian's fear. — A physician, who had imbibed Socinian principles, made it his chief concern, in matters of religion, to degrade the character and dignity of Christ. Such was his contempt for Him that he seldom spoke of Him in conversation under any other name than the carpenter's son. At length he was seized with affliction, which terminated in his death. A while before his departure, the servant who attended him, on entering his room, found him in great agitation. On inquiring the cause, he answered, "I am a dying man, and that which most of all affects me is that I must be judged by the carpenter's Son!"

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1-3. (1) **seven months**, during wh. time no effort was made by Is to recover it; from October till May. (2) **diviners**,^d the word is always used of idolatrous and superstitious divining.^e (3) **empty**, without a gift. **any wise, i. e. at all events. trespass offering**, wh. would involve acknowledgment of sin, wh. had been done unintentionally; Lev. v. 15. Obs. that now they speak of the ark of *Jehovah*, acknowl. Him as God of Israel.

What shall we do with the ark? (vs. 2). — I. The ungodly asked the question in perplexity, wishing they could destroy it. II. The superstitious asked the question in regard to imposing ritual, etc. They would defy it. III. The godly ask it with lowly reverence and humble faith, as anxious to do as God would have them.

Will my case be called to-day? — So asked a client of his lawyer, with the greatest eagerness, having heard that the Lord Chancellor's decision was expected. "Are you sure," was his anxious inquiry, "that nothing is left undone? If judgment is pronounced against me, I am a ruined man." The lawyer was a Christian man, and the question suggested to him the solemn inquiry, "What if my case come on to-day, before the eternal Judge whose sentence there is no reversing! Am I prepared?" Let every reader put the important question to himself — "Is nothing left undone for me?"

4-9. (4) **golden emerods**, *R. V.*, "golden tumours;"^a (and so in following verses). **mice**,^b wh. breed under some conditions so rapidly as to destroy almost an entire crop of wheat. (5) **mar**, damage, spoil. In the present case the Phil. offered "representations of the instruments of their chastisements" as an acknowledgment that the plagues of boils and mice were inflicted by the God of Israel, and were not "a chance." Thereby they would "give glory to the God of Israel." — *Cam. B.* (6) **wonderfully**, in ways of judgment. (7) **new cart**, so not polluted by previous use. **milch kine**, who would naturally be unwilling to leave their calves; so if they went towards Is. it would show Divine guidance. (8) **jewels**, or ornaments, gifts, as vs. 4. **by the side**, the Phil. neither looked into the ark, nor ventured to put their presents in it. (9) **his own**, *R. V.*, "its own." **Beth-shemesh**, now *Ain Shems*, a city of the priests,^c on the borders of Judah and Dan.^d

Providence or chance? — A careless sailor, on going to sea, remarked to his religious brother, "Tom, you talk a great deal about religion and Providence, and if I should be wrecked, and a ship was to heave in sight and take me off, I suppose you would call it a merciful Providence. It's all very well, but I believe no such thing — these things happen like other things, by mere chance, and you call it Providence that's all." He went upon his voyage and the case he had put hypothetically was soon literally true; he was wrecked, and remained upon the wreck three days, when a ship appeared, and seeing their signal of distress came to their relief. He returned, and in relating it, said to his brother, "O, Tom, when that ship hove in sight my words to you came in a moment into my mind — it was like a bolt of thunder; I have never got rid of it, and now I think it no more than an act of common gratitude to give myself up to Him who pitied and saved me. — *Whitecross*."

10-13. (10) **did so**, as vs. 7. (11) **laid the ark**, stood it up safely on the cart. (12) **lowing as they went**, in yearning for their calves, but Divinely constrained and guided. **lords**, satraps. (13) **wheat harvest**, about Pentecost. **in the valley**, Heb. "*emek*," denoting "the long, broad sweeps sometimes found between parallel ranges of hills." — *Sin. and Pal.* p. 481.

Rejoicing at the coming of the Word of God. — When the arrival of the cart which carried the first sacred load of the Scriptures to Wales in 1816, sent by the British and Foreign Bible Society, was announced, the Welsh peasants went out in crowds to meet it; welcomed it as the Israelites did the ark of old; drew it into the town, and eagerly bore off every copy as rapidly as they could be dispersed. The young people were to be seen spending the whole night in reading it. Laborers carried it with them to the field, that they might enjoy it during the intervals of their labor, and lose no opportunity of becoming acquainted with its sacred truths.

14-18. (14) **stood there**, the oxen standing still of their own accord. **great stone**, wh. at once suggested the idea of an altar and a sacrifice. **kine**, plural of *cow*. (15) **Levites**, some of whom were dwelling in this priestly city. **men . . sacrifices**, in addition to the kine the town-folk brought their offerings. (16) **seen**, the result of their diviner's scheme. (18) **mice**, representing the smaller towns and villages. **stone of Abel**, the Septuagint gives us what is probably the true reading: "and the great stone whereon they set the ark of Jehovah, which is in the field of Joshua the Beth-shemeshite, is a witness unto this day." (Comp. Gen. xxxi, 52; Is. xxx, 8). — *Pulp. Com.*

B. C. cir. 1095.

of divination are described, by arrows, by teraphim, and by the entrails of beasts." — *Spk. Com.*

"Fear is often concealed by a show of daring." — *Lucan.*

the test of providence or chance

^a It was customary among Easterns, and even among early Christians, to dedicate images or pictures of diseased members as votive offerings to the gods.

^b "The jerboa, or jumping mouse of Syria and Egypt." — *Bochart.*

^c Jos. xxi. 16.

^d Jos. xv. 10.

"Such representations may be seen still on the *Phyx* at Athens." — *Wordsworth.*

"More prob the short-tailed field-mouse, *achbar*." — *Gesenius.*

the ark is conveyed to Bethshemesh

"He who cannot find time to consult his Bible, will find one day that he has time to be sick; he who has no time to pray, must find time to die." — *H. More*
George, Prince of Transylvania, read over the Bible twenty-seven times.

the stone of Abel

^e "Lit from fenced city even unto country village." — *Wordsworth.*

B. C. cir. 1094.

"Look above you, and in the over-arching firmament read the truth of an all-pervading Providence. Your sky is God's outspread hand, and the glittering stars the jewels on the fingers of the Almighty. Do you not see that His hand closes round on all sides? and that you cannot go where universal love shines not."—*H. Gill.*

men of Bethshemesh smitten

a "It is not improbable that in their festive rejoicing they had fallen into intemperance, and so were led to pry into the sacred ark."—*Spk. Com.*
 b "Prob. it should read, 'He smote fifty out of a thousand, and the full number should be seventy.'"—*Jamieson.*
Syriac and Arabic versions give the number as 5,070. While we can come into God's presence with the trusting confidence of a child, we are not to treat Him or His sanctuary with irreverent familiarity. Lev. xix. 30; Ps. lxxxix. 7; cxi. 9; Heb. xii. 28, 29.

the ark at Kirjath-jearim

c His descendants appear as keepers of the ark in Dav.'s time. 2 Sa. vi. 3.
 d "To give the ark to the care of any but Levites would be gross violation of the law, and the names Eleazar, Uzzah, and Ahio, are all names in Lev. families."—*Spk. Com.*
 e 2 Sa. vi. 1; 1 Chr. xiii.

Josephus, Bp. Patrick Keil, and others support the idea that Abin. was a Levite.

f 1 Sa. xxi. 1.
 g De. xxx. 1-3; 1

God's guidance.—One of our poets, speaking of our birth, beautifully says, "Every soul leaves port under sealed orders. We cannot know whither we are going or what we are to do till the time comes for breaking the seal." But I can tell you something more beautiful than this. Every regenerated soul sets out on its voyage with an invisible captain on board, who knows the nature of our sealed orders from the outset, and who will shape our entire voyage accordingly if we will only let Him.—*A. J. Gordon.*

Providence.—

There is a power
 Unseen, that rules th' illimitable world, —
 That guides its motions, from the brightest star
 To the least dust of this sin-tainted mold;
 While man, who madly deems himself the lord
 Of all, is nought but weakness and dependence.
 This sacred truth, by sure experience taught,
 Thou must have learnt, when wandering all alone,
 Each bird, each insect, flitting through the sky,
 Was more sufficient for itself than thou.—*Thomson.*

19-21. (19) looked into, with irreverent curiosity.^a The number of persons slain is prob. incorrect. *Josephus* gives it as *threescore and ten*, without the fifty thousand.^b smitten many of the people, omit "many of." (20) able to stand, learning a lesson of reverence by a great calamity. holy Lord God, R. V., "before the Lord, this holy God,"—and so elsewhere for the A. V. translation. (21) Kirjath-jearim, Jos. ix. 17.

The ark returned to Bethshemesh (vs. 20).—Consider—I. The grounds and occasions of the question of our text. God had prevailed over the idolatrous Philistines. He had punished also His own presumptuous people. II. The answer to be given to it. Whatever reason for despondency there was in their apprehension, there was none in reality. But doubtless the wicked can never stand before God. Observe—1. How great an enemy to our welfare is slavish fear; 2. What a comfort to the soul is the knowledge of Christ.—*Simeon.*

Providence incomprehensible.—A hermit, having seen an innocent shepherd punished with death, began to distrust Providence. Leaving his cave, and going forth into the world, an angel met and journeyed with him. The first night they were entertained by a knight, whose infant child the angel strangled. From their next kind host, the angel stole a priceless golden cup, which he gave to their next host, a churlish man, who would only allow them to sleep in a shed. Passing a poor man on a bridge, the angel pushed him into the stream and he was drowned. The hermit now thought his companion a devil instead of an angel. The angel explained that, if the shepherd had not been slain, he would have committed great crimes; that the man whose child he strangled would have wasted his life in heaping up treasures for the child; that the golden cup would have led its possessor to a drunkard's grave; that the man whom he drowned would himself have committed murder had he gone a half mile farther; that he gave the cup to the inhospitable rich man, who received his reward in this life.—*Parnell.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1-4. (1) Abinadab,^c no doubt a Levite. in the hill, Kirjath-jearim was situate on a hill. Some translate, as a proper name, *Gibeah*. sanctified, set apart, or consecrated. to keep, if not a Levite, this only means, to take charge of, or preserve. If a Levite, it has usual meaning, attend upon.^d (2) twenty years, before Is. began to repent and revive. Ark was prob. some fifty years at this place,^e or at Nob.^f The public worship of Jehovah was intermitted; for the tabernacle seems to have been dismantled, and the ark was in a private house. The people sank into gross idolatry. But meanwhile Samuel was growing in strength and influence.—*Com. B.* (3) Samuel, coming forward at fit occasion. Ashtarothe, Ju. ii. 13. deliver . . Phil.,^g who prob. occupied the country round Shiloh. (4) put away, prob. by some public act wh. involved the destruction of the shrines of the idols. This was equivalent to an overt act of rebellion against the Phil. yoke.

An ideal statesman.—He was a man of spiritual disposition. This was shown by—1. His expostulation with the people (vs. 3). It was timely and

successful (vs. 4). 2. His supplication for the apostate nation. 3. His strict recognition of God. This is observable in—(1) The ordinary life of the nation; (2) Important national crises. Note his action after the victory over the Philistines. Learn.—(1) The practical influence of one holy life upon a nation; (2) National humiliations are acceptable to God; (3) God's mercy illustrated in the victories of life; (4) Public life should have its altar of devotion.

Why the Ark was not taken to Shiloh.—“Why the ark was not carried back to Shiloh is uncertain. The reason *may* be that the Philistines had conquered Shiloh, and now held it, as *Ewald* supposes; or it may be that, without a special revelation of the Divine will, they were unwilling to carry the ark back to the place whence it had been removed by a judgment of God, in consequence of the profanation of the Sanctuary by the sons of Eli (*Keil*); or simply that the purpose was first and provisionally to carry it safely to a large city as far off as possible, inasmuch as, in view of the sentence which had been passed on Shiloh, they did not dare to select on their own authority a new place for the Sanctuary.”—*Erdmann*. *The temptations to idolatry.*—Now the putting away of the strange gods and Ashtaroth was a harder condition than we at first should suppose. Some are inclined to fancy that it was a mere senseless and ridiculous obstinacy that drew the Israelites so much to the worship of the idolatrous gods of their neighbors. In reality the temptation was of a much more subtle kind. Their religious worship as prescribed by Moses had little to attract the natural feelings of the human heart. It was simple, it was severe, it was self-denying. The worship of the pagan nations was more lively and attractive. Fashionable entertainments and free-and-easy revelries were superadded to please the carnal mind. Between Hebrew and heathen worship, there was something of the contrast that you find between the severe simplicity of a Puritan meeting and the gorgeous and fashionable splendor of a great Romish ceremonial.—*Exp. Bib.*

5-8. (5) **Mizpeh** (*watch-tower*). prob. *Neby Samuil*. Assemblies of the Is. were often convened here.” Some identify with *Scopus*,^b just close to Jerusalem. The gathering of the people at Mizpah was the necessary result of the public insult offered to the Philistine gods, and virtually a declaration of war, as being an assertion of national independence.—*Pulp. Com.* (6) **drew water**, etc., symbolical act, testifying their need of purification and their pouring out their hearts to God in penitence and prayer. A day of general humiliation,^c not the ceremony of feast of tabernacles. **fasted**, as on the great day of atonement. **judged**, began to judge as civil and military ruler; prob. upon the invitation of the leaders of the tribes, who for years had recognized his prophetic office; Ex. xviii. 13-16. (7) **the lords**, uniting their forces. (8) **Cease not**, be not silent fr. crying. Sam. known to have remarkable power in prayer.

Three notable places.—I. Mizpeh. (1) The summons of the heaven-appointed prophet; (2) The gathering of the oppressed, fearful, and penitent people; (3) The offering of intercessory prayer, and of the sacrifice; (4) The mustering and approach of the Philistian clans. II. Ebenezer. (1) The conflict, the storm, the attack by Israel, the rout of Philistia; (2) The stone of help, old associations, new suggestions; (3) Where we have been conquered we may prove victors. Try again—against sin, habit, etc., but first seek the Lord. III. Ramah—its associations.—(1) A prophet's birthplace; (2) A judge's home; (3) The place of the altar. With what kind of conduct and feeling is our native place and home associated? This great and good old man the outgrowth of a good child, who ministered before the Lord in his youth.—*S. S. World*.

An answer to prayer.—An eminent minister in the north of Scotland remarkable for his fervor, was once praying in the public assembly for various classes of sinners. Among others he prayed for *profane sinners*, that notwithstanding all the enormity of their offenses, God would pardon them through the Lord Jesus Christ. A profane swearer, who was present, felt deeply interested, and lived to manifest a thorough conversion to God, and by the Divine blessing, the effect and answer of the prayer which had been offered for *that class of sinners* to which he belonged.—*Whitecross*.

9-12. (9) **lamb**,^d term here used is only found besides in Is. lxxv. 25. **burnt offering**, Le. vi. 8-13. denoting entire consecration to Jehovah.

B. C. cir. 1094.
Ki. viii. 47-50; Is. iv. 7; Hos. vi. 1; Joel ii. 12, 13.

“With grave aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed a pillar of state; deep on his front engraven, deliberation sat, and public care; and princely counsel in his face shone majestic.”—*Milton*

“In a free country there is much clamor with little suffering; in a despotic state, there is little complaint, but much suffering.”—*Carnot*.

So long as you abide in unbelief, so long the wrath of God abideth on you.

Israel summoned to Mizpeh

a Ju. xx. 1, 3; xxi. 1, 5, 8; 1 Sa. x. 17.

b “The broad ridge wh. forms the continuation of the Mt. of Olives to the North and East.”—*Smith's Dic.*

c Comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 14; 1 Chr. xi. 18; Ps vi. 6; xxii. 14; Jer. xiv. 17; La. i. 10; ii. 18, 19.

“With every exertion, the best of men can do but a moderate amount of good; but it seems in the power of the most contemptible individual to do incalculable mischief.”—*Washington Irving*.

Ebenezer d Le. xxii. 27.

B. C. 1094-1075.

a Comp. Jos. x. 21; Ju. iv. 15; v. 20-22.

"Quick is the succession of human events; the cares of to-day are seldom the cares of to-morrow; and when we lie down at night, we may safely say to most of our troubles, 'Ye have done your worst and we shall meet no more.'"
Cowper.

"Providence has given us hope and sleep, as a compensation for the many cares of life."
Voltaire.

Samuel as judge

b "Finding the Phil. worse masters than the Israelites, the Amor. made common cause with Samuel, and assisted the Israelites." — *Spk. Com.*

"It is necessary, in order to do well, to join strength with justice; but with this difference, that strength obeys justice as feudal dame and mistress, and does nothing in the spite of her authority, wish, or command." — *Michel v' Hospital.*

B. C. cir. 1051.

the ungodly sons of Samuel

c Ex xviii. 21, 22; Je. xxii. 15-17; 1 Ti. iii. 3; vi. 10.
d "Their sin did not consist simply in wishing to have a king, but in not waiting patiently until God was pleased to give them a king." — Wordsworth.

heard him, R. V., "answered him. (10) **thundered**,^a they doubtless interpreted the thunder as the answer to Samuel's prayer, and encouraged by this assurance of God's aid, went out boldly against the Philistines and found them in a panic from the same thunder. — *Spk. Com.* (11) **Beth-car, house of pasture**, west of Mizpeh, exact site unknown. (12) **Shen, tooth**, prob. a rock or peak, shaped like a tooth. **Eben-ezer**, stone of help. The special purpose of this inscription was to link on the present deliverance to all the past, and to form a testimony to the enduring faithfulness and mercy of a covenant-keeping God. — *Exp. B.*

Hitherto the Lord hath helped us. — In the years 1821 and 1822, the Hottentots could scarcely procure a morsel of bread, and the garden vegetables almost entirely failed; they were driven for their chief support to the wild fruits of the fields and woods. Those among them who had felt the power of the grace of God, displayed its influence in a very striking manner. A missionary said, "It is distressing to see what hunger they sometimes endure, but also edifying to find them so firm in their faith and confidence in God. I asked some, who had formerly enjoyed plenty and comfort, whether they had not rather return, as they found living so hard." One said, "No, indeed; in that place I had food for my body, but not for my soul; the Gospel that I hear in this place, is more to me than victuals and drink." "It is true," said another, "I often go to bed with an empty stomach, but I pray to the Saviour to make me satisfied, and feel no inclination to complain. It will not be always so; and though my garden fruits are all burnt up, I will plant again and again, till it shall please God to make it grow." Their hope in the providence of God was not disappointed. — *Whitecross.*

13-17. (13) **coast**, border, or district. **days of Sam. i. e.** of his government. (14) **restored**, though not recorded, Sam. evidently set up a vigorous government. **Amorites**, they prob. assisted in subduing the Phil.^b They were remnants of the ancient people of the land. (15) **judged, etc.**, as prophet-judge. Military part subseq. given to Saul. (16) **Bethel**, Ge. xii. 8. **Gilgal**, Jos. iv. 19, 20. (17) **Ramah**, 1 Sa. i. 1; prob. Sam. had succeeded to his father's estates and chose the place as the "centre of religious worship by building there an altar to Jehovah." Here ends the first division of the book, which records Samuel's life and work as the last of the Judges, in connection with the old order of things. The next division opens by relating the steps which led to the establishment of a monarchy. — *Camb. B.*

Samuel's public life. — Simply the vice-regent of God, and no king, Samuel had no palace in Israel. No armed guards protected the person, nor gorgeous retinue attended the steps of Samuel. No pomp of royalty disturbed the simple manner of his life, or distinguished him from other men; yet there arose by his house in Ramah that which proclaimed to all the land the personal character of its ruler, and the principles upon which he was to conduct his government. In a way not to be mistaken, Samuel associated the throne with the altar, earthly power with piety, the good of the country with the glory of God. That altar had a voice no man could mistake. In a manner more expressive than proclamation made by royal heralds with painted tabards and sounding trumpets, it proclaimed to the tribes of Israel that piety was to be the character, and the will of God the rule, of his government. — *Guthrie.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

1-5. (1) **old**, prob. about sixty. (2) **Joel, Jehovah is his God. Abiah, whose Father is Jehovah.** Beersheba, Ge. xxi. 14, in the south of Palestine. (3) **lucre**, money, advantage, generally used in bad sense. **bribes**,^c De xvi. 19. (4) **Elders**, here as elsewhere (1 Sam. xv. 30; 2 Sam. v. 3; 1 Kings viii. 3, etc.) we have traces of a popular assembly, representing the Israelite nation, and composed probably of the chiefs and heads of fathers-houses. — *Pulp. Com.* **Ramah**, place of Sam.'s residence. (5) **a king**,^d obs. how distinct fr. a judge: permanent, systematic, hereditary, with established court, offices, etc. *Political transitions (vs. 5).* — Political transitions. I. As founded on the most frivolous pretext. This political change was founded on — 1. The old age of Samuel; 2. The conduct of his sons. (1) This plea was unjust to Samuel; (2) The grievance might have been remedied. II. As pursued in antagonism to the Divine will — Consider — 1. The Divine permission; 2. The

Divine protestation. III. As involving the most alarming circumstances. 1. The despotic character of their future ruler: he would — (1) Disregard life's dearest relationships; (2) Impose several burdens of service; (3) Distribute property arbitrarily; 2. The withdrawal of Divine sympathy in this extremity. — *J. S. Exell.*

The desire for a king.—The Eastern mind is so essentially and pervadingly regal, that to be without a monarch is scarcely an intelligible state of things to an Oriental. . . . The want of a royal head must often have been cast in the teeth of the Israelites by their neighbors as a kind of stigma; even as we remember to have read in Harris's *Collection of Travels*, that when the English and Dutch were competing for power and influence in the East, the English, in order to damage their rivals, industriously circulated the dangerous secret that the Dutch had no king. The Oriental mind was astonished and perplexed by the indication of a condition so utterly beyond the scope of its experience and comprehension, and the Dutch, alarmed for the effect of this slur upon their respectability, stoutly repelled the charge as an infamous calumny, affirming that they had a very great king, thus exalting for the nonce their stadtholder to that high rank. — *Kitto.*

6-9. (6) **displeased**, his feelings were hurt because of the ingratitude shown him, and moreover this request had been made without consulting Jehovah. **prayed**, a fine example of impassioned self-control. (7) **rejected me**, as the king under the theocracy. **reign**, directly over them. (8) repeated declensions proved the people unfit for so high an idea as that of the *immediate government of God*. So He graciously condescended to meet their ability by a lower provision. (9) **manner**,^a law, or chief features.

Israel's king.—I. The king possessed. (1) They already had a king, the great God; (2) He ruled in mercy and justice; (3) He governed Israel by means of His servants, the judges (Samuel, etc.) priests, etc.; (4) He led them to victory and deliverance and prosperity; (5) He was rejected by them. II. The king demanded. (1) It is curious that they should demand a king of Samuel. Although they had resolved to have one, they (a) could not agree as to the mode of his election; (b) as to the person to be elected; (c) nor to have one without the Divine sanction; (2) The king they wished to have was a creation of their own fancy; a being possessed of heroic qualities of person and mind; at any rate, a visible representation of royalty; (3) The reason why they demanded a king was that they were tired of the righteous rule of God; (4) The excuse they offered was that they might be as other nations. III. The king granted. (1) One after their own heart; (2) One whose character and policy were previously described; (3) Such a king was granted that the people might learn the folly of which they were guilty in rejecting the rule of God. Learn—(1) The folly of envying other people; what might even be suitable for them might be a positive injury to us; (2) No greater harm could happen to us than the fulfilment of some of our own desires; (3) Let us pray that God's will may be ours. — *S. S. World.*

Instability of kings.—

The love of kings is like the blowing of
Winds, which whistle sometimes gently among
The leaves, and straightway turn the trees up by
The roots; or fire, which warmth afar off,
And burneth near at hand; or the sea, which makes
Men hoist their sails in a flattering calm,
And to cut their masts in a rough storm. They
Place affection by times, by policy,
By appointment; if they frown, who dares call
Them inconstant: if bewray secrets, who
Will term them untrue? if they fall to other
Loves, who trembles not, if he calls them unfaithful? — *Johnson.*

10-14. (10) **people**, whom the elders represented, *see vs. 7.* (11) **manner**, Samuel's or right. **for himself**, ch. xiv. 52. **chariots**, used on state occasions and for war. **run before**, comp. Elijah. 1 Ki. xviii. 46. (12) **captains, etc.**, appointing a regular military and civil organization, wh. the people will have to maintain by taxes, given in *money* or in *kind*. **ear**, old Eng. word for *to plough*. (13) **confectionaries**, i. e. perfumers, makers of ointments and

B. c. 1051-1041.

"So far it was well, that they did not rise up in rebellion, and set up a king for themselves." — *Mat. Henry.*

When life is ruined for the sake of money's preciousness, the ruined life cares naught for the money. — *Japanese Proverb.*

Israel demands a king

a "Sam. told them what a king might do, *de jure*; and also to what they must submit, if he did it, *de facto*." — *Bp. Sanderson.*

"King-becoming graces are justice, verity, temperance, stableness, bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness, devotion, patience, courage, fortitude." — *Shakespeare.*

"That king shall best govern his realm that reigneth over his people as a father doth over his children." — *Agessilaus.*

"In care they live, and must for many care; and such the best and greatest ever are" — *Lord Brooke.*

Samuel's reply to Israel's request

B. c. 1051-1041.

a "It was prob. the cook's office originally to slaughter the animal, and cut it up into joints, as well as to cook it, whence he was called the slaughterer."—*Spk. Com.*

"The faults of kings do shine like the fiery beacons on a hill, for all to see, and seeling tremble at You give your subjects license to offend when you do teach them how."—*Hemming.*

"We own thy virtues; but we blame thy mind elate with insolence and pride."—*Juvenal.*

b 1 Ki. xii. 4, 14, 15. c "Sain enumerated three evils incident to monarchical rule—impaired simplicity of life, diminished liberty of the individual subject, and increased taxation."—*Groser.*

"O diadem, thou centre of ambition, where all its different lines are reconciled, as if thou wert the burning-glass of glory."—*Dryden.*

Israel's request is granted

"All precepts concerning kings are in effect comprehended in those two: 'Remember that thou art a man;' and 'Remember that thou art the representative of God;' the one bridleth their power, and the other their will."—*Lord Bacon.*

"The Lord, like a most bountiful king, will be angry if any man will ask a small thing at His hands; because he had rather give things of great worth than of small value."—*Powell.*

scents, spices and perfumes. **cooks**, lit. *slaughterers*.^a (14) **fields**, illus. by 1 Ki. xxi. 7. **to his servants**, rewards for special service.

Running footmen (vs. 11). — Chariots are not now used, but in Persia it is to this day a piece of state for the king and other great personages to have several men run on foot before and beside them, as they ride on horseback. This they do even when the rider puts his horse to a gallop. The men are trained to their business from boyhood; and the feats they are able to perform would scarcely be considered credible in this country. They are called *shatirs*. Chardin mentions a candidate for the place of *shatir* to the king, who accomplished about 120 miles by fourteen hours' unremitted running, and who was rather censured for not having done it in twelve hours. Chardin himself followed him on horseback in his seventh course, when the heat of the day had obliged him somewhat to relax his pace, and the traveler could only follow him by keeping his horse on the gallop. It is astonishing to observe the extreme ease with which the men appear to attend their master's horse, in all its paces, even the most rapid; and, as a general rule, it is understood that an accomplished footman ought to remain untired as long, or longer, than the horse ridden by his master. — *Kitto.*

15—18. (15) **the tenth**, this tax would be extra to all ecclesiastical claims. One penalty of monarchy is increase of taxation. **officers**, lit. *eunuchs*, poss. indic. chamberlains, or lords of the bedchamber. (16) **young men**, Sept. has oxen, prob. correctly, as young men are referred to vs. 11. (17) **sheep**, for daily food of his court. **servants**, slaves. (18) **cry out**,^b with alarm at his exactions.^c

Despotism of Eastern kings.—The following anecdote, related by Mr. Fraser, will put this in a striking point of view:—"A native of Fars, some time ago, made a considerable improvement in the manufacture of porcelain. His fame quickly spread, until it reached the court, when the king immediately dispatched an order, commanding him to repair to Teheran, to make china for the Shah. Now the poor fellow knew that, once there, he should have to make china, not only for the Shah, but for all his officers and courtiers—and that, too, without the hope of any payment, unless it might be an occasional good beating. Seized with consternation, he collected as large a sum as possible, and presenting it by way of bribe to the minister, besought him to report that he was not the man that made the china, but that the real potter had run away. The business was managed according to his wish, and he returned penniless to his own country, vowing never again to make a bit of china, nor to attempt an improvement of any sort as long as he lived."

19—22. (19) **we will**, they failed to apprehend the consequences and followed out their own determination. Self-will is ever a dangerous road. (20) **like . . . nations**, their wish was not to develop and perfect their own institutions, but to revolt from them, and escape from the rigor of the Mosaic law. — *Pulp. Com.* They persisted in seeing only *one side* of a king's conduct. (21) **rehearsed**, to go over again a second time. (22) *Comp. vs. 7-9. go, etc., not intimating further his intention.*

Israel's request for a king.—I. The request. To be like other nations. They were better off than other nations, if they had but known it. No one way of governing is best for every nation. Comp. America, Turkey, England. The way God designed for Israel would have worked well, if they had been true-hearted. 2. The request taken to a man; an honored, aged, praying man, who had been judge. It seemed like putting a slight on him. The request brought by a deputation of elders. 3. The request carried to God, Who was the One really affected by it. Carried by the man of prayer and the prophet. 4. The answer sent as a warning. 5. The answer sent in a permission. Learn—What mistakes we shall make all through life if we set our wills up against God's will. — *Hive.*

Obstinacy. —

You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well bid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops and to make no noise,

When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven ;
You may as well do anything most hard,
As seek to soften that (than which what's harder ?) —
His Jewish heart ! — *Shakespeare.*

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1-3. (1) **Kish**, a bow. **Abiel**, strong, father of Kish and Ner, and grand-father of Saul and Abner.^a **Zeror**, a bundle or purse; also *Zur*.^b **Bechorath**, first birth. **Aphiah**, refreshed. **power**, *R. V.*, "valour." (2) **Saul**, Heb. *Shāul*, i. e. asked for. **higher**, physical strength and lofty stature are in all primitive nations important qualif. for leadership. (3) **asses . . . lost**, had strayed away.

A trivial incident the herald of a momentous future. — (1) Saul is introduced in connection with his ancestry; (2) In connection with the meaner duties of life; (3) The light which this incident throws upon Saul's domestic character — (a) he was an obedient son, *vs. 3*; (b) persevering and patient, *vs. 4*; (c) considerate, *vs. 5*; (4) Saul was somewhat indebted to the social condition of the times for his elevation. — *Exell.*

The call of the times. — "The times call forth! Alas, we have known times call loudly enough for their great man, but not find him when they called! He was not there; Providence had not sent him; the time, calling its loudest, had to go down to confusion and wreck, because he would not come when called. . . . But I liken common languid times with their embarrassed circumstances, impotently crumbling down into ever worse distress towards final ruin — all this I liken to dry dead fuel, waiting for the lightning out of heaven that shall kindle it. The great man, with his free force direct out of God's own hand, is the lightning. All blazes around him now, when he has once struck on it, into fire like his own. The dry moldering sticks are thought to have called him forth. They did want him greatly; but, as to calling him forth —! These are the critics of smaller vision, I think, who cry, 'See, is it not the sticks that made the fire?'" — *Carlyle.*

4-6. (4) **mount Ephraim**, north of Benjamin. **Shalisha**,^c . . . land of **Shalim**, a district bordering on Mt. Ephraim. (5) **Zuph**, the district round *Ramathaim Zophim*, 1 Sa. i. 1. (6) **he said unto him**, Saul does not appear to have heard. Does not this indicate a family living entirely outside of all religious connections, entirely immersed in secular things, caring nothing about godly people, and hardly ever even pronouncing their name? — *Exp. B.* **this city**, Rama was in sight probably.^d **honourable man**, title of rank. Obs. the general confidence felt in Samuel. **our way, etc.**, *R. V.*, "concerning our journey whereon we go."

Value of a wise and religious attendant. — It is an interesting thing in the history of the church, how often great people have been indebted to servants for important guidance, perhaps even for their first acquaintance with saving truth. The little captive maid that ministered in the house of Naaman the Syrian was the channel through whom he came to know of the prophet of Israel who was able to heal him. Many a distinguished Christian has acknowledged, like the Earl of Shaftesbury, his obligations to some pious nurse that when he was a child told him Bible stories and pressed on his heart the claims of God. Happy those servants who are faithful in these circumstances, and of whom it can be said, "They have done what they could!" Of this servant of Saul's we know nothing whatever, save that in his master's dilemma he told him of the Lord's servant, and induced him to apply to him to extricate him from his difficulty. — *Exp. Bible.*

7-10. (7) **bring the man**, as a present,^e not as a bribe. (9) This verse is manifestly a gloss inserted in the older narrative by the later editor of the sacred text, to explain the use of the term *seer* in verses 11, 18, 19. It is one among many instances which prove how the very letter of the contemporary narratives was preserved by those who in later times compiled the histories. — *Spk. Com.* **Prophet**, Heb. *nabi*, official name of those established to be the declarers and expounders of God's will. (10) **Well said**, Heb. *thy word is good*.

Lessons from the life of Saul. — I. If God wants a king. He knows where to

B. C. cir. 1041.

the story
of Saul

the search

for the asses

a Comp. 1 Chr.

viii. 33; ix. 39,

where Ner is

spoken of as father

of Kish.

b Comp. 1, Chr.

viii. 30; ix. 36.

"It is uncertain in

what precise spot

of the territory of

that fierce tribe (of

Benj.) the original

seat of the family

lay. It may have

been the conical

eminence amongst

its central hills,

known as *Gibeah*

of *Saul*. It was

more prob. the

village of *Zelah*,

on its extreme

southern frontier,

in wh. was the an-

cestral burial

place." — *Stanley.*

he fails in

the search

c "The situation

is wrapt in the

same geographical

obscurity that

tracks the whole

journey of Saul."

— *Stanley.*

d "It is not to be

inferred that the

city was Samuel's

residence, Rama."

— *Wordsworth.*

"There are some

that use humility

to serve their

pride, and seem

humble upon their

way, to be prouder

at their wish'd

journey's end." —

Denham.

he inquires

of the seer

e "According to

Eastern notions, it

would be consid-

ered a want of re-

spect for any per-

son to go into the

presence of a

superior man of

B. C. cir. 1041.

rank, or of official station, without a present of some kind in his hand, however trifling in value."—*Jamieson*.

"Probably the shekel, like our early Eng. silver coins, was divided into four quarters by a cross, and actually subdivided when required into half and quarter shekels."—*Spk. Com.*

Samuel meets him

a Heb. word *ham-mith* is applied both to isolated places of worship, and to those in which the true God was honored (1 K. iii. 3).

"You may say, 'I wish to send this ball so as to kill the lion crouching yonder, ready to spring upon me. My wishes are all right, and I hope providence will direct the ball.' Providence won't. You must do it; and if you do not, you are a dead man."—*Bescher*

Samuel had been fore-instructed

"We are not to lead events, but to follow them."—*Epictetus*.

h1 Sa. xv. 1; Ac. xiii. 21.

"Happy is the man who can endure the highest and the lowest fortune. He who has endured such vicissitudes with equanimity has deprived misfortune of its power."—*Seneca*.

get him. II. Obedient sons are likely to be Divinely honored. III The mysterious power of human association. IV. The Divine casuistry of every-day life. V. The harmonious working of Divine providence. VI. The relationship of human governments to the Divine. — *Exell*.

The shekel. — What was its proportionate value in Samuel's days we cannot tell, for silver was rare; but in size it would be somewhat bigger than a dime, and would be a very large fee, while the bread would have been a small one. It very well marks the eagerness of the servant that he is ready to part with the considerable sum of money in his possession in order to consult the seer. —

Pulp. Com. *Events controlled by God*. — One would suppose that many of the dramas of the Old Testament were planned on very purpose to show how intimately things secular and things sacred, as we call them, are connected together; how entirely the minutest events are controlled by God, and at the same time how thoroughly the freedom of man is preserved. The meeting of two convicts in an Egyptian prison is a vital link in the chain of events that makes Joseph governor of Egypt; a young lady coming to bathe in the river preserves the life of Moses, and secure the escape of the Israelites; the thoughtful regard of a father for the comfort of his sons in the army brings David into contact with Goliath, and prepares the way for his elevation to the throne; the beauty of a Hebrew girl fascinating a Persian king saves the whole Hebrew race from massacre and extermination. — *Eerp. Bib.*

11—14. (11) draw water, the wells were usually outside the cities here at the foot of the hill. (12) before you, *i. e.* they are to go straight ahead into the city. came to-day, returning from his circuit for the proposed sacrifice high place,^a a sacred eminence. Such altars, and the worship of the true God upon high places, were at this time recognized as right, and were, in fact, in accordance with, and were even the remains of, the old patriarchal religion. But gradually they were condemned, partly because of the growing sanctity of the temple, but chiefly because of the tendency of religious rites celebrated in such places to degenerate into nature worship. — *Pulp. Com.* (13) straightway, immediately. bless the sacrifice; *i. e.* ask the blessing before eating. (14) into the city, midst of the city. came out, of his house, not of the city gates. against, opposite to.

Providence. — God is the pilot as well as the constructor; He holds every second cause, and every instrument, in positive subordination to His intelligent will. An infidel was sailing upon a river; a storm arose, the man was drifted out to sea, clinging to the oars; finally he was picked up by a vessel, itself swept from its moorings, with broken cable, and in danger of wreck: thus was Vanderkemp converted. A minister made an open-air appointment for a preaching service; a young man and boys undertook to disturb the meeting; one of the most nimble and dexterous broke his ankle in trying to kick a football into the good man's face; that laid him on his bed, and brought the preacher to see him: thus Morgan Howell was converted. President Edwards turned from church one Lord's Day, intending to spend the time in sleep and seclusion; taking from the library at random an old book, without any name on the back, it proved to be a Bible, and he opened it to find in 1 Ti. i. 17 the instrument of his conversion.

15—18. (15) in his ear,^b R. V., "had revealed unto Samuel." (16) anoint, with the oil of consecration, as in appointment of priest. save, deliver and keep free. This verse implies that in Samuel's old age the Phil. were harassing and oppressing Israel, and it was this danger wh. led the elders to ask for a king. (17) This *vs.* follows on the account fr. *vs.* 14. reign over, restrain, coerce, predicting a strong and strict rule. (18) in the gate, indic. that Saul had not entered far into the city.

Unconsciously guided. — It is recorded of Mr. John Dod, that one night, at a very late hour, he felt strongly moved to visit a gentleman of his acquaintance, who lived at some distance. Not knowing what might be the design of Providence in this, he went. Having come to the house, and knocked at the door, the gentleman himself opened it: to whom Mr. Dod said, "I am come to you, I know not why myself, but I was restless in my spirit till I had done it." The gentleman replied, "You know not why you came; but God knew why He sent you." On which he pulled out the halter with which he intended to take away his own life, which, by this means, was happily prevented.

19-24. (19) **go up**, "addressed to Saul only. Saul is to precede Sam. as a mark of honor."—*Cam. B.* **eat with me**, at the festival. (20) **three days ago**, Heb. to-day three days, *i. e.* day before yesterday. **on whom**, *etc.*, *R. V.*, "for whom is all that is desirable in Israel." (21) The language of unaffected modesty and humility. Benjamin had been reduced to insignificance by the civil war recorded in Jud. xxi. 46. (22) **parlour**,^a or hall. (23) **the portion**, a boiled shoulder, *fr. wh.* Saul, as chief guest, was to tear off the first morsel. (24) **is left**, *R. V.*, "hath been reserved."

Great men from humble walks in life.—It is not from castles so much as from cabins, from princes so much as from among the people, that reformers and patriots spring. Luther came out of a miner's hut, and while the German boy sang in the streets for his bread, John Knox earned his by teaching. Wallace and William Tell, Hampden and Geo. Washington embarked in the cause of freedom with little else but their lives to lose. The noblest sacrifices of piety and patriotism have been made by such as had not a drop of noble blood in their veins.—*Guthrie.*

25-27. (25) **top of the house**, flat, often used for private intercourse. The people could see what great honor Sam. showed his guest. (26) **spring, etc.**, as the morning arose, *Ge. xix. 15.* **to the top**, or *on the top*. Saul's bed being made on the house-top, under an awning.^b After returning from the sacrifice and the feast, they seem to have committed themselves to rest. In the early morning, about daybreak, they had their conversation on the house-top, and thereafter Samuel sent Saul away, conveying him part of the road.—*Exp. B.* (27) **pass on**, to give Sam. opportunity of imparting a private communication.

Patience.—Saul must wait patiently until God shall bring him out of concealment and make it manifest who he was. So should we also, if God has lent us gifts and wishes them to remain concealed with us, not be displeased at the fact that they are not recognized, but quietly wait until the Lord Himself, as it seemeth Him good, carries further the matter that He has begun.—*Berlenberger Bible.*

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1-4. (1) **vial of oil**, for anointing as king. **kissed him**, token of homage, and act of congratulation. **captain**, ruler, deliverer, and king. No doubt, sharing in the feeling of the people, Saul at once understood the act. (2) The first of three signs given as tokens that Sam. acted by Divine commission. **Rachel's sepulchre**,^c position is difficult to locate. If situate on the road *fr.* Bethel to Bethlehem, it was not in Saul's way home. **Zelzah**, not known, if name of a place. (3) **plain**, or *oak*, *Ge. xxxv. 8.* **meet thee**,^d *etc.*, or thou shalt light upon, come up with. (4) **loaves of bread**, as God's representative he would henceforth share with the sanctuary the offerings of the people.

The Heavenly Father's care.—In the "Rothsay Castle," which was lately wrecked, a father with his child was near the helm, grasping his hand, till the waves rolling over the quarter deck and taking with them several persons who were standing near them, it was no longer safe to remain there. The father took his child in his hand and ran towards the shrouds, but the boy could not mount with him. He cried out therefore, "Father, father! do not leave me." But finding that his son could not climb with him, and that his own life was in danger, he withdrew his hand. When the morning came, the father was conveyed on shore, with some other passengers, who were preserved, and as he was landing he said within himself, "How can I see my wife without our son with me?" When, however, the child's earthly parent let go his hand, his Heavenly Father did not leave him. He was washed off the deck, but happily clung to a part of the wreck on which some others of the passengers were floating. With them he was almost miraculously saved. When he was landing, not knowing of his father's safety, he said, "It is of no use to take me on shore, now I have lost my father." He was, however, carried, much exhausted, to the same house where his father had been sent, and actually placed in the same bed, unknown to either, till they were clasped in each other's arms.—*Whitecross.*

5-8. (5) **hill of God**, a proper name, *Gibeah-elohim*: it is obvious to conclude that the *Gibeah of God* (which occurs nowhere else) was sometimes

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Saul is the guest of Samuel

^a "They ascended to the hill or high place, and in the inn, or caravanse-ral, at the top, found thirty guests assembled, amongst whom they took the chief seats."—*Stanley.*

^b "My endeavors have ever come too short of my desires."—*Shakespeare.*

Samuel shows Saul the word of God.

^c "During a large part of the year the roof is the most agreeable place about the establishment, especially in the morning and evening."—*Thomson.*
^d "He that is without fear is without hope."—*Webster.*

Samuel anoints Saul

c Ge. xxxv. 19, 20.

Humility.—
"The bird that soars on highest wing,
Builds on the ground her lowly nest;
And she that doth most sweetly sing
Sings in the shade when all things rest;
In lark and night-ingale we see,
What honor hath humility."
—*J. Montgomery.*

^d "The kids were for sacrifice, the loaves for the offering, and the wine for the libations."—*Jamieson.*

Samuel sends Saul to Gilgal

B. C. cir. 1041.

a "A stringed instrument, prob. in shape triangular, like a cone with the vertex downward, with 10 or 12 strings." — *Ayre*.

b "He caught the inspiration from the 'chain' of prophets, as the sign of a grander, loftier life, than he had ever before conceived." — *Stanley*.

Saul among the prophets

c "The heart in the Heb. acceptation points more to intellect and courage, than to the affections and conscience." — *Spk. Com.*

"Saul was not a prophet because he did once prophecy, nor is every one a believer that talks of faith." — *Adams*.

"In many looks the false heart's history is writ, in moods, and frowns, and wrinkles strange." — *Shakespeare*.

Saul's interview with his uncle

given to *Gibeah* of *Saul* on account of the worship on its high place. — *Spk. Com.* **garrison**, or military post. **psaltery**,^a *nebel*; first mentioned here. **tabret**, *toph*, kind of tambourine or drum. **pipe**, *chalib*, a bored or pierced instrument; kind of flute. **harp**, *cinnor*, stringed instrument, more like lyre, with fewer strings than the psaltery. **prophecy**, *R. V.*, "be prophesying," singing hymns of praise, with rapturous and extatic feeling. (6) **Spirit**, *etc.*,^b *Ju. iii. 10.* **turned . . . man**, internally up to the level of his changed circumstances. No longer had he the feelings of a husbandman, concerned only about corn and cattle; he had become a statesman, a general, and a prince. — *Pulp. Com.* (7) **as occasion**, *etc.*, *i. e.* act independently; with royal authority. (8) **Gilgal**, *Jos. iv. 19.* **seven days**, *etc.*, it seems quite impossible that this verse 8, can refer to the meeting spoken of at xiii. 8–10. If, therefore, the text is sound in both passages, Samuel must have given Saul an appointment at Gilgal, with an injunction to tarry seven days, on two several occasions at least. — *Spk. Com.*

Saul's changes. — Subject: "The transforming power of the Holy Spirit." Saul turned into another man in respect to— I. His circumstances. II. His prospects. III. His character. Learn:— 1. Seek to possess the Spirit of the Lord; if He does not make you great, He will make you good; 2. Test His presence by the change produced. — *Hive*.

The Spirit of God. — When in the Old Testament the Spirit of God is said to come on one, the meaning is not always that He comes in regenerating and sanctifying grace. The Spirit of God in Bezaleel, the son of Uri, made him cunning in all manner of workmanship, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass. The Spirit of God, when He came upon Samson, magnified his physical strength, and fitted him for the most wonderful feats. So the Spirit of God, when he came on Saul, did not necessarily regenerate his being; alas! in Saul's future life, there is only too much evidence of an unchanged heart! Still it might be said of Saul that he was changed into another man. — *Exp. Bib.*

9—13. (9) **another heart**,^c see vs. 6. **came to pass**, for his encouragement. (10) **to the hill**, better, to *Gibeah*. (11) **beforetime**, prev. to his anointing. (12) **who is their father?** this question was designed to meet a reason for the surprise felt at Saul being among the prophets— *viz.*, that his father Kish was a godless man. That consideration is irrelevant; for who, asks this person, is the father of the prophets? The prophetic gift does not depend on fatherhood. It is not by connection with their fathers that the prophetic band enjoy their privileges. Why should not Saul be among the prophets as well as any of them? — *Exp. B.*

Conversion a ground of joy. (vs. 12). — The proverb of our text we may consider as containing— I. A subject for grateful admiration. Many are converted to God when no such change could have been hoped for, from— 1. Their age; Their occupations; 3. Their habits; 4. Their connections. II. A matter for prudential inquiry. How shall we know whether we are "among the prophets?" We must see whether we have— 1. The mind; 2. The spirit, of the prophets. — *C. Simeon*.

Changed by the Spirit. — No man or women amongst you knows what he might be if he were filled with the Spirit. What is that rough Luther? He is only fit to have been a killer of bullocks, or a feller of the oaks in the forest; but fill Luther with the Holy Spirit and what is he? He takes the bull of Rome by the horns, slays wild beasts of error in the great arena of the gospel, and is more than a conqueror through the might which dwelleth in him! Take John Calvin— fit naturally to be a cunning lawyer, cutting and dividing nice points, judging this precedent and that, frittering away his time over immaterial niceties; but fill him with the Holy Ghost and John Calvin becomes the mighty master of grace, the reflection of the wisdom of all past ages, and a great light to shed a brilliant ray even till the Millennium shall dawn! Chief, and prince, and king of all uninspired teachers, the mighty seer of Geneva, filled with the Spirit of God is no more John Calvin, but a God-sent angel of the Churches. — *C. H. Spurgeon*.

14—16. (14) **uncle**, Abner or Ner. **no where**, within our reach. (15) **Sam. said**, uncle had observed the change in Saul, and wanted it accounted for. (16) **the kingdom**, Saul's silence left the fulfilment of Saul's words to God's time and way.

Discretion.—

Discretion guard thine asking, discretion aid thine answer ;
Teach thee that well-timed silence hath more eloquence than speech.
Whisper thee, thou art weakness, though thy cause be strength,
And tell thee, the key stone of an arch can be loosened with least labor from within.

The snows of Hecla lie around its troubled, smoking Geysers ;
Let the cool streams of prudence temper the hot spring of zeal ;
So shalt thou gain thine honorable end, nor lose the midway prize,
So shalt thy life be useful and thy young heart happy. — *M. F. Tupper.*

17-21. (17) **Mizpeh**, ch. vii. 5. (18) Throughout Scrip. constant reference is made to the *Exodus*, as the first great national event. **out of . . you**, *R. V.*, "out of the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you." "Jehovah had always done for them the very things for wh. they desired a king." (19) **before the Lord**, in solemn assembly, in presence of His altar. (20) **to come near**, that the Lord's choice might be indicated : poss. by lot the selection was made.^a (21) **Matri**, *rain of Jehovah*. **not be found**, indic. of his youthful modesty.

The first king of Israel.—I. The election of a king. A strange thing, because this nation had a king. One very near, very strong, very gracious, but One they could not see, One who kept no earthly court. Election conducted in a strange way. This no hereditary monarchy ; nor was the election by vote or show of hands, but by lot, which meant leaving the choice to the great unseen King, whose reign did not satisfy them. II. The king elected. Already found by the prophet and anointed. Now modestly hiding, now fetched out, a grand-looking man ; but he proved a failure. He was a man quite after the people's heart ; not like David—a man after God's own heart. — *Hive.*

Shrinking from positions of responsibility.—However pleasant it might be to ruminate on the privileges and honors of royalty, it was a serious thing to undertake the leadership of a great nation. In this respect Saul shared the feeling that constrained Moses to shrink back when he was appointed to deliver Israel from Egypt, and that constrained Jeremiah to remonstrate when he was appointed a prophet unto the nations. Many of the best ministers of Christ have had this feeling when they were called to the Christian ministry. Gregory Nazianzen actually fled to the wilderness after his ordination, and Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, in the civil office which he held, tried to turn the people from their choice even by acts of cruelty and severity, after they had called on him to become their bishop. — *Exp. Bib.*

22-25. (22) **inquired . . further**, *i. e.* made use of the Urim and Thummim to discover the hiding place of Saul. **stuff**,^b the baggage of the people who had come to *Mizpeh*. (23) **higher shoulders**, ch. ix. 2. (24) **God save, lit. let the king live**. (25) **the manner**, law or principles. **laid up, etc.**, placed beside the ark of the covenant with the copy of the law.

The duty of prayer for the sovereign (vs. 24).—I. The prayer, "God save the king." This implies that we supplicate God—1. That our sovereign may maintain God's law and seek His honor ; 2. That she may be strong and courageous ; 3. To take her under His protection ; 4. To bless and keep her always. — *T. H. Horne.*

The flattery of kings—

The vulgar call us gods, and fondly think
That kings are cast in more than mortal molds.
Alas ! they little know that when the mind
Is cloy'd with pomp, our taste is pall'd to joy,
But grows more sensible of grief or pain.
The stupid peasant, with as quick a sense,
Enjoys the fragrance of the rose as I ;
And his hard hand is proof against the thorn
Which, rankling in my tender skin, would seem
A viper's tooth. O blissful poverty !
Nature, too partial to thy lot, assigns
Health, freedom, innocence, and downy peace—
Her real goods—and only mocks the great
With empty pageantries. — *Fenton.*

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"No one can take less pains than to hold his tongue. Hear much, and speak little ; for the tongue is the instrument of the greatest good and the greatest evil that is done in the world." — *Sir W. Raleigh.*

Israel summoned to Mizpeh

election of king

Saul chosen

^a Comp. Jos. vii. 14, 16-18 ; 1 Sa. xiv. 41.

"A king that would not feel his crown too heavy for him, must wear it every day ; but if he think it too light, he knoweth not of what metal it is made." — *Bacon.*

"My heart being virtuous, let my face be wan, I am to God, I only seem to man." — *Quarles.*

Saul found ; and the people cry God save the king

^b "The assembly was like a camp, and the baggage (impedimenta) of the whole congregation was prob. collected in one place, where the wagons were arranged for protection." — *Spk. Com.*

"Kings are like stars—they rise and set—they have the worship of the world, but no repose." — *Shelley.*

"A king ruleth as he ought, a tyrant as he lists ; a king to the profit of all, a tyrant to please a few." — *Aristotle.*

B. C. cir. 1041.

Saul and
the band of
good men

a "Another sign of his modesty, patience and prudence at this time." — *Wordsworth*.

"Wise kings have generally wise counsellors, as he must be a wise man himself who is capable of distinguishing one." — *Diogenes*.

There are many who would sooner meet their bitterest enemy in the field than throw their hearts in the closet.

Nahash
besieges
Jabesh-
gilead

b "The Ammonites had long claimed the right of original possession in Gilead." — *Jamieson*.

Ju. xi. 4, 12, 20.

"Cruelty and fear shake hands together." — *Balsac*

men from
Jabesh come
to Saul

c "He was a true Benjamite from first to last. The Spirit of God came upon him as upon Samson. His shy, retiring nature vanished. His anger flamed out." — *Stanley*.

"When anger rushes unrestrained to action, like a hot steel, it stumbles in its way; the man of thought strikes deepest, and strikes fastest." — *R. Savage*.

26, 27. (26) home to Gibeah, *vss.* 5, 10. band of men, *the valiant company*. (27) children of Belial, *De.* xiii. 13; *i. e.* "certain worthless fellows." presents, token of homage and allegiance. held his peace, a very prudent patience.

A young man's best companions (*vs.* 26). — A young man's best companions are men whose hearts God has touched. When God touches the heart He makes it — I. Loving: hence they are united, "a band." II. Faithful: they were true when others despised him (*vs.* 27). III. Kind: they went home with him for company and safety. — *Hive*.

Companions. — The following beautiful allegory is translated from the German: Sophronius, a wise teacher, would not suffer even his grown-up sons and daughters to associate with those whose conduct was not pure and upright. "Dear father," said the gentle Eulalia to him one day, when he forbade her, in company with her brother, to visit the volatile Lucinda, "dear father, you must think us very childish, if you imagine that we should be exposed to danger by it." The father took in silence a dead coal from the hearth, and reached it to his daughter. "It will not burn you, my child, take it." Eulalia did so, and behold her beautiful white hand was soiled and blackened, and, as it chanced, her white dress also. "We cannot be too careful in handling coals," said Eulalia, in vexation. "Yes, truly," said the father; "you see, my child, that coals, even if they do not burn, blacken; so it is with the company of the vicious."

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

1-3. (1) Then, and; the LXX. says: "and it came to pass after about a month that Nahash," *etc.* Nahash, *serpent*, a name frequently found. Jabesh-gilead, the metropolis of Gilead, *Ju.* xxi. 8-14. (2) thrust out, dug out. Nahash supposed they were wholly in his power. (3) all the coasts, *etc.*, not directly to Saul, but to the various tribes. Saul's kingdom not yet fully recognized.

Cruelty of Nahash. — Just as you may see at this day in certain African villages miserable creatures without hands or eyes who have fallen under the displeasure of their chief and received this revolting treatment, so it was in those early times. But Nahash was comparatively merciful. He was willing to let the men of Jabesh off with the loss of one eye only. But as if to compensate for this forbearance, he declared that he would regard the transgression as a reproach upon all Israel. The mutilated condition of that poor one-eyed community would be a ground for despising the whole nation; it would be a token of the humiliation and degradation of the whole Israelite community. — *Exp. B.*

4-7. (4) told the tidings, to the people, not to Saul. (5) after the herd, or oxen, with which, though a king, he had been ploughing. We are compelled to conclude that the opposition to him was far from contemptible in number and in influence, and that he found it expedient in the meantime to make no demonstration of royalty, but continue his old way of life. — *Exp. B.* (6) Spirit . . him, *comp. ch.* x. 6, 10, as a spirit of zeal, energy and power. anger, fervor of indignation. (7) *Comp. Ju.* xix. 29. messengers, *i. e.*, those who came fr. Jabesh. after Saul . . Samuel, it is important to notice that Saul speaks not only in his own name, but also in that of Samuel. It was as the man chosen of Jehovah to be king by the voice of His prophet that he acted, and so as one possessed of legitimate authority. — *Pulp. Com.* with one consent, *R. V.*, "as one man."

Be angry and sin not. — I. This anger of Saul was divinely kindled. II. It was occasioned by the cause of humanity and patriotism. III. It did not vapor itself away in idle words. IV. The cause of the oppressed may well stir our righteous indignation.

Righteous indignation. — When Bonaparte retreated from before Acre, the tyrant Djezzar Pasha, to avenge himself on the Franks, inflicted a severe punishment on the Jewish and Christian inhabitants of Saphet. It is said that he had resolved to massacre all the believers in Moses and Jesus Christ who might be found in any part of his dominions, and had actually sent orders to Nazareth and Jerusalem, to accomplish his barbarous designs. But Sir Sidney Smith, on being apprised of his intention, conveyed to him the assurance that

if a single Christian head should fall, he would bombard Acre, and set it on fire. The interposition of the British admiral is still remembered with heartfelt gratitude by all the inhabitants, who looked upon him as their deliverer. "His word," says Burkhardt, "I have often heard both Turks and Christians exclaim, 'was like God's Word — it never failed.'" — *Whitecross*.

8-11. (8) **Bezek**, Ju. i. 4, 5, nearly opposite the ford for crossing to Jabesh-Gilead. Obs. in this *vs.* the distinction of Israel and Judah. "Judah always stood apart until there was a king who belonged to itself." (9) **sun be hot**, before mid-day. The distance to travel was some twenty miles. **help**, R. V., "deliverance." (10) **said**, to Nahash. (11) **the morrow**, prob. the last of the seven days' respite, *vs.* 3. **three companies**, as Gideon, Ju. vii. 16-19. **midst of the host**, which had gone forth to meet the sally of the men of Jabesh, and so quite closed round.

Ye shall have help. — I. This promise of help was prompt. II. It infused joy in the hearts of threatened and endangered men. III. It was fully kept. IV. For us, also, help is laid on One who is mighty to save.

Acts of chivalry. — Notwithstanding the wail which we occasionally hear for the chivalry that is gone, our own age has witnessed deeds of bravery and gentleness, — of heroic self-denial and manly tenderness, — which are unsurpassed in history. On the bleak plateau of Sebastopol, in the dripping perilous trenches of that twelve months' leaguer, men of all classes proved themselves worthy of the noble inheritance of character which their forefathers have bequeathed to them. But it was in the hour of the greatest trial in India, that the qualities of our countrymen shone forth the brightest. The march of Neil on Cawnpore, of Havelock on Lucknow, — officers and men alike urged on by the hope of rescuing the women and children, — are events which the whole history of chivalry cannot equal. Outram's conduct to Havelock in resigning to him, though his inferior officer, the honor of leading the attack on Lucknow, was a trait worthy of Sidney, and alone justifies the title which had been awarded to him of the "Bayard of India." — *Smiles*.

12-15. (12) **that said**, ch. x. 27. Saul's authority was now established. (13) **not . . . death**, instance of restraint, and moderation, showing good judgment. (14) **Gilgal**, sometimes difficult to decide wh. Gilgal is meant.^a (15) **made Saul king**, by general acknowledgment, by making him assume royal state and authority, and poss. by a second anointing. **peace-offerings**, *i. e.* for the deliverance and the estab. of the kingdom. This offering was followed by a feast.

Mercy of kings. —

It becomes

The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the heart of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself,
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. — *Merchant of Venice*.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

1-5. (1) **Samuel said**, the assembly at Gilgal marks an important epoch in Jewish history. It ratified the work of the assembly at Mizpah, finally closed the period of the judges, and formally inaugurated the New Monarchy. Samuel, though he was still to retain his influence and authority as *Prophét*, now resigned his office as *Judge*, and in doing so delivered a solemn address to the assembled people. — *Cam. B. Ch. xi. 14, 15.* **ye said**, ch. viii. 4-6. (2) **walketh**, like a shepherd who goeth before the flock to guide and guard. **sons are with you**, their age proved his great age. Poss. intended to intimate that he had not tried to establish his family in the government.^b See ch. viii. 1-3. (3) **his anointed**,^c Saul, who had been privately anointed by Sam., and perhaps also publicly at Gilgal. **whose ox, etc.**,^d demand for care-

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Saul defeats Nahash

"If I boast of aught, be it to have been heaven's happy instrument, the means of good to all my fellow-creatures; this is a king's best praise." — *Rowe*.

"In general, indulgence for those we know is rarer than pity for those we know not." — *Rivarol*.

"Trust him with little who, without proofs, trusts you with everything, or, when he has proved you, with nothing." — *Lavater*.

Saul is made king at Gilgal

a Stanley says Gilgal by Jericho, so Wordsworth; Keil says Jiljilia, as being near the road fr. Jabesh to Gibeah and Ramah. "A sovereign's great example forms a people; the public breast is noble, or is vile, as he inspires it." — *Mallett*. "What is a king? a man condemned to bear the public burden of the nation's care." — *Prior*.

Samuel's address to Israel

he vindicates himself

b They are private persons and subjects of the king, as you are. — *Wordsworth*. *c* Ps. lxxxiv. 9. *d* Nu. xvi. 15; Ac. xx. 33.

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a "Copher, ransom or satisfaction; fr. *caphar*, to cover, to pardon." — Gesenius.

b "Applied to the bribe paid to an unjust judge to induce him to acquit the guilty." — *Spk. Com.*

c Ac. xxiv. 16, 20.

"To him who is good, goodness has ceased to be either object or abstraction; it is in him a thirst to give; a solemn quiet, a passion to bless, a delight in beholding well-being."

he rehearses the ways of God

d Mic. vi. 4.

"A soul sincerely obedient will not pick and choose what commands to obey, and what to reject, as hypocrites do." — T. Brooks.

"The memory of past favors is like a rainbow, bright, vivid, and beautiful; but it soon fades away. The memory of injuries is engraved on the heart, and remains forever." — *Haliburton*.

he calls to obedience

e Hos. xlii. 11; Ps. lxxviii. 29.

Truth to be impressed: — If any person or any nation, is to be prosperous and happy, he must maintain allegiance to God, and devote himself wholly to His service. This illustrate from the previous history and experience of Israel; from the

ful review of his public life. **bribe**, Heb. ransom; ^a the fine paid by a criminal in lieu of bonds or death. **restore**, Lu. xix. 8. (4) **taken ought**, improperly. (5) **witness**,^c that Sam. had given no cause for casting off the order of judges.

Here I am (vs. 3). — I. Let us consider a few of the things of which this "Here I am" may remind us. 1. Honesty an important element in the strength and beauty of old age; 2. Moral courage inspired by conscious integrity; 3. It is sometimes needful to be self-assertive. This not to be confounded with vain boasting. II. Let us inquire how it was that in his old age Samuel could so fearlessly look the world in the face and say, "Here I am." It was because, in his youth, he had responded to the Divine call with "Here I am." The boy was father to the man.

Oriental injustice. — It was no small matter to be able to make this challenge, which is as fearless in tone as it is comprehensive in range, in the very midst of such a sea of corruption as the neighboring kingdoms of the East presented. Even to this day, the same system prevails as corrupt as ever. I have heard from an excellent American missionary a tale of a court of justice that came within his experience, even at a conspicuous place like Beirut, that shows that without bribery it is hardly possible to get a decision on the proper side. A claim had been made to a piece of land which he had purchased for his mission, and as he refused to pay what on the very face of it was obviously unjust, he was summoned before the magistrate. The delays that took place in dealing with the case were alike needless and vexatious, but the explanation came in a message from the authorities, slyly conveyed to him, that the wheels of justice would move much faster if they were duly oiled with a little American gold. To such a proposal he would not listen for a moment, and it was only by threatening an exposure before the higher powers that the decision was at last given where really there was not the shadow of a claim against him. — *Exp. Bib.*

6-11. (6) It is the Lord,^d lifting their thoughts from the instruments to the real Author. **advanced**, appointed. (7) **stand still**, or stand up, as in a court of justice. **righteous acts**, Sam. vindicates God's dealings with Israel during their past as against the implication contained in their demand for a king. (8) Ge. xli. 5, 6; Ex. iv. 16, etc. (9) **Sisera**, Ju. iv. 2. **Philistines**, Ju. xiii. 1. **king of Moab**, Ju. iii. 12. (10) **Baalim and Ashtaroth**, Ju. ii. 13; x. 10. (11) **Jerubbaal**, Ju. vii. 1. **Bedan**, either *Barak* or *Abdon*. **Jephthah**, Ju. xi. 1. **Samuel**, that Samuel should thus mention himself need not surprise us if we remember that the apparent abruptness of the mention is due to the condensation of the narrative, which gives only a summary of the original speech. — *Cam. B.*

Laws of right and wrong. — History is a voice forever sounding across the centuries the laws of right and wrong. Opinions alter, manners change, creeds rise and fall, but the moral law is written on the tablets of eternity. For every false word or unrighteous deed, for cruelty and oppression, for lust or vanity, the price has to be paid at last; not always by the chief offenders, but paid by some one. Justice and truth alone endure and live. Injustice and falsehood may be long-lived, but doomsday comes at last to them in French revolutions and other terrible woes. — *Froude, Short Studies*.

12-15. (12) **Nahash**, ch. xi. 1. (13) **behold the king**, Saul being present at the convention. **ye have chosen**, etc., Sam. throws the whole burden of responsibility *on them*. **desired**, demanded, **set a king**,^e in response to your wish. (14) Translate, "If ye will fear the Lord, and serve Him, and obey His voice, so as not to rebel against the mouth of the Lord, and will be, both you and your king that reigns over you, followers after the Lord your God" — well: the apodosis being understood as Exod. xxxii. 32. — *Spk. Com.* (15) **hand of the Lord**, Ex. ix. 3.

The two courses. — Samuel here places before the people two courses. I. One of which they were bound to follow. There was no middle course. Man cannot be neutral. II. We have the results of obedience and of disobedience set clearly forth. III. Such presenting of the truth should bring us to immediate decision.

The world's blindness to God's excellence. — If ever a nation owed everything to the power above, Israel owed everything to Jehovah. And yet there was a want of cordiality on the part of the people in acknowledging it. The

truth is, they did not like all the duties and responsibility which it involved. It is the highest honor of a son to have a godly father, upright, earnest, consistent in serving God. Yet many a son does not realize this, and sometimes in his secret heart he wishes that his father were just a little more like the men of the world. It is the brightest chapter in the history of a nation that records its struggles for God's honor and man's liberty; yet there are many who have no regard for these struggles, but denounce their champions as ruffians and fanatics. Close connection with God is not, in the eyes of the world, the glorious thing that it is in reality. How strange that this should be so! — *Exp. Bib.*

16-19. (16) **stand and see**, notice, attend to. **great thing**, sign Sam. was about to give. (17) **wheat harvest**, usually a time of drought.^a **thunder^b and rain**, people greatly terrified by the thunder, and distressed by the rain, and so made to feel what power to punish rebellion was in the hands of God. (18) *Comp. Ex. xiv. 31.* (19) **Pray for**, one of Sam.'s characteristics was power in prayer. Obs. how readily the people were affected to *penitence*, but it seldom lasted long or bore fruit in steadfast goodness.

Partnership with God. — Two Germans wanted to climb the Matterhorn, near which they were staying. They took three guides, and began to climb the mountain in its steepest and most slippery part. When traveling thus, they rope themselves together; there was first a guide, next a traveler, then another guide, then the second traveler, and finally a guide — five men in all. When they had been ascending for a short time, the guide at the bottom began to slip, but was held up by the other four, whose feet rested in niches cut in the rock; but the last pulled down the man just above him and these two dislodged the next, and the three, the one above them. The only man who kept his footing was the first, who drove his ax with all his might into the ice before him and clung to it; and as he stood the man beneath regained his footing, and so the next, and the next, and the next, and the whole party was saved because the first man stood his ground. I am one of those men who slipped, but thank God, I am bound in living partnership to Christ in glory, and because He stands I can never be cast away. — *F. B. Meyer.*

Appalling aspect of a storm. —

I have seen tempests when the scolding winds
Have rived the knotty oaks; and I have seen
The ambitious ocean swell, and rage, and foam,
To be exalted with the threatening clouds:
But never till to-night, never till now,
Did I go through a tempest dropping fire. — *Shakespeare.*

20-25. (20) **ye have done**, Sam. deepens the sense of sin, but shows how graciously God was overruling their error. All depended on their faithfulness to God under the new constitution. It was Samuel's purpose to press on the people, that the change involved in having a king brought no change as to their duty of invariable allegiance to God. — *Exp. B.* (21) **vain things**, *lit.* emptiness. In *Bib.* language all sin is also foolishness and vanity. (22) **not forsake**, even in this their wilfulness. (23) **ceasing to pray**,^c if God does not forsake, good men need not. (25) **consumed**,^d as *illus.* by the thunder and rain.

The farewell counsel of Samuel (vss. 20, 24, 25). — In his farewell address, Samuel adapted his counsels and encouragement to the special position and need of his audience. There were words of — I. Wise caution to people who had made great changes in their circumstances. Note the perfect soundness of the principles embodied in Samuel's words. II. Gracious hope to people who had erred and sinned in relation to their circumstances. — *C. Vince.*

Persistent prayer. — One Lord's day morning, Mr. Whitefield, with his usual fervor, exhorted his hearers to give up the use of the means for the spiritual good of their relations and friends *only with their lives*; remarking that he had had a brother for whose spiritual welfare he had used every means. He had warned him and prayed for him; and apparently to no purpose, till a few weeks ago, when his brother, to his astonishment and joy, came to his house, and with many tears declared that he had come up from the country to testify to him the great change that Divine grace had wrought upon his heart; and to acknowledge with gratitude his obligation to the man whom

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life and integrity of Samuel; from the future history of the nation of Israel under the kings. *Comp.* such reigns as those of Ahab and Hezekiah.

he confirms his words by a miracle

a "This season in Pales. occurs at the end of June or beginning of July, when it seldom or never rains, and the sky is serene and cloudless." — *Jamieson.*

b Thunder is called the voice of the Lord. See *Ex. ix. 28, marg.; Ps. xxix. 3-9.*

No one can ask honestly or hopefully to be delivered from temptation unless he has himself honestly and firmly determined to do the best he can to keep out of it. — *Ruskin.*

he asserts God's faithfulness

c *Jer. xv. 1.*

d *Jos. xxiv. 20.*

He who would feign and flatter had better try his craft with a fool like himself, for to deceive the all-seeing One is as impossible as to take the moon in a net, or to lead the sun into a snare. He who would deceive God is himself already most grossly deceived. — *Treas. of David.*

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"Let the day have a blessed baptism by giving your first waking thoughts into the bosom of God. The first hour of the morning is the rudder of the day."—*Beecher.*

the reign
of Saul

Israel sum-
moned to
Gilgal

"The true meaning seems to be that Saul had been publicly made king, and had reigned one year, when the events recorded in the former chap. had taken place."—*Wordsworth.*

the people
fear—Samuel
is sent for

a *Sheloshim*,
thirty, has crept
into the text, in-
stead of *Shelosh*,
three.

b Ex. xiv. 7; Ju.
iv. 3; 2 Sa. x. 18; 1
Ki. x. 26; 2 Ch. xii.
3, xiv. 9; Ps. lxxviii.
17.

"Real glory
springs from the
silent conquest
of ourselves; and
without that the
conqueror is
nought but the
first slave."—
Thompson.

Samuel
reproves
Saul, and
predicts his
rejection

c Ge iii. 13.

d 1 Sa. xv. 28.

The dross men toil
for often stains
the soul.—*T. B.*
Aldrich.

God had made the instrument of it. Mr. Whitefield added, that he had that morning received a letter, which informed him that on his brother's return to Gloucestershire, where he resided, he dropped down dead as he was getting out of the stage-coach, but that he had previously given the most unequivocal evidence of his being a new man in Christ Jesus.—"There," said Mr. Whitefield, "let us pray always for ourselves and for those who are dear to us, and never faint."—*Whitecross.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-4. (1) **reigned one year**, we must render, "Saul was [] years old when he began to reign, and reigned [] and two years over Israel." Either the numbers were wanting in the original document, or they have been accidentally lost.—*Cam. B.* (2) **chose, etc.**, to form a private body guard. **Michmas**, now a desolate village, **Mukhmas**, near a steep ravine called *Wady-es-Suweinit*, 9 m. N. of Jerus. **mount Bethel**, *Beitin*: 6 m. N. W. of Michmas. **Jonathan**, "the gift of Jehovah," the first mention of Saul's eldest son, **Gibeah**, now Tuleil-el-Phul . . . **tent, i. e.**, homewards; Israel was still dwelling in tents largely. (3) **Geba**, now *Jeba*, on S. side of Wady-Suweinit. (4) **called**, were cried, *i. e.* were summoned by proclamation. *Gilgal*, Jos. iv. 19, 20.

The trumpet blown in Israel (vs. 3).—I. The occasion of the sounding of this trumpet. II. The purpose for which it was blown. 1. To inspire courage; 2. To spread good tidings; 3. To lead Israel to the attack. III. The effect of the sounding of the trumpet (*vs. 4*). IV. The gospel trumpet now calls.

5-10. (5) **thirty thousand**, prob. a mistake in number.^a Comp. other numbers of chariots mentioned in Scrip., and proportion to horsemen.^b **people, i. e.**, infantry. **Beth-aven**, Josh. vii. 2. (6) **in a strait**, not having force to resist such a foe. **hide themselves**, as in Ju. vi. 2. **high places**, word occurs elsewhere but once. Ju. ix. 46, 49. It prob. refers to "towers," old Canaanite ruins. **pits**, dry cisterns. (7) **trembling**, having little confidence. No great signs of God's blessing had yet attended Saul, except that recorded in ch. xi. (8) **set time**, to try his patience and obedience. (9) **he offered**, not certain whether he did it himself, or ordered the proper priest to do it. (10) **salute him**, word as in Ge. xiv. 19, meaning simply courteous salutation.

How to meet temptation.—Billy Bray, the Cornish miner, whose rugged piety has been a blessing to so many of God's children, gives much instruction in his quaint way as to how to treat the temptations of Satan. He says that one day when he was a little downhearted, he stood upon the brink of a coalpit and someone seemed to say, "Now, Billy, just throw yourself down there and be rid of all your trouble." He knew in a minute who it was, and drawing back, said, "Oh, no! Satan! you can just throw yourself down there. That is your way home, but I am going to my home in a different direction." Another time his crop of potatoes turned out poorly; and as he was digging them in the fall, Satan was at his elbow, and said, "There, Billy, isn't that poor pay for serving your Father the way you have all the year? Just see those small potatoes!" He stopped hoeing and replied, "Ah, Satan, at it again—talking against my Father, bless his name! Why, when I served you, I didn't get any potatoes at all! What are you talking against Father for?" And on he went, hoeing and praising the Lord for small potatoes.—*D. W. Whittle.*

11-16. (11) **What, etc.**,^c calling Saul to serious consideration of his act. (12) **I forced myself**, went against my judgment, pressed by the emergency. The significant thing in Saul's state of mind, as disclosed by his act, is that he was not really bent on complying with the will of God. God was not a reality to Saul.—*Exp. B.* (13) **foolishly**, showed himself unable to wait, trusting in God. Wilfulness was Saul's great sin. **for ever, i. e.**, permanently. (14) First hint of Saul's rejection.^d (15) **up**, Gibeah being in the hill country. Sam. did not break friendly relations with Saul for this act of impatience with and distrust of Jehovah. (16) **Jonathan, vs. 3. Gibeah, R. V., "Geba,"** wh. was at the other end of the defile fr. Michmas.

A fearless reprover.—William IX, Duke of Aquitaine and Earl of Poitiers,

was a violent and dissolute prince, and often indulged himself in improper behavior at the expense of religion. Though he had contracted a very suitable marriage, and one with which he was satisfied for some time, he parted from his wife without reason, to marry another who pleased him better. The Bishop of Poitiers, where he resided, was a holy prelate, named Peter. He could not brook so great a scandal, and having employed all other means in vain, he thought it his duty to excommunicate the Duke. As he began to pronounce the anathema, William furiously advanced, sword in hand, saying, "Thou art dead if thou proceedest." The bishop, as if afraid, required a few moments to consider what was most expedient. The Duke granted it, and the bishop courageously finished the rest of the formula of excommunication. After which, extending his neck, "Now strike," said he, "I am quite ready." The astonishment which this intrepid conduct produced in the Duke disarmed his fury, and saying ironically, "I don't like you well enough to send you to heaven," he contented himself with banishing him. — *Whitecross*.

17-23. (17) *spollers*, same word used of destroying angel, Ex. xii. 23. *Ophrah*, in a northerly direction. 5 m. E. of Bethel.^a *Shual*, foxland; prob. *Shalim*.^b (18) *Beth-horon*,^c westward. *Zeboim*, eastward; a town of Benja, min gave name to this valley. *wilderness*, valley of Jordan. (19) *no smith*, to make or to sharpen weapons.^d (20) These were agricultural implements not weapons. *share*, prob. a sickle. *coulter*, kind of ploughshare. *mattock*, kind of spade.^e (22) *day of battle*, recorded in next chap. (23) *pass of Michmash*, the steep, precipitous valley now called Wady Suweinut.

Arms for war (vs. 20). — We are engaged in a great war with the Philistines of evil. I. Every weapon within our reach must be used. Preaching, teaching, praying, giving, all must be brought into action. Rough tools may deal hard blows: killing need be done not elegantly, but effectually. II. Most of our tools want sharpening; we need quickness of perception, tact, energy, promptness; in a word, complete adaptation for the Lord's work. Practical common sense is a very scarce thing among the conductors of Christian enterprises. III. We might learn from our enemies if we would, and so make the Philistines sharpen our weapons. — *Spurgeon*.

Making of war-weapons forbidden. — The policy of the Philistines has been imitated in modern times. "Mulei Ismael went farther towards a total reduction of these parts of Africa than his predecessors had done. This sheriff brought multitudes of sturdy Arabs and Africans, who used to be courted by the kings of Morocco, Fez, etc., to such a pass, that it was as much as all their lives were worth to have any weapon in a whole dower (movable village or small community) more than one knife, and that without a point, wherewith to cut the throat of any sheep or other creature when in danger of dying, lest it should *jif*, as they call it, i. e. die with the blood in it, and become unlawful for food." — *Morgan, Hist. of Algiers*.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1-5. (1) *Jonathan*, associated with Saul in all his wars.^f He was called *The Gazelle* (see orig. of 2 Sa. i. 19). (2) *under a pomegranate*, Ju. iv. 5: 1 Sa. xxii. 6. *Migrion*, a precipice; the name prob. occurred frequently in the mountainous regions; the town Migrion was N. of Michmash.^g (3) *Ahiah*, either the same as Ahimelech^h (ch. xxi. 1; xx. 9), or an elder brother of Ahimelech's. *Ichabod*, ch. iv. 21. *Lord's priest*, referring to Eli. *ephod*, Ex. xxviii 4-35; 1 Sa. ii. 18. *sharp rock*, etc., R. V., "rocky crag on the one side and a rocky crag." (4) *Bozez*, shining. *Seneh*, "the acacia," fr. the thorny acacia trees wh. dot its course. Two sharp jutting rocks, *Seneh* running S. and *Bozez* N. (5) *forefront*, Heb. *tooth*; R. V., "The one crag rose up on the north in front of Michmash, and the other on the south in front of Geba."

Bozez and Seneh. — The ridges on either side of the valley exhibit two elevated points which project into the great wady; and the easternmost of these bluffs on each side were probably the outposts of the two garrisons of the Philistines and the Israelites. The road passes around the eastern side of the southern hill, the post of Israel, and then strikes over the western part of the northern one, the post of the Philistines and the scene of Jonathan's adventure. These hills struck us now, more than formerly, as of sharp ascent,

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I would rather obey than work miracles. — *Luther*. Wicked men obey for fear, but the good for love. — *Aristotle*.

A gentle heart is like fruit, which bends so low that it is at the mercy of every one who chooses to pluck it, while the harder fruit keeps out of reach.

the Hebrews without arms

a Prob. now *Tazyibeh*. — *Robinson*.

b 1 Sa. ix. 4.

c Jos. x. 10.

d Policy of the Phil. had been to disarm the inhabitants.

e. "In Is. vii. 25, the word translated *mattock* is prob. a weeding hook, or hoe." — *Anre*.

"Our greatest glory consists not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." — *Goldsmith*.

"In place, there nothing so becomes a man as modest stillness and humility." — *Shakespeare*.

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the two rocks, Bozez and Seneh

f "The perfect type of a warrior, according to the requirements of his age: he is everywhere the first in courage, in activity, and speed; slender also, and of well-made figure." — *Ewald*.

g Is. x. 28.

h *Ahiah* means friend of Jehovah, and *Ahimelech*, friend of the king, names very nearly identical.

B. c. cir. 1033.

Jonathan
and his
armor-
bearera Ju. xiv. 3; xv. 18;
1 Sa. xvii. 26, etc.b "Jonathan's
action, viewed in
itself, was rash and
contrary to all es-
tablished rules of
military disci-
pline."—*Jamieson*.

their exploit

c Comp. 1 Sa. xvii.
43, 44d "No sooner is he
within reach of
them than he
strikes them down,
while his compan-
ion behind him
dispatches those
whom he has dis-
abled."—*Ewald*."Sallust relates a
similar occurrence
in connection with
scaling a castle in
the Numidian
war."—*Bell, Ju-
gurth*, c. 89, 20."As full of peril
and adventurous
spirit as to o'er-
walk a current,
roaring loud, on
the unsteadfast
footing of a spear."
—*Shakespeare*.Saul per-
plexed by the
panic of
Philistinese As LXX, and ar-
gued by *Stanley*.
f Comp. 2 Sa. vi
2, 3."As to be per-
fectly just is an
attribute of the
Divine nature, to
be so to the utmost
of our abilities is
the glory of man."
—*Addison*.

and as appropriate to the circumstances of the narrative. They are isolated cliffs in the valley, except so far as the low ridge, at the end of which they are found, connected them back with the higher ground on each side. — *Robinson's Later Researches*.

6—10. (6) **uncircumcised**, term almost confined to the Phil.^a it may be, not intended to express doubt, only dependence on the Div. will. (7) **I am with thee**, willing to follow thee anywhere. (8) **discover ourselves**, let them see us climbing the cliff. (9) Comp. Gideon's sign of fleece. (10) Jonathan had doubtless sought God in prayer, and asked Him to permit this sign.^b **sign**, *R. V.*, "the sign."

Military faith. — We are brought face to face with a strange but fascinating development of the religious spirit—military faith. The subject has received a new and wonderful illustration in our day in the character and career of that great Christian hero General Gordon. In the career of Gordon, we see faith contributing an element of power, an element of daring and an element of security and success to a soldier, which can come from no other source. No one imagines that without his faith Gordon would have been what he was or could have done what he did. It is little to say that faith raised him high above all ordinary fears, or that it made him ready at any moment to risk, and if need be, to sacrifice his life. It did a great deal more. It gave him a conviction that he was an instrument in God's hands, and that when he was moved to undertake anything as being God's will, he would be carried through all difficulties, enabled to surmount all opposition, and to carry the point in face of the most tremendous odds. And to a great extent the result verified the belief. If Gordon could not be said to work miracles, he achieved results that even miracles could hardly have surpassed. — *Exp. Bib.*

11—13. (11) **out of the holes**, indic. how the Phil. despised Israel, as in a military sense defenseless. (12) **Come . . thing**, the language of scorn.^c (13) **slew after him**, put to death those Jonathan stunned.^d

The overthrow of the boastful. — I. The Philistines were cowardly. They saw but two men, and said, "Come up to us." II. They were scornful: "We will show you a thing." III. The deep insight of Jonathan. That word, "Come," showed they were afraid. Had they said, "Stop till we come down," he had been more wary. IV. What can be expected of the boastful but defeat?

Individual conviction. — Did not the reformation begin through the steadfastness of Luther, the miner's son of Eisleben, to the voice that spoke out so loudly to himself? Did not Carey lay the foundation of the modern mission in India, because he could not get rid of that verse of Scripture, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature?" Did not Livingstone persevere in the most dangerous, the most desperate enterprise of our time, because he could not quench the voice that called him to open up Africa or perish? Or to go back to Scripture times. A Jewish maiden at the court of the great king of Persia becomes the savior of her whole nation, because she feels that, at the risk of her life, she must speak a word for them to the king. Saul, of Tarsus, after his conversion, becomes impressed with the conviction that he must preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and through his faithfulness to that conviction, he lays the foundation of the whole European church. — *Exp. Bib.*

14—18. (14) **within . . half acre**, etc., *R. V.*, "within, as it were, half a furrow's length in an acre of land." (15) **trembling**, sudden panic, sure fore-runner of defeat. It rapidly spread through the Phil. host. **host**, *i. e.* the camp at Michmash. **people**, camp followers. **quaked**, perhaps should be understood literally, *Spk. Com.*, but more likely the expression refers to the widespread terror and confusion created by the panic among the Phil. — *Pulp. Com.*. *Cam. B.* **very great**, *lit.* "a trembling of God." (16) **watchmen**, etc., who were full in sight of Phil. camp, and could prob. even hear the tumult. **went on beating**, etc., *R. V.*, "went hither and thither." Comp. Ju. vii. 21, 22. (17) **Saul**, who knew nothing of the adventure, see vs. 1, 3. (18) **ark**, prob. should be *ephod*.^e There is no evidence that the ark had been brought from Kirjath-jearim.^f

Saul's perplexity (vs. 18) — I. How his perplexity was excited. 1. News

from the outposts brought in by scouts; 2. Noise of retreating panic-stricken foe; 3. The two heroes missing. II. How he sought to obtain relief. Sent for the ark to inquire through the priest. Learn—1. In our perplexity inquire of God; 2. What perplexes us may be for our good.

Ploughing in the East.—Dr. A. Clarke observes: "The ancients measured land by the quantum which a yoke of oxen might plough." The same mode of speaking is still used by this people. Thus in describing a man's possessions, they convey an idea of their extent by asking, "How many yokes of oxen will be required to keep the fields in order?" The Eastern farmers who wish to have a good crop plough their fields eight or ten times over, having made furrows lengthwise, they then cross them. The seed is also covered by the plough instead of by the harrow.—*Roberts. Saul's hypocrisy.*—Saul is a specimen of that class of persons who show a certain reverence and zeal for the outward forms of religion, and cherish even a superstitious reliance on them, but are not careful to cherish the inner spirit of vital religion, without which all outward forms and ordinances, even though instituted by God Himself, are mere "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal" (1 Cor. xiii. 12).—*Wordsworth.*

19-23. (19) talked,^a etc., inquiring of him what the tumult was. Withdraw thine hand, cease what thou art doing. In his impatience, Saul could not wait for answer or guidance fr. God. (20) assembled, lit. shouted, called to each other to haste to the battle,^b or "were cried together," i. e., by trumpet note. (21) Heb. . . time, forced into service of Phil. as militia or camp attendants. (22) hid themselves, ch. xiii. 6, 7. (23)^c Beth-aven, this the direction of the flight and pursuit, ch. xiii. 5. Saul pursued Phil. 15 or 20 miles.

Ancient method of seeking Divine counsel.—The question brought was one affecting the well being of the nation, or its army, or its king. The inquirer spoke in a low whisper, asking one question only at a time. The high priest, fixing his gaze on the "gems oracular" that "lay on his heart," fixed his thoughts on the light and perfection which they symbolized, on the holy name inscribed on them. The act was itself a prayer, and, like other prayers, it might be answered. After a time he passed into the new, mysterious, half-ecstatic state. All disturbing elements—selfishness, prejudice, the fear of man—were eliminated. He received the insight he craved. Men trusted in his decisions, as with us men trust the judgment which has been purified by prayer for the help of the eternal Spirit more than that which grows only out of debate and policy and calculation.—*Smith's Dict.*

24-27. (24) distressed, i. e. faint fr. hunger and thirst, ch. xiii. 6, a consequence of Saul's rashness. cursed, etc., the people were made by Saul to take this vow.^d (25) Ewald suggests should read, "the whole land was excavated by wild honey," or full of holes of wild honey. (26) into the wood, poss. place of rendezvous. dropped,^e R. V., "behold a stream of honey." (27) enlightened, simply meaning he was refreshed.

Zeal for outward forms.—Louis XIV. has led a most wicked and profligate life, and he has ever and anon qualms that threaten him with the wrath of God. To avert that wrath, he must be more attentive to his religious duties. He must show more favor to the church, exalt her dignitaries to greater honor, endow her orders and foundations with greater wealth. But that is not all. He must use all the arms and resources of his kingdom for ridding the Church of her enemies. For twenty years he must harass the Protestants with every kind of vexatious interference, shutting up their churches on frivolous pretexts, compelling them to bury their dead by night, forbidding the singing of psalms in worship, subjecting them to great injustice in their civil capacity, and at last, by the revocation of the edict that gave them toleration, sweeping them from the kingdom in hundreds of thousands, till hardly a Protestant is left behind. What the magnificent monarch did on a large scale, millions of obscurer men have done on a small.—*Exp. Bib.*

Rash vows.—

Take then no vow at random; ta'en in faith
Preserve it; yet not bent, as Jephthah once,
Blindly to execute a rash resolve,
Whom better it had suited to exclaim,
"I have done ill," than to redeem his pledge
By doing worse.—*Dante.*

B. c. cir. 1033.

"The Heb. is obscure. A measure of time would not be out of place if the words could mean, 'In about half the time that a yoke of oxen draw a furrow in the field.'"—*Spk. Com.*

the battle of
Bethaven

^a Nu. xxvii. 21.

^b Ju. vii. 22; 2 Ch. xx. 23.

^c Ex. xiv. 30; Ps. xiv. 6, 7; Hos. i. 7.

A Christian soldier, whose term of enlistment had nearly expired, was anticipating much pleasure from rejoining his family and friends. Being reminded that he might fall first, he replied "I know it; but, if I fall, the battle-field will only be a shorter cut to glory." In the battle of the Wilderness, he went home by the shorter way.

Jonathan
unknown-
ingly breaks
his father's
command

^d "A specimen of Saul's hot, hasty, and headstrong wilfulness and imperiousness, joined to a show of zeal for the outward forms of religion."—*Wordsworth.*

^e "In the Feh. retreat from Moscow the soldiers observed some combs of honey on the top of a high tree, and climbed up to get it. They threw down the comb by morsels, and their comrades pounced upon it like so many famished hounds."—*Quoted in Spk. Com.*

B. C. cir. 1033.

the people transgress

a Le. vii. 26, 27.

"The surest way to prevent seditions (if the times do bear it) is to take away the matter of them; for if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire."—*Bacon*.

"Intellectually, as politically, the direction of all true progress is towards greater freedom, and a king and endless succession of ideas."—*Bovee*.

Saul builds an altar

b Comp. 1 Chr. xxvii. 24.

"Government began in tyranny and force, began in the feudalism of the soldier and bigotry of the priest; and the idea of justice and humanity have been fighting their way, like a thunder-storm, against the organized selfishness of human nature."—*Wendell Phillips*.

"The power is detested, and miserable is the life of him who wishes rather to be feared than loved."—*Cornelius Nepos*.

"Society is well governed when the people obey the magistrates, and the magistrates the laws."—*Solon*.

popular discontent

"But endless is the list of human ills, and sighs might sooner fall than cause to sigh."—*Young*.

28—32. (28) **straitly**, strictly. (29) **troubled**, brought disaster, *i. e.* the faintness of the soldiers prevented them fr. continuing the slaughter of the Phil. comp. Jos. vii. 25. (30) **much more**, Saul's injunction was unreasonable and mischievous, and prevented the reaping of the full results of Jon.'s enterprise. (31) **Aijalon**, 15 to 20 miles fr. Michmash; mod. *Yalo*. (32) Further conseq. of Saul's foolish injunction: desperate hunger led to ravenous feeding in sinful ways."

Too much governed (vs. 32). — We have here related the consequences of injudicious restraints. I. Why they were imposed (vs. 24). An arbitrary law framed by the whim or pride of one. II. Effect of the imposition. People's natural appetite so roused by a long fast that they took food at length regardless of the law of God. Learn—1. People, children, servants may be too much governed; 2. Rigid human rules may lead to violation of moral law, etc.

Saul's cruelty. — To fast in the solitude of one's chamber, where there is no extra wear and tear of the bodily organs, and therefore no special need for recruiting them, is comparatively safe and easy. But to fast amid the struggles of battle or the hurry of a pursuit; to fast under the burning sun and that strain of the system which brings the keenest thirst; to fast under exertions that rapidly exhaust the thews and sinews, and call for a renewal of their tissues—to fast in circumstances like these involved an amount of suffering which it is not easy to estimate. It was cruel in Saul to impose a fast at such a time, all the more that, being commander-in-chief of the army, it was his duty to do his utmost for the comfort of his soldiers.—*Exp. Bib.*

33—35. (33) **sin**, comp. Ge. ix. 4. **transgressed**, marg. *dealt treacherously, i. e.* "faithlessly to the covenant bet. Israel and Jehovah."—*Pulp. Com.* **roll a great stone**, for slaughtering on. **this day**, immediately. (34) **slay them here**, under my supervision. (35) **built an altar**, this stone forming a part of it. The intim. is that he began to build it, but *did not finish it*.^b He is not concerned in spirit for his unworthy behavior toward God. He feels only that his own interests as king are imperiled. It is this selfish motive that makes him determine to be more religious.—*Exp. B.*

Unjust reproaches (vs. 33). — "Ye have transgressed." I. So, doubtless, we have, but it was the rebound consequent on unjust legislation. II. So, doubtless, we have; but on thy part it is most ungenerous to remind us of our sin; we incurred the penalty fighting for thee. III. So, doubtless, we have; but it is a question whether your sin is not greater.

Unconscious influence. — How solemn is the thought of the influence which consciously or unconsciously we are continually exercising upon others! We cannot rid ourselves from this responsibility. It follows us, in proportion to the weight of our characters, into all our actions; nor does it cease when we refrain to act, for who will say that the example of indolence or idleness has no influence? Our words pass from us, but how often are they, in the ears of those that hear them, living seeds that spring up either as wheat or as noxious weeds!

Responsibility of influence.—

The smallest bark on life's tumultuous ocean;

Will leave a track behind forever;

The slightest wave of influence, set in motion,

Extends and widens to the eternal shore;

We should be wary, then, who go before

A myriad yet to be; and we should take

Our bearing carefully where breakers roar,

And fearful tempests gather; one mistake

May wreck unnumbered barks that follow in our wake.

36—40. (36) **Let us go down**, Saul does not inquire of God, so is reproved by the priest. **draw near . . . God**, *i. e.* to Saul's altar. The priest alone dared thwart the king. (37) **asked counsel**, inquired of God by *Urim and Thummim*. (38) **this sin**, suspecting some person for delayed response. Comp. Achan's case. (39) **as the Lord liveth**, needlessly taking a new oath: another sign of rashness. (40) **people said**, none dared resist Saul's will.

The assent of indifference. — The words, "Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee," twice repeated vs. 36, 40, and the silence of the people when ques-

tioned, vs. 39, point to the beginning of resentment. I. Saul receives in this indifference and silence a check from the people. II. He also receives a check from God, vs. 37. III. Proudly self-confident, he will cast lots between the people and himself. IV. The result proved that he had erred.

Saul's selfishness and injustice.—Jonathan was as remarkable for the power of faith as Saul for the want of it. Jonathan had been wonderfully blessed that day, but now that Saul, through the priest, sought to have a communication with God, none was given. Might he not have seen that the real cause of this was that Saul wanted what Jonathan possessed? Besides, was Saul doing justice to Jonathan in taking the enterprise out of his hands? If Jonathan began it, was he not entitled to finish it? Would not Saul have been doing a thing alike generous and just had he stood aside at this time, and called on Jonathan to complete the work of the day? If the king of England was justified in not going to the help of the Black Prince, serious though his danger was, but leaving him to extricate himself, and thus enjoy the whole credit of his valor, might not Saul have let his son end the enterprise which he had so auspiciously begun?—*Exp. Bib.*

B. C. cir. 1033.

"Indifference never wrote great works, nor thought out striking inventions, nor reared the solemn architecture that awed the soul, nor breathed sublime music, nor painted glorious pictures, nor undertook heroic philanthropies. All these grands are born of enthusiasm, are done heartily."—*Anon.*

41—46. (41) Give a perfect lot, R. V., "show the right." (42) taken, or fixed on as the guilty one. (43) vs. 27. I. . taste, "I did certainly taste . . . here I am: I will die." Jonathan's words are not a lamentation over his hard fate, as the A. V. implies, but a confession that the guilt, though involuntary, was his, and an heroic expression of readiness to sacrifice his life for his country even in the hour of victory.—*Cam. B.* (44) God do so, Ru. i. 17. (45) "Determined opposition of the people, who see God's will with more impartial vision."—*Ewald.* (46) went up, abandoning intention.

they rescue Jonathan

a Comp. case of Jephthah's daughter.

Importance of little things (vs. 43).—I. Little things become important as a part of a series—that is, by aggregation. II. They also become important because they have critical relations to mind and temperament to times and seasons. III. A little thing, or that which men call little, may be very trifling indeed for one purpose, and in one direction; and yet, for another purpose, and in another direction, it may be extremely potent.—*Beecher.*

"There was now a freer and more understanding spirit in the nation at large than in the times of Jephthah; the people recognized the relig. aspect of Jon.'s exploit, and rallied round him with a zeal that overbore even the royal vow."—*Stanley.*

Safety in God.—Jonathan's life was safe in God's care in spite of zeal for a fictitious regard for truth on the part of his father. The voice of the people demanding his release was the voice of God, and the honor put on Jonathan during his previous day, was evidence to all but the obstinate king of a favor much to be desired. He who had gone forth in the service of the Lord with true, honest heart, and had been shielded in the dangerous enterprise, was not forsaken by his God when now the rashness of man encompassed his life with peril. Thus, the custom of Eastern rulers keeping their word when once uttered (Judges xi. 30—39; Matt. xiv. 9), personal consistency, and royal authority must give place where God makes manifest his approval.—*Pulp. Com.*

"Trivial circumstances show the manners of the age."

47—52. (47) took the kingdom, defeat of Phil. brought the country into subjection to him. Zobah, one of the smaller kingdoms of Aram. Situate bet. Damascus and the Euphrates. vexed, Heb. means to condemn, chastise. Comp. 2 Sa. viii. 14. (48) he gathered an host, R. V., "he did valiantly." (49) "Names of his children indic. how Saul's mind swayed bet. old heathen superstitions, and the pure relig. of Jehovah."—*Stanley.* (50, 51) Comp. 1 Sa. ix. 1. son of Abiel, there can be little doubt that the right reading is sons, and not son. We thus get an intelligible statement—"And Kish the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner, were sons of Abiel."—*Pulp. Com.* (52) sore war, continuous and desperate. took him, as threatened, ch. viii. 11.

the wars and family of Saul

Saul's body guard (vs. 52).—This taking to himself of the strong and valiant was—I. A predicted measure, viii. 11. II. An arbitrary measure—people not consulted. III. A politic measure. IV. An expensive measure. So many less to till the land; so many more to be supported by the toilers.

War and peace.—Franklin was a staunch opposer of the war system. "If statesmen," says he, "were more accustomed to calculation, wars would be much less frequent. Canada might have been purchased from France for a tenth part of the money England spent in the conquest of it; and if, instead of fighting us for the power to tax us, she had kept us in good humor by allowing us to dispose of our own money, and giving us now and then a little of her own by way of donation to colleges or hospitals, for cutting canals, or

"Our life is a warfare; and we ought not, while passing through it, to sleep without a sentinel or march without a scout. He who neglects either of these precautions exposes himself to surprise, and to become a prey to the diligence and perseverance of his adversary."—*Felt-ham.*

B. C. cir. 1033.

Gillimez, when he was led in triumph by Belisarius, cried out, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

fortifying ports, she might easily have drawn from us much more by occasional voluntary grants and contributions, than ever she could by taxes. Sensible people will give a bucket or two of water to a dry pump, in order to get from it afterwards all they want. After much occasion to consider the folly and mischiefs of a state of warfare, and the little or no advantage obtained even by those nations which have conducted it with the most success, I have been apt to think there has never been, nor ever will be, any such thing as a good war or a bad peace."

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

Samuel charges Saul to smite Amalek

a Jos. vi. 17-19.

b 1 Sa. xiv. 48.

"It is necessary to look forward as well as backward, as some think it always necessary to regulate their conduct by things that have been done of old times; but that past which is so presumptuously brought forward as a precedent for the present, was itself founded on an alteration of some past that went before it." — *Madame de Staël*

the Kenites are spared

c Their principal seat seems to have been the rocky tracts on the S. and S. W. of Palestine, near the Amalekites (Nu. xxiv. 21, 22). — *Ayre*.

"Whatever was the general condition of the Midianites, the tribe of the Kenites possessed a knowledge of the true God in the time of Jethro." — *Kilto*.

d Nu. xxiv. 7; Es. iii. 1.

"Agag was saved for his stature and beauty." — *Josephus*.

"Let them obey that know not how to rule." — *Shakespeare*

1-5. (1) also said, some years after, during wh. Saul had been left very much to himself. Now his faithfulness to God must be again tested. The interest of this chapter lies in the unfolding of Saul's character, and so it follows immediately upon ch. xiv., which was occupied with the same subject, without any note of chronology, because the historical narrative is subservient to the personal. — *Pulp. Com.* hearken thou, by an exact and entire obedience. (2) Lord of hosts, 1 Sa. i. 11. remember, R. V., "I have marked that." Amalek, Ex. xvii. 8-16; Nu. xxiv. 20. laid wait, R. V., "set himself against him." (3) utterly destroy, as a sacred war all the spoil was devoted, put under the ban.^a Provocation seems to have been given by the Amalekites.^b (4) Telaim, prob. Telem of Jos. xv. 24. Comp. numb. of army with ch. xiii. 15. (5) laid wait, marg. fought.

Providential mercies a reason for obedience (vs. 1). — I. God sometimes promotes men for a specific purpose (Est. iv. 14). II. Instead of regarding promotion as an evidence of favor to ourselves only, we should ask what God may design for others through us. III. The honor set upon us by God should induce us to gratefully obey Him; even when obedience may be difficult.

God's just dealings with men. — There are some particular precepts in Scripture given to particular persons, requiring actions which would be immoral and vicious were it not for such precepts. But it is easy to see that all these are of such a kind as that the precept changes the whole nature of the case, and of the actions, and both constitutes and shows that not to be unjust or immoral which, prior to the precept, must have appeared and really have been so; which may well be, since none of these precepts are contrary to immutable morality. Men have no right to either life or property, but what arises solely from the grant of God; when this grant is revoked, they cease to have any right at all in either; and when this revocation is made known, as surely as it is possible it may be, it must cease to be unjust to deprive them of either. — *Bp. Butler*.

6-9. (6) Kenites,^c Ge. xv. 19. (7) Havilah, Ge. xxv. 18. Shur, Ge. xvi. 7; the sense of this verse is that Saul began his devastating course on the borders of Judæa and continued up to the limits of Egypt. (8) Agag, fire, flaming, prob. the official title of kings of Amalek.^d (9) spared Agag, etc., "to make a splendid show at the sacrificial thanksgiving." In this Saul acted on his own will, not in simple obedience to God.

Past kindness requited (vs. 6). — Learn — I, How greatly God loves His own people. He will avenge their wrongs and reward their helpers. II. Deeds of kindness remembered by a God of mercy. III. Do good to all men as you have opportunity. Bread cast on the waters found after many days. IV. Note how our present conduct may affect our remote posterity.

Kindness to an enemy. — A slave, who had by the force of his sterling worth risen high in the confidence of his master, saw one day, trembling in the slave market, a negro, whose gray head and bent form showed him to be in the last weakness of old age. He implored his master to purchase him. He expressed his surprise, but gave his consent. The old man was bought and conveyed to the estate. When there, he who had pleaded for him took him to his own cabin — placed him on his own bed — fed him at his own board — gave him water from his own cup; when he shivered carried him into the sunshine; when he drooped in the hut, bore him softly to the shade. "What is the meaning of all this?" asked a witness. "Is he your father?" "No." "Is he your brother?" "No." "Is he, then, your friend?" "No! he is my enemy. Years ago he stole me from my native village, and sold me for a slave: and the good Lord has said, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he

thirst, give him drink: for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

B. C. chr. 1033.

10-15. (10) unto Sam., as prophet. (11) **repenteth me**, His repentance is not to be understood as though He who foreknows all things *regretted* His action, nor is it a sign of mutability. A change in the attitude of man to God necessarily involves a corresponding change in the attitude of God to man. — *Cam. B.* **grieved**,^a Heb. displeased, angry. *R. V.*, "Sam. was wroth." **he cried**, in prayer. (12) **Carmel**,^b not Mount Carmel, but a city in the hill country of Judah, now *Kurmul*. **a place**, *R. V.*, monument.^c (15) **to sacrifice**, Saul supposed intended worship of God would excuse or cover disobedience. "The king who pretended to keep the booty for the purpose of offering sacrifice to the Lord his God, was evidently beginning to play the hypocrite: — to make the service of God an excuse for acts of selfishness, and so to introduce all that is vilest in king-craft as well as in priest-craft." — *Maurice, Prophets and Kings.*

The rigor of divine law (vs. 14). — I. The transcendent importance of rendering literal obedience to Divine requirements. Divine language never exceeds Divine meaning. II. The fearful possibility of resting satisfied with partial obedience. III. The utter impossibility of rendering disobedience well-pleasing to God. 1. Divine requirements are absolute; 2. God will not allow one duty to be performed on the ruins of another. IV. The danger of being seduced into disobedience by social clamor. 1. There is a higher law than the verdict of society; 2. There is a crisis in which social force can yield us no assistance. Conclusion — 1. Let the guilty sue for pardon; 2. Let the disobedient be assured of detection; 3. Let no man tamper with the word of God. — *Parker.*

A man of prayer. — John Welch of Ayr was pre-eminently a man of prayer. Whilst minister at Ettrick he was boarded in the house of one named Mitchell. A son of his landlord, who slept with Welch, used to tell, in after years, how he would lay a Scot's plaid above his bed-clothes and would rise and cover himself with it when he went to prayer; for, from the beginning of his ministry, "he reckoned the day ill-spent if he stayed not seven or eight hours in prayer." He would, we are told, retire many nights to the church and spend the whole night in prayer — praying with an audible and sometimes with a loud voice. Once his wife, going at night to his closet, where he had been long at prayer, and fearing he should catch cold, heard him say, "Lord, wilt thou not grant me Scotland?" and, after a pause, "Enough, Lord, enough." Once he got such nearness to the Lord in prayer that he exclaimed, "Hold Thy hand, Lord; remember Thy servant is a clay vessel, and can hold no more." — *Old Test. Anec.*

16-21. (16) **Stay**, forbear! Sam, sees now the utter helplessness of interceding longer for Saul, and acquiesces in the Divine judgment. **this night**, Gilgal only some fifteen miles fr. Ramah. (17) **When**, *R. V.*, "though," little, ch. ix. 21. **the Lord anointed**, thou art only a servant to obey. (18) **the sinners**,^d Saul only executor of deserved punishment. (19) **fly upon**, ch. xiv. 32, dealing with them in his own wilfulness. (20) Saul's was obedience with a *but*. It should have had no such limitation. (21) **the people**, he meanly tries to put the blame on others. **should have been**, he evidently knew well what his duty had been. It was "devoted," did not belong to the Israelites, and no offering could be made of it. **thy God**, censure for Sam.^e

Saul's disobedience and excuses (vss. 20, 21). — Learn, from the history before us — I. The nature of the obedience required by God. It must be total and entire. Partial fulfilment of Divine commands is but little better than total disregard of them. II. The growing nature of sin. One sin makes many. Saul's disobedience leads to his making mean excuses. III. The firmness with which the wrong desires of the multitude should be met. — *Ramsden.*

Punishment of disobedience. — The Rev. Herbert Palmer, B. D., Master of Queen's College, Cambridge, who died in 1647, and who was "a burning and shining light" in his day, was remarkable for his dutiful affection to his parents, not only when he was a child, but during his whole life. He was peculiarly attentive to his pious, aged mother; promoting, to the utmost of his power, both her temporal and spiritual comfort, even to the day of her death, which happened not long before his own. He used frequently to enforce this duty in his ministry, observing the emphasis which God puts upon it,

Saul tries to deceive Samuel

^a Jo. iv. 1.

^b Jos. xv. 55; 1 Sa. xxvii. 3.

^c "According to Jewish tradition, a triumphal arch of olives, myrtles and palms." — *Stanley.*

"When God changes His doings by His unchangeable counsel, then by reason of the change of His doing, and not of His design, He is said to repent." — *Wordsworth.*

The sparing of King Agag seems to have been a piece of vanity with Saul, for a conqueror returning home with a royal prisoner was greatly thought of in those eastern lands. But the sparing of the prey was a matter of pure greed. — *Exp. B.*

You cannot walk in the ways of Christ, if you are not alive to God in Christ.

Samuel's reproof and Saul's duplicity

^d Ge. xlii. 13.

^e "Saul says that Sam. blames him for what was done in honor of Sam's God." — *Spk. Com.*

"The most difficult province in friendship is the letting a man see his faults and errors; which should, if possible, be so contrived, that he may perceive our advice is given him, not so much to please ourselves as for his own advantage. The reproaches, therefore, of a friend should always be strictly just and not too frequent." — *Budgett.*

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Samuel declares Saul rejected

"Thus clearly is one of the highest prophetic ideas anticipated here." *Ewald.*

a Ge. xxxi. 19; comp. Is. i. 11, 16, 17, lxvi. 3; Je. vii. 22, 23; Mi. vi. 6-8; Ho. vi. 6; Mar. xii. 33.

Saul's fruitless remorse

"When a man sinneth, he thinketh with himself, I will do this no more; after, another sin promiseth as much profit as that, and he saith again, I will do this no more; presently another sin promiseth as much profit as that, and he saith again, I will do this and no more. This is the property of sin to spur a man forward, until he commit that which he condemneth himself, that he may be tormented of his own conscience." *Henry Smith*

Samuel declares the kingdom rent from Saul

b "If Saul had been really peni-

through the whole of the Scriptures. He used to say that he had noticed the effects of disobedience to parents, so that he scarcely ever knew undutiful children escape some visible judgment of God in the present life; he also thought that the mischiefs which occur in society frequently take their rise in contempt of parental authority.

22, 23. (22) "There is a poetical rhythm in the original, wh. gives it the tone of a Div. oracle uttered by the Spirit of God."—*Wordsworth*. **than sacrifice**, wh. is only offering what a man *has*, obedience is offering *himself*, (23) **rebellion**, the meaning is: "Rebellion is as bad as the sin of divination, and stubbornness is as bad as worshipping false gods, and teraphim."—*Spk. Com.* **stubbornness**, self-willed opposition to God. **idolatry**, Heb. *teraphim*,^a household gods.

True obedience better than verbal protestations.—Why the Lord prefers obedience to sacrifice, etc. I. It is a greater proof of sincerity. To sacrifice easy, obedience difficult; sacrifice momentary, obedience continual; sacrifice formal, obedience a matter of heart and conscience. II. Its effect on others more deep, continuous, and permanent. Learn:—Not what you do or give, but what you are, that needs most thought.

Impure motives in religious work.—The traveler from Rome to Gaeta crosses the Maremma. He watches the sun setting over its dim, dismal, and yet majestic fanes; he sees a white mist rising soft, beautiful, tinged now with the fair glow of sunlight, now with the paler shades of moonlight—a beautiful mist indeed; but plunge into it, and the mist is poison. Just as fatal are the effects of religious work when engaged in from impure motives.—*Old Test Anec.*

24-27. (24) **sinned**, the language of repentance, not the full spirit of it. Saul only dreaded *punishment*. Saul's worst qualities had now become petrified. His wilfulness, his selfishness, his passionateness, his jealousy, had now got complete control, nor could their current be turned aside.—*Exp. Bib.* **feared the people**, comp. ch. xiii. 45. As king it was his duty to lead, and if need be restrain, the people. (25) **turn . . . Lord**, continuing his own wilful way, and persuading Sam. to sanction it. (26) **not return**, public disapproval of Saul's act must be shown. (27) **skirt**, some kind of a lapet or flap hanging down behind, which could be easily torn or cut off, seems to be meant. *Cp.* xxiv. 4. As Samuel turned to go, Saul seized it to detain him, and it was torn off. The accident served Samuel as an emblem of the complete severance of the sovereignty from Saul.—*Cam. B.* **mantle**, characteristic dress of the prophet.

A lost kingdom (vs. 26).—I. The highest personal qualities and widest material resources not sufficient to hold a kingdom against the will of God. Saul's strength, courage, etc. II. The rejection of the word of the Lord leads ever to most disastrous consequences. Loss of personal influence, happiness, etc. III. Rejecting the word of grace brings one under the word of condemnation, and leads to forfeiture of kingdom of heaven. IV. We have now before us the picture of a man whom God has rejected.

Saul's faithfulness.—We may see in the history of Saul how important it is that we should make the most of the opportunities which God sets before us. There came to the son of Kish a tidal time of favor, which, if he had only recognized and improved it might have carried him, not only to greatness, but to goodness. But he proved faithless to the trust committed to him, and became in the end a worse man than he would have been if no such privileges had been conferred upon him. . . . His career is a melancholy illustration of the truth of the Saviour's words: "From him that hath not, shall be taken away even that he hath."—*W. M. Taylor.*

28-31. (28) **this day**, actual deprivation did not come at once, but this was the beginning of his downfall. (29) **Strength**, Heb. *netsah*, what is bright and shines continually, and so may be relied on. The victory of Israel. The glory of Israel. **nor repeat**, a seeming contradiction: it is because God is unchangeable that in His dealings with men their faithlessness compels Him to make a seeming change in His action. (30) **honour . . . people**, Saul feared *disgrace* much more than sin.^b (31) Saul's meaning seems to be, Well, granting that I have sinned, and that this sentence of exclusion from the kingdom is passed upon me, yet at least pay me the honor due to the rank which

I still continue to hold. And to this request Samuel accedes. Saul was *de facto* king, and would continue to be so during his lifetime. — *Pulp. Com.*

Human pity and Divine integrity. — We have here — I. An instance of a too late repentance. II. Of an insufficient repentance. Saul mourned because of loss of power, etc. III. Of human pity excited by the spectacle of human sorrow. IV. A man vainly seeking by attention to the outward forms of religion to recover the Divine favor of Him who desires truth in the inward parts.

God's immutability. — A boat rows against the stream, the current punishes it. . . . The boat turns and goes with the stream, the current assists it. . . . But the current is the same, it has not changed — only the boat has changed its relationship to the current. Neither does God change. We change, and the same law which executed itself in punishment now expresses itself in reward. — *Brooke. Sin a master.* — When the morning sun is bright, and the summer breezes gently blowing from the shore, the little river-boat is enticed from the harbor to start on her trip of pleasure on the clear, calm sea. All nature seems to enlist in her service. The fair wind fills her sails, the favorable tide rolls onward in her course the parted sea makes way for her to glide swiftly and merrily on her happy voyage; but having thus been her servants, and carried her whither she would these soon become her masters, and carry her whither she would not. The breeze that swelled her sails has become a storm, and rends them; the waves that quietly rippled for her pleasure now rise in fury, and dash over her for her destruction; and the vessel which rode in the morning as a queen upon the waters sinks before night comes on, the slave of those very winds and waves which had beguiled her to use them as her servants. So it is with sin. — *Morse.*

32—35. (32) *delicately,*^a *anxiously*, in terror of his fate. (33) *so*, or still more.^b *hewed, etc.*, perchance by his own hand, some think by executioner. Thus fulfilling the ban, or devotement, wh. Saul had neglected. The swift retribution executed on the one king was but the sign of the slower retribution pronounced upon the other. In one case the doom was rapid; in the other it was deferred; in both it was sure. — *Exp. B.* (34) Saul prob. offended at Agag's execution. (35) *came no more to see*, these words involve the cessation of that relation in which Samuel and Saul had previously stood to one another as respectively the prophet and king of the same Jehovah. Saul was no longer the representative of Jehovah, and consequently Samuel no more came to him, bearing messages and commands, and giving him counsel and guidance from God. — *Pulp. Com. mourned for*, ch. xvi. 1. *repented*, *see vs. 11.*

Agag's last words (vs. 33). — I. In what respect the bitterness of death was passed to Agag. To him, a proud heathen, there was nothing worse than defeat and capture by foes he had despised. To worldly men, who have no thought of the future, there are things worse than death, as poverty, disgrace, disease, etc. II. The higher sense in which the bitterness of death may be past. When by faith in Christ the favor of God and the hope of immortality are realized. The sting of death extracted. The Christian a victor in Christ.

God's judgments on persecutors. — Persecutors, and others who have unjustly shed the blood of their fellow-creatures, have often, in the righteous providence of God, met with a violent death, or been visited by signal judgments. Nero was driven from his throne, and, perceiving his life in danger, became his own executioner; Domitian was killed by his own servants; Hadrian died of a distressing disease, which was accompanied with great mental agony; Severus never prospered in his affairs after he persecuted the church, and was killed by the treachery of his son; Maximinus reigned but three years, and died a violent death; Decius was drowned in a marsh, and his body never found; Valerian was taken prisoner by the Persians, and, after enduring the horrors of captivity for several years, was flayed alive; Diocletian was compelled to resign his empire, and became insane. — *Whitecross.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1—5. (1) *rejected him*,^c *bec.* he had proved unfaithful by his wilfulness. *horn*, comp. *vial* of ch. x. 1, the word is not the same. *Jesse*, Ru. iv. 17—22. (2) *with thee*, in thine hand. *come to sacrifice*, Sam. was to conceal his true object by setting forth prominently a secondary object.^d It may be

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tent, he would have prayed to be humbled, rather than to be honored." — *St. Gregory, thro' Wordsworth.*

"It is a great deal better to live a holy life than to talk about it. Lighthouses do not ring bells and fire cannons to call attention to their shining — they just shine."

death of Agag — Samuel mourns for Saul

a "Heb. *ma-adan-noth*, from *adan*, to live softly, voluptuously." — *Genesis*.

b "Bec. in losing her son, she loses also the king of her people, and her loss is thus greater than that of any other bereaved mother in the nation." — *Ewald*.

"What disarrays like death? It defaces the fascination of the beautiful. It breaks the lamp of the wise. It withers the strength of the mighty. It snatches the store of the rich. Kings are stripped of trapping, trophy, treasure; 'their glory shall not descend after them.'" — *E. W. Hamilton.*

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life of David

Samuel charged with the anointing
c 1 Sa. xv. 10, 11.
d "Secrecy and

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concealment are not the same as duplicity and falsehood. Concealment of a good purpose, for a good purpose, is clearly justifiable, e. g., in war, in medical treatment, in state policy, and in the ordinary affairs of life. There is nothing in the least inconsistent with truth in the occurrence here related."—*Spk. Com.*

a "Samuel, being the offerer, had a right to invite any guest he pleased."—*Jamieson.*

the three sons of Jesse

b 1 Sa. x. 23, 24; Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11; Lu. xvi. 15; c 1 Sa. xvii. 13; 2 Sa. xiii. 3; 1 Ch. ii. 13; xi. 7.

"The sea works, the heavens move, the earth never stands still. Thus the heart of man never rests, sleeping or waking; it fancies more in a moment than it can compass in many years. Lust entices it, vanity possesses it, anger disquiets it, pleasure seduces it, envy torments it, sorrow and sadness vex and molest it. It finds no rest until it returns to Christ."—*Spencer.*

"Lord! therefore make my heart upright, Whate'er my deeds do seem; And righteous rather in Thy sight, Than in the world's esteem."

—*Wither.*

David is sent for and anointed

d "We are enabled to fix his appearance at once in our

assumed that it was the custom of Sam. to hold religious services in the different towns, to keep alive the sense of religion, and to select young men for his prophetic schools (3) **to the sacrifice**,^a to the social feast that followed the sacrifice. (4) **trembled**, as Beth. was not one of the circuit towns, the elders cd. not account for this special visit. (5) **sanctify**, Ex. xix. 14, 15. **he sanctified . . . sons**, Sam. was anxious to have a private interview with them, and moreover to be sure that no legal impurity hinder the execution of his purpose.

Our grief to be moderated by the Divine will (vs. 1). — I. The cause of Samuel's grief. The decline of a great man in the favor of God. Disappointment in one's official work. II. The corrective of this sorrow. The will of God. To grieve may be natural; to continue to grieve may be a sin. *The possible wickedness of a backslider (vs. 2).* — I. The first step downward — departure from God. II. The second step — rejection by God. III. The possible sin of such — murder of a prophet in discharge of official functions.

The end of grief.—

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended,
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserved when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.
The robb'd, that smiles, steals something from the thief;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.—*Shakespeare.*

6--10. (6) **said**, not aloud but he had this thought in his heart. (7) God spake in the *soul* of the prophet, guiding his judgment and actions. **outward appearance**, this had been the ground of people's satisfaction in Saul.^b (8) **pass before**, Sam.'s feeling on sight of each son decided the choice. (9) **Shammah**, also written *Shimeah*, and *Shimma*.^c (10) **seven**, altogether; or perhaps without David; comp. 1 Chr. ii. 13-15.

Man's heart under God's eye (vs. 7). — Consider — I. God's knowledge of human nature. It is — 1. Immediate and direct; 2. Perfect; 3. Surpassing men's knowledge of each other, and of themselves. II. The lessons this subject yields. 1. The folly of permitted self-delusion; 2. The utter uselessness of all hypocrisy; 3. The exposed position of all our sins; 4. The thorough competency of God to save us; 5. The duty of being passive under Divine discipline; 6. The reasonableness of our acting on God's judgment of men. Conclusion: — See here — (1) An antidote for disquiet under misconception and misrepresentation; (2) A motive to diligence in keeping the heart; (3) The advantageous position of Him who is now our Lord and Master, and who will come to be our Judge. — *S. Martin.*

Judging from appearances. — Whatever truth there may be in phrenology, or in Lavater's kindred science of physiognomy, we shall do well scrupulously to avoid forming an opinion against a man from his personal appearance. If we so judge we shall often commit the greatest injustice, which may, if we should ever live to be disfigured by sickness or marred by age, be returned into our own bosom to our bitter sorrow. Plato compared Socrates to the gallipots of the Athenian apothecaries, on the outside of which were painted grotesque figures of apes and owls, but they contained within precious balsams. All the beauty of a Cleopatra cannot save her name from being infamous; personal attractions have adorned some of the grossest monsters that ever cursed humanity. Judge then no man or woman after their outward fashion, but with purified eye behold the hidden beauty of the heart and life. — *Spurgeon.*

11-13. (11) **sit down**, sit at table. **till he come**, David prob. 18 yrs. of age at this time. (12) **ruddy**, golden-haired.^d (13) **horn**, "long horn filled with the consecrated oil preserved in the Tabernacle at Nob." **anointed**, the true significance of this act was not revealed to David's brothers. They supposed that Sam. had chosen David for his prophetic school, where he was sent and instructed by Sam.

The forgotten son (vs. 11). — I. He was the youngest son. We often find the youngest son becoming the greatest. II. He was engaged in peaceful pursuits. There did not seem to be any preparation for future eminence. III.

The child of whom we may think least may be the greatest. None of the family appear to have thought much of David (xvii. 28).

David's anointing. — We are not informed whether Samuel explained to him, or to his father, the meaning of this sacred rite. The likelihood is that he did not, because his words would have been sure in some way or other to have reached the ears of Saul, and then all his prudential measures would have been taken in vain. But David would receive all needful knowledge from another quarter, for "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward." Not with stormful gust, like that which swept over the land of Saul, when he met the children of the prophets, and which speedily passed away, but with the gentle silence of the opening dawn which brightens into perfect day, the Spirit came unto David's heart, and soon, by his secret, supernatural suggestions, he would discover for what purpose the prophet had emptied his horn of oil upon his head. — *Wm. M. Taylor.*

14-18. (14) *evil spirit, etc.*, a melancholy spirit.^a It is never called "the spirit of Jehovah," which always designates the spirit of holiness. Saul's apostasy was punished not merely by the withdrawal of the grace which had been given as the endowment of his office, but by positive assaults from the powers of evil, akin to the demoniacal possession of the N. T. — *Cam. B. from the Lord*, sent as judgment. *Comp. hardening Phar.'s heart.* troubled him, terrified. (16) *cunning*, or skilful. *with his hand*, some harps played thus, and some with an instrument called a *plectrum*. *be well*,^b music the best remedy for such melancholy. (17) *play well*, everything depended on the man's having a soul for music, and so able to meet Saul's moods. (18) *servants*, not the same word as in vss. 15, 16, 17, wh. literally means "slaves;" *R. V.*, "young men;" *i. e.* military attendant. Saul had no hint of David's anointing. *matters, R. V.*, "speech."

The world's remedy for a troubled spirit (vs. 16). — I. The world's remedy here was music. It is often change of scene. II. The world's remedy, as in this case, sometimes overruled for good by Divine mercy. III. Compare this with God's remedy. Is any afflicted, let him pray. Removal of cause better than temporary change of thoughts.

Subjugation of a king's wrath. — Sultan Amurath, a prince notorious for his cruelty, laid siege to Bagdad; and, on taking it, gave orders for putting thirty thousand Persians to death, notwithstanding they had submitted and laid down their arms. Among the number of the victims was a musician, who entreated the officer to whom the execution of the sultan's order was intrusted to spare him for a moment, that he might speak to the author of the dreadful decree. The officer consented, and he was brought before Amurath, who permitted him to exhibit a specimen of his art. Like the musician in Homer, he took up a kind of psaltery which resembles a lyre, and has six strings on each side, and accompanied it with his voice. Hesung the capture of Bagdad, and the triumph of Amurath. The pathetic tones and exulting sounds which he drew from the instrument, joined to the alternative plaintiveness and boldness of his strains, rendered the prince unable to restrain the softer emotions of his soul. He even suffered him to proceed, until, overpowered with harmony, he melted into tears of pity, and repented of his cruelty. In consideration of the musician's abilities, he not only directed his people to spare those among the prisoners who yet remained alive, but also to give them instant liberty.

19-23. (19) *Send me*, exercising his right of appropriating whom he pleased.^c (20) *ass, etc.*, as a *baksheesh*, or present.^d (21) *stood before him*, daily waiting on him. *armour bearer*, comp. *squire* attending on the modern knight. (22) *Let . . me*, *i. e.* permanently. (23) *when, etc.*, this was the regular custom. "It is quite consistent with the genius of Hebrew narrative, for the narrator to pursue his theme to its ultimate consequences in respect to the leading idea of his narrative, and then to return to fill up the details which had been omitted. Thus the words. *He loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer; and Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David stand before me, etc.*, are the ultimate sequence of David's first visit to Saul, and of his skill in music, and are therefore placed here; but they did not really come to pass till after David's victory over Goliath." — *Spk. Com.*

The healing power of music (vs. 23). — From this healing power of music we infer — I. The kindness of the Creator in endowing some men in every circle

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minds. He was of short stature. He had red or auburn hair. — His bright eyes are especially mentioned, and generally he was remarkable for the grace of his figure and countenance, well made, and of immense strength and agility." — *Stanley.*

Saul troubled with an evil spirit

^a "His own gloomy reflections, the loss of his throne and the extinction of his royal house made him jealous, irritable, vindictive, and subject to fits of morbid melancholy." — *Jamieson.*

^b "The first example of what, in after times, has been called religious madness." — *Stanley.*

^c "Bochart has collected many passages fr. profane writers, which speak of the medicinal effects of music on the mind and body, especially as appeasing anger, and soothing and pacifying a troubled spirit." — *Spk. Com.*

David is sent for to comfort Saul

^c 1 Sa. viii 10, 11.
^d Pr. xviii 16.

"When gripping grief the heart doth wound, and doleful dreams the mind oppress, then music, with its silver sound, with speedy help doth lend redress." — *Shakespeare.*

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"Music, which gentlier on the spirit lies than tired eyelids upon tired eyes." — *Tennyson*.

"Music is the only sensuous gratification wh. mankind may indulge in to excess without injury to their moral or religious feelings." — *Addison*.

the Philistines offer battle at Shochoh

a "Beit Netif is on a hill some 3 ms. nearly north of this, and between them is the deep Wady-es-Sumpt, wh. passes down the plain, by Timnath, to the great Wady Surar. Saul encamped prob. on the N. side and it was into this wady that the champion of the 'uncircumcised' descended every day to defy Israel." — *Thomson*. b 1 Ch. xi. 13.

"Naught is more honorable to a knight, nor better doth beseech brave chivalry, than to defend the feeble in their right, and wrong redress in such as we end awry." — *Spenser*.

the story of Goliath

his stature and weapons

c 2 Sa. xxi. 15-22; d 1 Chr. xx. 4-8.

"The cubit, the length fr. the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, is believed to be about 1½ feet, and the span, the distance fr. the thumb to the middle or little finger, when stretched apart to the full length, is half a cubit." — *Spk. Com.*

e "The Heb. word implies height and roundness; whence we may infer the shape." — *Ayre*. f Comp. 1 Chr. xi. 23; xx. 5.

with the musical genius and voice. II. The obligation of those who are endowed with this gift to employ it for the common good. III. The mercy of God in ordaining the use of music in public worship. IV. The duty of those who have the conduct of Divine worship to promote good psalmody. — *Thomas*.

Music. — "Music," says Luther, "is one of the fairest and most glorious gifts of God, to which Satan is a bitter enemy, for it removes from the heart the weight of sorrow and the fascinations of evil thought. Music is a kind and gentle sort of discipline; it refines the passion and improves the understanding." And in most of the revivals of spiritual life in the Church of God, music has been one of the agencies employed. It follows, therefore, that redeemed men ought to cultivate a knowledge of music, and render thanks unto God for having left us this reminder of heaven and of Himself. — *Hom. Com.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-3. (1) *Shochoh*, better *Socoh*, as in the *R. V.*, 11 miles S. W. of *Jerus.* and *Bethlehem*, now *Shuweikeh*.^a *Azekah*, *Jos. xv. 35*. *Ephes-dammim*,^b *Pas-danmin*; or the coast of D., now *Danum*, situated bet. the two. (2) *Elah*, formerly identified with *Wady Beit Hanina*, now with *Wady-es-Sumpt*. The name is taken fr. terebinth tree. (3) *valley*, another word differing fr. that in *vs. 2*, and meaning a *ravine*.

The scene of the combat. — We have been all night in the saddle, coming up from *Joppa* to *Jerusalem*. The city is yet two hours distant from us. The morning sun is just crowning the mountains of *Judea* with its golden light. Before us lies a deep valley, watered by a brook, running from the southeast to the northwest. The hills on both sides rise almost to the dignity of mountains. This scene is associated with an event of thrilling interest in Bible history; it is that of *David's first triumph* over the *Philistines*. As I here read the seventeenth of 1st *Samuel*, how real it all appears! Over on that hill-side the hosts of *Israel* were drawn up in battle array; on this side the *Philistines* came up to bid them defiance. Down there, a little distant, *Goliath of Gath* — his helmet of brass, and his spear like a weaver's beam — advanced to challenge *Israel*. The two hills are so near, that in the clear atmosphere of such a morning as this those on opposite sides could easily converse with each other, and witness every movement of their antagonists. Twelve miles away, to the southeast, are the mountains of *Bethlehem*, where was the home of the young shepherd who came that bright morning into the camp of *Saul*, little dreaming of the honor that awaited him. Yonder sparkles the little brook as brightly as when he picked the smooth stones with which to smite the enemy. In the bed of the brook I also gathered five smooth stones, to take home with me to use in a lecture to my Sunday-school on "Giant-killing." — *A. G. Thomas*.

4-7. (4) *champion*, "one who determines a national quarrel by offering single combat." *Goliath*,^c *great*, or an *exile*; a survivor of the famous race of *Anak*. *Gath*, *Jos. xi. 22*. six *cubits*,^d etc., about ten feet.^d (5) *helmet*, defense of head.^e coat of mail, corslet, quilted with leather or overlapping plates of metal. 5,000 *shekels*, prob. 157 lbs. *avoids* *leupois*. brass, prob. copper. Brass was unknown to the ancients. (6) *greaves*, kind of metal covering rounded to the leg. *target*, a *javelin*. — *Gesenius*. (7) *spear's head*, "Heb. 'the flame of his spear,' the metal part wh. flashed like a flame." — *Spk. Com.* 600 *shekels*,^f 17 or 18 lbs.

Fighting our giants. — When we think of the tribal inheritance of *Judah*, still in a large degree retained by the *Philistines*, who ever and anon arose to reclaim it all, and sometimes nearly succeeded, we have a striking analogy to the heart of the believer, wherein divers sins and lusts do still contend for the mastery; and sometimes one of them, attaining *Goliath*-like proportions, threatens to enslave him altogether. Each of us has his own giant to fight, and here, too, it must be single combat, with no one to help us but *Him* who went forth with the stripling *David*. . . . Or, yet again, in contending with external evils, we may sometimes feel that they have assumed such magnitude as to appal us. Thus, which of us is not brought almost to a standstill when he surveys the ignorance, infidelity, etc., by which we are surrounded? It seems to us sometimes, in moments of depression, as if these

evils were stalking forth defiantly before the armies of the Living God, and laughing them, Goliath-like, to scorn; and our courage is apt to cool as we contemplate this show of force. But the God of David liveth, and He will still give us success. — *W. M. Taylor.*

Goliath of Gath. — Mark the value of this casual designation of the formidable Philistine — “of Gath.” The report of the spies whom Moses sent into Canaan is given in Nu. xiii. 32, 33; in this Moses is a testimony unto us that these Anakites were a race of extraordinary stature. This fact borne in mind, turn to the Book of Joshua as a witness that, when he put the Anakites to the sword he left some remaining in three cities and in no others, and one of these cities was Gath. — *Blunt, Undesigned Coincidences.*

8—11. (8) **for you**, to represent you. Saul’s days of prowess were past; or he would have responded; and where was the brave and trustful Jonathan? “To Dav. belongs the credit of seeing that the Phil. champion was a huge imposition.” — *Pulp. Com.* (9) **your servants**, tributary to you. (10) **give . . . fight**, form of challenge.^a (11) **dismayed**, at his formidable appearance, and boastful language.^b

Boastfulness. — The Targum puts a long speech into Goliath’s mouth. “I am Goliath the Philistine of Gath, who slew the two sons of Eli the priest. Hophni and Phinehas, and carried away captive the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Dagon my error [*i. e. idol*], and it was there in the cities of the Philistines seven months. Moreover in all the wars of the Philistines I go forth at the head of the army, and we have been victorious in war, and have cast down the slain as the dust of the earth, and hitherto the Philistines have not honored me, to make me captain of a thousand over them. But as for you children of Israel, what valiant deed has Saul the son of Kish of Gibeah wrought for you, that ye have made him king over you? If he be a valiant man, let him come down and do battle with me; but if he be a coward, choose you, etc.” — *Cam. Bib.*

12—16. [*Note.* vss. 12—31, 41, 55 — xviii: 5 are evidently taken from some other documents than those wh. form the basis of 1 Sam. They are wanting in many copies of the Septuagint.] (12) **old man**, *R. V.*, “the man was an old man in the days of Saul, stricken in years among men.” (13) **followed Saul**, representing their father, and his house. (14) **youngest**, and evidently was treated as a child. (15) **went**, had gone. This was prob. before he became armor-bearer. If David had been back at Bethlehem for two or three years, a young man changes so much in appearance at David’s time of life that it is no wonder that neither Saul nor Abner recognized him in his shepherd’s dress. — *Pulp. Com.* (16) **presented himself**, *see vs. 11 and note.*

Duties of parents. —

The voice of parents is the voice of gods,
For to their children they are heaven’s lieutenants;
Made fathers not for common uses merely
Of procreation (beasts and birds would be
As noble then as we are); but to steer
The wanton freight of youth through storms and dangers
Which with full sails they bear upon, and straighten
The mortal line of life they bend so often.
For these are we made fathers, and for these
May challenge duty on our children’s part.
Obedience is the sacrifice of angels,
Whose form you carry. — *Shakespeare.*

17—21. (17) **ephah**, in liquids, 7 galls. 4 pints; for dry goods, 3 pecks and 3 pints. **parched corn**, *Ru. ii. 14.* **run**, *R. V.*, “carry them quickly.” (18) **cheeses**, curdled milk.^c **take their pledge**, bring back their assurance of health and safety. (19) **were**, or “are;” the *vs.* may be a part of Jesse’s speech to David. (20) **trench**, *R. V.*, “place of the wagons.”^d (21) **in array**, ready for fighting.

Out of sight, but not out of mind (vss. 17, 18). — I. We have a father thinking of and making provision for absent members of his family. 1. Reminds us of presents from home sent to us at school; 2. Young man in city situation receiving home gifts; 3. Such gifts fragrant with country

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“It is not thou who takest life; it is God, whose I shall be! And His, with God, whom here my heart deifies. I glory in His power as in His love.” — *Bailey.*

his challenge to Israel

^a “The first challenge to a duel that we ever find, came out of the mouth of an uncircumcised Philistine.” — *Bp. Hall*
^b “If, in ancient times, such a challenge was refused, the champion would parade himself within hearing of the enemy’s lines, defying them in a loud, boastful, bravado style, and pouring out torrents of abuse and insolence to provoke their resentment.” — *Jamieson.*

Jesse’s family

“It is a curious fact, that children are the best judges of character at first sight in the world. There is an old Scotch proverb, ‘They are never cannie that dogs and bairns dinna like;’ and there is not a more true one in the whole collection.” — *Hogg.*

Jesse sends David with presents to the camp

^c “Oriental cheeses are very small, resembling in shape and size our penny loaves.” — *Jamieson.*
^d “Wagon ram-

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part, constructed of the baggage of the army."—*Genesis*.

Home is home be it ever so homely. An Englishman's house is his castle. — *English*. — To every bird its nest is fair. — *French*. — East and west, at home the best. — *German*.

David hears of Goliath

"Love is the purification of the heart from self; it strengthens and ennobles the character, gives a higher motive and a nobler aim to every action of life, and makes both man and woman strong, noble and courageous; and the power to love truly and devotedly is the noblest gift with which a human being can be endowed; but it is a sacred fire that must not be burnt to idols."—*Miss Jewsbury*.

"The time was when Saul slew forty thousand Philistines in one day; and now one Philistine is suffered by him to brave all Israel for forty days."

Eliab reproves David, whose words are reported to Saul

"The opinions of youth are frequently false and fervently expressed; of manhood, severe and carefully uttered; of old age, merciful and just."

odors and home affection. II. Young men from home should seek to be worthy of all this care. III. The gifts of our heavenly Father to us who are fighting the battle of life. 1. Such gifts are to strengthen us; 2. Such a home worth fighting for.

A message of love from home.—A father in good circumstances, in one of the Eastern States, had a reckless son, who disgraced himself, and brought shame upon his family, by his misconduct. From home the prodigal went to California to become even more reckless. For years the father heard nothing from him. A chance offering, he sent this message to him: "Your father still loves you." The bearer sought him long, in vain. At last he visited a brothel, on his search, and there recognized the erring son. He called him out, and, at the hour of midnight, delivered his message. The gambler's heart was touched. The thought of a father that loved him still, and wanted to forgive him, broke the spell of Satan. He abandoned the game, his companions, and his cups, to return to his father. The heavenly Father sends a like message to every prodigal.

22-27. (22) carriage, what he was conveying, R. V., "baggage." ran excited by the stir in the camp. (23) came up, to his daily parade of, defiance. (24) fled, retreating back. (25) give . . daughter, comp. Jos. xv. 16. free, prob. fr. liability to special taxation in support of the monarchy. (26, 27). Intimates that Dav. conversed with first one and then another. living God, De. v. 26; Jos. iii 10; ground of confidence: Dagon was a lifeless idol.

The reward offered (vs. 25).—I. By King Saul to the champion of Israel. 1. Riches; 2. Influence, by a royal marriage; 3. Civil freedom. II. By the King of kings to the good soldier of Jesus Christ. 1. Durable riches; 2. A more blessed union; 3. A more lasting and glorious freedom.

Universality of patriotism.—A French writer informs us that a native of one of the Asiatic Isles, amid the splendors of Paris, beholding a banana-tree in the Garden of Plants, bathed it with tears, and seemed for a moment to be transported to his own land. The Ethiopian imagines that God made his sands and deserts, while angels only were employed in forming the rest of the world. The Maltese, insulated on a rock, distinguish their island by the appellation of the "Flower of the World." The Javanese have such an affection for the place of their nativity, that no advantages can induce them, particularly the agricultural tribes, to quit the tombs of their fathers. The Norwegians, proud of their barren summits, inscribe upon their rix-dollars, "Spirit, loyalty, valor, and whatever is honorable, let the world learn among the rocks of Norway." The Esquimaux are no less attached to their frigid zone, esteeming the luxuries of blubber-oil for food, and an ice-cabin for habitation, above all the refinements of other countries. — *Goodrich*. *Trusting the affairs of daily life to God.*—A friend went one morning to Sir Robert Peel's house and found him with a great bundle of letters lying before him, bowed over it in prayer. The friend retired, and came back in a short time and said, "I beg your pardon for intruding upon your private devotions." Sir Robert said, "No; those were my public devotions. I was just giving the affairs of state into the hands of God, for I could not manage them." Try trusting the living God with your letter-bag or your housekeeping. — *H. W. Webb-Pepto*.

28-31. (28) An instance of the position too often assumed by elder brothers. wilderness, not necessarily a barren district, but pasture land. pride, *i. e.*, presumption. (29) a cause, he had come at his father's bidding, and with food for his brothers. R. V., margin. "was it not but a word?" *i. e.*, I only asked a harmless question. (30) David spoke to one after another, hoping the matter would get to ears of Saul. (31) rehearsed, repeated.

Mistaken appearances of pride (vss. 28, 29).—It is not pride—I. When a man in power and government has a spirit suitable to his place and work: that is virtue. II. When natural strength and vigor of spirits expel pusillanimity, and when faith expels all inordinate respects and fear of men. III. When a wise man knows in what measure he is wise, and in what measure other men are ignorant or erroneous. IV. When a wise man desires that others were of his mind, for their own good and the propagation of the truth. V. When a holy person is conscious of his holiness and assured of his state of grace, and rejoices in it. VI. When we value our good name, and the honor

which is indeed our due, as we do our other outward common mercies, not for their own sake, but as means of glorifying God. — *Baxter*.

Unjust rebukes. — Eliab sought for the mote in his brother's eye, and was not aware of the beam in his own. The very things with which he charged his brother — presumption and wickedness of heart — were most apparent in his scornful reproof. — *Keil*.

Self control. —

“The bravest trophy ever man obtained
Is that which o'er himself, himself hath gained.”

“When thou art offended by others, do not let thy mind dwell upon them, or on such thoughts as these: — that they ought not so to have treated thee: who they are; or whom they think themselves to be, and the like; for all this is fuel, and a kindling of anger, wrath, and hatred. But in such cases turn instantly to the strength and commands of God, that thou mayest know what thou oughtest to do, and that thine error be not greater than theirs. So shalt thou return into the way of peace.” — *Scupoli*.

32-37. (32) According to LXX. vs. 32 “stands in close and appropriate connection with vs. 11. — *Cam. B.* heart fail, vs. 11, 24. (33) youth, Dav. about 20 yrs. old, and fair. (34) lion and bear,” prob. on 2 diff. occasions; *R. V.*, “and when there came a lion or a bear, etc.” a lamb, or kid. (35) beard, or throat. (36) living God, this expression indic. Dav.’s faith.

An old friend in a new trouble (vs. 32). — I. This not the first time that David had been a comfort to Saul. II. David no carpet-knight. He had a warrior’s heart as well as the taste of a musician. III. David makes good his offer by recounting his past deeds. IV. David a true comforter since he shows that only God can save Israel.

David’s faith. — The only help to faith was the remembrance of the encounter with the lion and the bear, and the assurance that the same gracious help would be vouchsafed now. How many an adventurer or sportsman, that in some encounter with wild animals has escaped death by the very skin of his teeth, thinks only of his luck, or the happiness of the thought that led him to do so and so in what seemed the very article of death? The faith of David recognized God’s merciful hand in the first deliverance, and that gave an assurance of it in the other. What! would that God that had helped him to rescue a lamb fail him while trying to rescue a nation? Would He who had subdued for him the lion and the bear when they were but obeying the instincts of their nature, humiliate him in conflict with one who was defying the armies of the living God? — *Exp. Bib.*

38-42. (38) armed Dav., in anxiety for his safety. his armour, prob. the loose corslet, or coat of mail, was the chief thing, as this would fit a smaller man; *R. V.*, “apparel.” (39) assayed, attempted, started to go, proved, tried, not it, but them, both the armor and weapons. (40) brook, wady. bag,^b scrip, for carrying daily food. (41) man . . shield, his armor-bearer. (42) disdained, despised.

David and Goliath (vs. 41, 42). — These two men give us a picture of — I. The forms of good and evil. Evil: gigantic, immense energy, imposing. Good: apparently small, weak, insignificant. II. The spirit of good and evil. Evil: proud, contemptuous, malignant. Good: humble trust on God. III. The weapons of good and evil. IV. The ultimate destinies of good and evil. Goliath, notwithstanding his great strength, proud vauntings, and mighty weapons, was slain. So it will be with evil. — *Thomas*.

David’s weapons. — It was just because the sling and the stone were not the weapons of Goliath that they were best fitted to David’s purpose. They could be used at a distance from the enemy; they made his superior resources of no avail; they virtually reduced him to the dimensions and condition of an ordinary man; they did more, they rendered his extraordinary size a disadvantage; the larger he was, the better the mark. David, moreover, had been accustomed in his shepherd life to the sling; it had been the amusement of his solitary hours, and had served for his own protection and that of his flock; so that he brought to his encounter with Goliath an accuracy of aim and a strength and steadiness of arm that rendered him a most formidable opponent. — *A. J. Morris*.

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Should any ask us why we meet at this time? Why we surrender our ease and pleasure on the Sabbath? and betakes ourselves to labors outside our secular calling at other times? Our reply shall be, “Is there not a cause?”

David offers to fight Goliath

^a “It was the habit of the wild animals to make incursions into the pastures of Judea. Fr. the Lebanon at times descended the bears. Fr. the Jordan ascended the lion, at that time infesting the whole of western Asia; these creatures, though formidable to the flocks, could always be kept at bay by the determination of the shepherds.” — *Stanley*.

he refuses Saul’s armor and takes his sling

^b “He carried a switch in his hand, such as would be used for his dogs, and a wallet round his neck, to carry anything needful for his shepherd’s life, and a sling to ward off beasts or birds of prey.” — *Stanley*. You know if you wish your arrow to fly high you must send it with force from your bow, and so, if you wish the arrow of prayer to reach heaven, you must send it out in the earnestness of your spirit.

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**Goliath
curses David
who avers
his trust
in God**

a Ex. xiv. 13-18;
Ju. vii. 2, 4, 7;
Sa. xiv. 6; Ps.
xliv. 6.

"The rodomontade of Goliath is still the favorite way of terrifying an enemy. 'Be-gone, or I will give thy flesh to the jackals!' 'The crows shall soon have thy carcase.' 'Yes, the teeth of the dogs shall soon have hold of thee.' 'The eagles are ready'" — *Roberts*.

**David slays
Goliath**

"It is an unhappy division that has been made between faith and works. Though in my intellect I may divide them, just as in the candle I know there is both light and heat; but yet put out the candle and they are both gone, one remains not without the other, so it is with faith and works." — *J. Selden*.

"Live as long as you may, the first twenty years are the longest half of your life." — *Southey*.

**David brings
the head of
Goliath to
Jerusalem**

b Poss. identifi-
with Tell-el-
Safiyeh.

43-47. (43) **a dog**, "this kind of abusive dialogue is common among Arab combatants still." Goliath felt insulted at the light equipment of David. (44) **Come to me**, the language of injured pride. (45) Goliath was strong in *himself*, but David strong in *God*. **shield**, javelin. **whom . . defied**, not *Is.*, but *Is.'s God*. (46) *Dav.* sends back his taunt but in altogether nobler form. **deliver thee, etc.**, "shut thee up." (47) **this assembly**, the two armies. **sword and spear**, human weapons.

A true spirit and the pledge of victory in the battle of life (vs. 45). — From the passage, we infer that a true spirit is superior. I. To the greatest material strength of our foes. II. To the greatest social prestige of our foes. III. To the completest accoutrements of our foes. IV. To the proudest vauntings of our foes. Conclusion — This spirit ensures victory because it — (1) Enables man to employ the best means; (2) Enables man to use the best means in the best way; undaunted courage, invincible determination; (3) Ensures God's aid in the best use of the best means. — *Thomas*.

The boastful spirit. — Was ever such proof given of the sin and folly of boasting as in the case of Goliath? And yet, as we should say, how natural it was for Goliath! But pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. In the spiritual conflict it is the surest presage of defeat. It was the Goliath spirit that puffed up St. Peter when he said to his Master, "Lord, I will go with Thee to prison and to death." It is the same spirit against which St. Paul gives his remarkable warning, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. Can it be said that it is a spirit that churches are always free from? Are they never tempted to boast of the talents of their leading men, the success of their movements, and their growing power and influence in the community? And does not God in His providence constantly show the sin and folly of such boasting?" — *Exp. Bib.*

We rise in glory, as we sink in pride;

Where boasting ends, there dignity begins. — *Young*.

48-51. (48) **army**, "the battle array" of the Phil. *Dav.* showed his courage by precipitating the conflict. **to meet**, come against for the purpose of fighting. Indic. how swiftly all this took place. (49) **hand . . bag**, as he ran. **slang it**, practice had made him very dexterous, and God guided the stone. **forehead**, so stunned him. (50) **slew him**, began to slay. (51) **slew him**, completed his work ere the giant could recover fr. his blow. **champion**, not the word so rendered in *vs.* 4, 23; but that used in *xvi. 18*, for "hero." *R. V., margin*, "mighty man."

A sling and a stone (vs. 50). — I. The spirit in which David went to the encounter, 1. He went as a consecrated man; 2. He was strengthened by the memory of past mercies; 3. He went implicitly trusting God, but diligently using means. II. Some general truth suggested by the history — 1. The wondrous disproportion between means and results in all God's works; 2. The amazing importance of little things; 3. Means employed in God's service must have God's approval. III. The allegorical improvement of the story. David, a type of Christ in his name — his birthplace — his early troubles — the reproaches of his brethren — his enemies — his giant foe — the tarrying of his success — his final, complete, everlasting glory. — *Preacher's Portfolio*.

Verse 51. — What needed David load himself with an unnecessary weapon? one sword can serve both Goliath and him. If Goliath had a man to bear his shield, David hath Goliath to bear his sword, wherewith that proud, blasphemous head is severed from his shoulders. Nothing more honors God than the turning of wicked men's forces against themselves. There are none of His enemies but carry with them their own destruction. Thus didst Thou, O Son of David, foil Satan with his own weapon; that whereby he meant destruction to Thee and us, vanquished him through Thy mighty power, and raised Thee to that glorious triumph and super-exaltation wherein Thou art, wherein we shall be with Thee. — *Bishop Hall*.

52-54. (52) **shouted**, in excitement of so sudden and glorious a triumph. *valley, R. V., "Gai."* The Sept. has "Gath." *Ekron, Jos. xiii. 3. Shaaraim, Jos. xv. 36. Gath, vs. 4.* (53) **chasing**, pursuing hotly. (54) **Jerusalem**, perhaps this done later. There is reason to think that *Jerus.* was at this time in the hands of the Jebusites.

The victory of one leads to the success of many (vs. 52). — I. This is true of

modern successes. They were heralded by the victory of one. Many succeed now through the victories of Columbus—Arkwright, Watt, etc. II. Especially true of Christ and His church. We succeed because He conquered.

Success. —

He who flies,
In war or peace, who his great purpose yields,
He is the only villain of this world;
But he who labors firm and gains his point
Be what it will, which crowns him with success,
He is the son of fortune and of fame;
By those admired, those specious villains most,
That else had bellowed out reproach against them. — *Thomson.*

55—58. (55) **Abner**, ch. xiv. 50, 51. whose son, Saul had not recognized him. He may have only had the services of Dav. as a minstrel occasionally. (56) **stripling**, diminutive of *strip*, as if a small strip fr. the main stock, or stem. The Heb. word signifies "a full-grown youth." (57) **took him**, called him aside. (58) **son**, a young man is more spoken of in E. countries by his father's name than by his own.

Undeclared royalty. — That is a very simple account for a man to give of himself, yet it answered the question which elicited it. Though but a strippling, David knew where to stop in his answers. On this occasion he could have startled Saul as Saul was never startled in his life, yet he held his peace! Truly, there is power in moderation; and truly, discretion is the supreme beauty of the valiant man. Notice with special care the exciting circumstances under which the answer was given. David stood before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand! Call up the scene! Look at the sinewy hand grasping the bleeding head of the boastful barbarian! See the flush upon the cheek of the young conqueror, then listen to the quiet answer! To be so self-controlled under such circumstances! Standing before the king, grasping the head of a man who made Israel quake, a nation looking at him, yet he speaks as if a stranger had accosted him in some peaceful retreat of the pasture! — *Peop. Bib.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1—4. (1) **knit**,^a bound to, in affection and friendship. The remarkable friendship between David and Jonathan — a beautiful oasis in this wilderness history, — one of the brightest gems in this book of Samuel. — *Exp. B.* (2) **took him**, to attend upon him. Comp. ch. xvi. 19—23. (3) **covenant**, mutual understanding, and engagement. (4) **robe**, *i. e.* the coat worn by princes, garments, military accoutrements. "To receive any part of the dress which had been worn by a sovereign, or his eldest son and heir, was esteemed the highest honor.

Saul's envy of David. — Consider — I. Its grounds. It is the grudging to another the possession of some good, which we ourselves affect. II. Its operation. It produces in all a permanent aversion to the person envied. III. Its cure. We may all impede its influence over our own hearts by — 1. Contemplating the vanity of earthly distinctions; 2. Cultivating the knowledge of our own hearts; 3. Seeking a thorough conversion unto God. — *Siméon.*

True friendship. — The friendship which subsisted between Jonathan and David "shines for all ages an eternal type." It is "the first biblical instance of such a dear companionship as was common in Greece, and has been since in Christendom imitated, but never surpassed, in modern works of fiction." — *Stanley.* The most celebrated of the instances referred to were those of Orestes and Pylades, Damon and Pythias, Nisus and Euryalus. — *Pulp. Com.*

5—9. (5) **went out**, upon military expeditions at the head of a small band. **accepted**, bec. of his triumph over Goliath, and bec. of his wise conduct. (6) **the Philistines**, not Goliath, the term is generic for the whole people. The narrative now goes back to relate the welcome which David received when the army returned in triumph from the successful completion of the Philistine war. Ch. xviii. 6 is to be read (as it actually stands in the Sept.) in connection

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"I am convinced the world will get tired, at least I hope so, of this eternal guffaw about all things. After all, life has something serious in it. It cannot be all comic history of humanity." — *Douglas Jerrold.*

Saul asks David of his lineage

Cicero was one day sneered at by one of his opponents, a mean man of noble lineage, on account of his low parentage. "You are the first of your line," said the railer; "and you," rejoined Cicero, "are the last of yours."

"The man who has not anything to boast of but his illustrious ancestors, is like a potato — the only good belonging to him is underground." — *Sir T. Overbury.*

the friendship of David and Jonathan

a Ge. xlv. 30.

"Ancient poets represent their heroes as exchanging armor in token of friendship; and in eastern countries a prince can scarcely bestow a greater mark of his favor than by the gift of some article of his dress, especially if he has already worn it."

David's prudence and popularity, and Saul's jealousy

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"In the mountains of Tyrol, it is the custom of the women and the children to come out, when it is bedtime, and sing their national songs until they hear their husbands, fathers, or brothers answer them from the hills, on their return home."

"Glory the casual gift of thoughtless crowds! Glory, the bribe of avaricious virtue!"—*Johnson*. "As for our opportunities, we can make a heroic life out of whatever is set before us to work with or upon."—*Anna Robertson Brown*.

Saul attempts the life of David

a This explan. is supported by *Gesenius*, *Keil*, *Wordsworth*, but said to be impossible by *Spk. Com.* Comp. 1 Ki. xviii. 29; Jer. xxix. 26.

"This remarkable instance of the power of music over the mind, is in conformity with the experience of physicians."

Saul gives David his daughter Michal

b 2 Sa. xxi. 8.

"Faith is like the magnetic needle—often trembling yet ever true; swayed, amidst the tem-

with xvii. 54, though some time may have elapsed, during which the army was occupied in following up its first success.—*Cam. B.* women, comp. Ex. xv. 20; Ju. v. 1, xi. 34. **tabrets**, timbrels, Ge. xxxi. 27. **instruments, etc.**, lit. triangular instruments. (7) **answered**, they sang in strophe and antistrophe. Comp. Miriam's song. **played**, not on the instrument, but rather as they danced in alternate choruses. (8) **have more**, if thus he has the love and praise of the people. (9) **eyed David**, invidiously, but making no present signs of his feelings. 'He recalls Samuel's solemn words.

Discipline—a means of strengthening character.—It is said that when Alcibiades, the distinguished Athenian, was young, Socrates tried hard to withhold him from public life, and to convince him that he needed a long course of inward discipline before he could engage safely and usefully in the conduct of public affairs. But Alcibiades had no patience for this; he took his own way, became his own master but with the result that he lost at once true loftiness of aim and all the sincerity of an upright soul. And how often has the lesson been repeated! What story is more constantly repeated than, on the one hand, that of the young man succeeding to a fortune in early life, learning every wretched habit of indolence and self-indulgence, becoming the slave of his lusts, and after a miserable life sinking into a dishonored grave? And on the other, how often do we find, in the biography of the men who have been an honor to their race, that their early life was spent amid struggles and acts of self-denial that seem hardly credible, but out of which came their resolute character and grand conquering power?—*Blaikie*.

10-16. (10) **evil spirit**, his melancholy mania. **prophesied**, prob. he *raved*.^a (11) **cast**, prob. brandished it, in a dangerous way. (12) **afraid of**, jealous of. He does not seem to have yet known of his anointing; but Dav. was evidently the rising man. It is indeed a beautiful period of David's life—the most blameless and beautiful of any. The object of unmerited hatred, the victim of atrocious plots, the helpless object of a despot's mad and ungoverned fury, yet cherishing no trace of bitter feeling, dreaming of no violent project of relief, but going out and in with perfect loyalty.—*Exp. B.* (13) **from him**, i. e. fr. personal attendance. Poss. set him to active service, in the hope that he would be slain. (14, 15) **wisely**, prudently and successfully. **afraid**, *R. V.*, "stood in awe," stronger word than that used in vs. 12. (16) **loved Dav.**, Saul's plan only brought him before the people, who made him their hero.

Selfishness of Saul.—We may see the evil of centring our thoughts and plans entirely on ourselves. This was the root of Saul's misery. He was one of the most ardent *selfists* that ever lived. He had made self his god. He looked only and always at his own interests. "How will this affect me?" was his constant question as each new event transpired; and whensoever he imagined that he was to be injured by any other man's elevation or advancement, he was stirred up to seek his ruin. Thus he was ever moody and unhappy. He hugged himself to his heart, and as a punishment God left him to himself, and no companionship could have been more miserable.—*W. M. Taylor*.

17-21. (17) Comp. xvii. 25. The fulfilment had been delayed, *see vs. 13*. Are we to understand that it was an unauthorized rumor that was told to David (ch. xvii. 25-27) when it was said that the victor was to get these rewards?—*Exp. B.* **said**, i. e. thought. (18) The lang. of modesty and humility. **my life**, the Alexandrian version of the Sept., by the slightest possible change of punctuation, gives the sense "What is the life of my father's family," etc., life being put for *condition*, or, *means of living* (Prov. xxvii. 27).—*Spk. Com.* (19) **Meholathite**,^b for Meholah, *see Ju. vii. 22*; this an intentional insult to Dav. (20) **pleased him**, as giving him another chance of getting rid of his rival (*vs. 25*). (21) **that she may be**, *lit.* and she shall be. **the twain**, should be, as Heb., this second time.—*Gesenius*. Neh. xiii. 20; Job xxxiii. 14.

Fight the Lord's battles (vs. 17).—I. It is our duty to fight for God. 1. God Himself demands it of us; 2. His goodness to us demands it; 3. The justice of His cause demands it. II. The manner in which we should make the attack. 1. With prayer; 2. With confidence in God. III. The reward of our winning the battle. 1. Eternal peace; 2. Eternal life with God. Learn—(1) "Put on the whole armor of God;" (2) Trust not in your own strength: God is the ruler of battles.—*W. Mailland*.

It is come to the Triarii. — When the Romans marshaled their infantry in order of battle, they placed the Hastati in the front, the Principes behind them, and the Triarii in the rear. If the first body (the Hastati) were overpowered, they fell back into the intervals of the second (the Principes) and renewed the fight with their assistance; but if the enemy was still too strong for these combined forces, their last resource was to fall back amongst the Triarii; and then altogether they made a last and more impetuous effort for success; but if the Triarii were defeated, a retreat was sounded and the day was lost. Hence it became a saying, “It is come to the Triarii,” meaning, “It is come to the last push.” But Cæsar’s plan was to make his van strong, and to place but little dependence on his rear. Now, the Christian, when attacked by temptations, must fight in Cæsar’s style. The ancient order of battle will not do for him. He must not yield an inch. If his van give way, all is lost. His rear will be always too weak to fall back upon; so, reversing the old Roman order of battle, he must strengthen and depend on his van (his Hastati), and never let it come to the Triarii.

22—27. (22) **be the king’s**, etc., indic. that Dav. had mistrusted Saul, and returned him no answer. (23) **poor man**, and so have no worthy dowry to give. (25) **foreskins**,^a these would prove that the persons killed were uncircumcised Philistines. (26) **not expired**, reference is prob. to some time fixed by Saul for Dav. either to accept or reject this second offer. (27) **full tale**,^b the complete number.

David a prototype of Christ. — A man so rare in his qualities, so evidently fitted for greatness, drew after him eyes of cruel envy. So it befell the Son of David. Because Jesus drew to him disciples and friends, the priests and rabbis hated him. Because he was followed by multitudes, the rulers took counsel together against him. Because he answered and acted wisely the scribes and Pharisees were filled with malice against him. Wherever he went, jealous eyes watched him, and crafty questions laid wait for him. And how significant of his greatness it is that he, now unseen, awakens in human hearts a faith as strong, an attachment as ardent, as thrilled the breasts of apostles who accompanied him and women who administered to him in Galilee! Paul, who had not seen him in the flesh, loved him as truly and served him as enthusiastically as Peter and John, who had. Christians of the eleventh century, like Bernard of Clairvaux, or of the fifteenth, like him who wrote as Thomas à Kempis, clave to him as devoutly as the Fathers who lived within a few generations of the apostles. And comparative moderns, like Herbert, Bengel, Rutherford, Madame Guyon, Brainerd, Whitefield, the Wesleys, Toplady, Hervey, Henry Martyn, McCheyne, Adolph Monod, have held him as precious as did the most fervent spirits of earlier times. — *Pulp. Com.*

28—30. (28) **saw and knew**, by such proofs of the Div. blessing as this recorded, vs. 27. (29) **continually**, not as before, in his jealous melancholy moods alone. (30) **went forth**,^c to war, as the result of Dav.’s raid. **set by**, i. e., esteemed.

Saul’s fear of David. — One would have thought rather that David should have been afraid of Saul, because the devil was so strong with him, than that Saul should be afraid of David, because the Lord was with him; yet we find all the fear in Saul of David, none in David of Saul. Hatred and fear are ordinary companions. David had wisdom and faith to dispel his fears; Saul had nothing but infidelity, and dejected, self-condemned, distempered thoughts, which must needs nourish them; yet Saul could not fear any hurt from David, whom he found so loyal and serviceable. He fears only too much good unto David; and the envious fear is much more than the distrustful. — *Bp. Hall. Character the best security.* — “I owe my success in business chiefly to you,” said a stationer to a paper-maker, as they were settling a large account; “but let me ask how a man of your caution came to give credit so freely to a beginner with my slender means?” “Because,” replied the paper-maker, “at whatever hour in the morning I passed to my business, I always observed you without your coat at yours.”

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pest’s wildest tossings, by the invisible mysterious spell, which never fails to direct it right. It is computed there are about fifty thousand voyagers always upon the ocean. Who can describe the obligation these are all under to this constant, unerring guide?” — *Bowes.*

Saul craftily sets David upon a difficult enterprise

a 2 Sa. iii. 14.

b Is. xliii. 1, 4.

“Faith may live in a storm, but it will not suffer a storm to live in it. As faith rises, so the blustering wind of discontented troubles goes down. In the same proportion that there is faith in the heart, there is peace also; they are joined together.” — *A Divine of the 17th century.*

David’s prudence and continued popularity

c “To avenge the act of Dav., and perhaps supposing (as the Rabbis suggest) that according to the Hebrew law he would claim exemption fr. warfare for a year after his marriage. De. xxiv. 5.” — *Wordsworth.* The pinnacle of a man’s greatness is the height of his own character. “There can be no kernel in this light nut; the soul of this man is his clothes.” — *Shakespeare.*

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1—3. (1) **kill David**, this had previously been his secret purpose; now it was openly avowed to the members of his court. (2) **delighted much**, see ch.

Saul resolves to kill David

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a. "He arranged this, prob. that in case the king broke forth into violence, or proved inexorable, David might be aware of it, and escape without incurring the danger of further personal communications." — *Kitto*. Ps. xxxi. 8, 9. "What is a friend but one whom I can trust; one who, in sorrow's hour, will mingle his tears with mine; one on whose support I can reckon when my back is at the wall?" — *Guthrie*. "True happiness consists not in a multitude of friends, but in their worth and choice." — *Ben Jon on*. "Nothing is more dangerous than a friend without discretion; even a prudent enemy is preferable." — *La Fontaine*.

Jonathan intercedes for David

b Ps. cix. 5; Pr. xvii. 13; Je. xviii. 20; Jo. x. 32.

c Jo. xv. 25; Ps. xxxv. 19; cxix. 161; Ma. xxvii. 4.

Kindred passions and pursuits are the natural groundwork of friendship. Real friendship is of slow growth, and never thrives unless ingrafted upon a stock of known and reciprocal merit. — *Chesterfield*. — The youth of friendship is better than its old age. — *Hazlitt*. — Make not thy friend too cheap to thee, nor thyself to thy friend. — *Fuller*. — Purchase not friends by gifts; when thou ceaseth to give, such will cease to love. — *Ibid.* — Before you make a friend, eat a peck of salt with him. He is my friend who grinds at my mill." — *English*.

xviii. 1. **morning**, by wh. time Saul's excited temper would probably be cooled, and Jonathan would be able to influence him. (3) **in the field**, place convenient for Dav. to hide in, yet overhear the conversation."

The confidences of friendship (vs. 3). — Learn — I. That the sins of parents may justly limit filial obedience. II. That there may be times and occasions when filial disobedience may be better for parents than obedience. III. That righteousness may distinguish the children of unworthy parents. IV. That friends should guard the interests of the absent.

Saul's threat to kill David (comp. vs. 2 with xx. 2). — Now it must be confessed that at first sight there seems some incoherence between these passages. Let it be considered, however, that a danger often appears more imminent at first than it does after it has been repeatedly experienced and more narrowly scrutinized. Saul's first outburst of fury against David no doubt startled Jonathan, and alarmed him for his friend's safety; and under the impulse of this, he counseled David to hide himself lest his father should destroy him. But further experience showed him that Saul had no settled purpose at that time to destroy David; what he had done was the effect of a mere paroxysm of disease, and Jonathan might well hope that this might pass away, so as to leave David free from the risk to which at first he seemed exposed. *God's purpose in David's trials*. — As the crystal vessel, though cast into its proper and permanent form, is unfit for use until it has been recommitted to the furnace, and, by the process of *annealing*, adapted for the rough process of ordinary usage, so the character of David, elevated and beautiful although it had already appeared, was as yet too soft for the strain and pressure of a royal position; years had to be spent in annealing it. . . . The great purpose of God, in David's early trials, seems to have been to develop and mature those gifts and graces that were to fit him for a royal position. — *Blaukie*.

4-7. (4) **spake good**,^b both praised Dav., and dealt very faithfully with his father. (5) **life . . hand**, Ju. xii. 3; 1 Sa. xxviii. 21. **Philistine**, ch. xvii. **the Lord wrought**, therefore to treat in evil manner God's servant was insult to God.^c (6) **sware**, readiness to make rash oath was one of Saul's weaknesses. As the heathen poet said, "You may expel nature with a thunderbolt, but it always returns." The evil spirit, the demon of jealousy, returned to Saul. And strange to say, his jealousy was such that nothing was more fitted to excite it than eminent service to his country on the part of David. — *Exp. B.* (7) **called David**, after his interview with Saul. All went well while there was *peace* in the land.

Jonathan intercedes for David. — From which learn — I. The strength and duty of disinterested friendship. II. The obligations of gratitude. Even the heart of Saul under its influence. III. The power of a reasonable and dispassionate appeal to the best feelings of the heart. IV. The joy of reconciliation.

The grateful soldier. — The Rev. John Craig, a distinguished minister, and colleague of Knox, having gone to reside in Bologna, in a convent of Dominicans, found a copy of Calvin's *Institutes*, which God made the means of his conversion to the reformed faith. He was seized as a heretic soon after, and carried to Rome, where he was condemned to be burnt; but, on the evening preceding the day of execution, the reigning pontiff died, and, according to custom, the doors of all the prisons were thrown open. All others were released; but heretics, after being permitted to go outside the walls, were reconducted to their cells. That night, however, a tumult was excited, and Craig and his companions escaped. They had entered a small inn at some distance from Rome, when they were overtaken by a party of soldiers sent to apprehend them. On entering the house, the captain looked Craig steadfastly in the face, and asked him if he remembered having once relieved a poor wounded soldier in the neighborhood of Bologna; Craig had forgotten it. "But," said the captain, "I am the man; I shall requite your kindness; you are at liberty; your companions I must take with me; but for your sake, I shall treat them with all possible lenity." He gave him all the money he had, and Craig escaped. But this money soon failed him; yet God, who feeds the ravens, did not. Lying at the side of a wood, full of gloomy apprehensions, a dog came running up to him with a purse in its teeth. Suspecting some evil, he attempted to drive the animal away, but in vain. He at length took the purse, and found in it a sum of money which carried him to Vienna.

8—11. (8) **war again**, in wh. Dav., as chief officer, must take part. His successes again aroused Saul's jealousy. (9) **evil spirit**, see ch. xvi. 14.^a **played**, on his harp; this time music did not avail to soothe the king. (10) **even to the wall**, pinning him to the wall. The force of the thrust was shown by the javelin sticking into the wall. The beginning of Dav.'s life as a fugitive, his stern preparation for kingly duties. (11) **slay . . morning**,^b Saul did not think of Dav.'s running away. Prob. the Eastern idea of the sanctity of the women's apartments prevented Saul entering the house at night.

Saul's enemies.—I. Of his throne; the Philistines. II. Of his peace; envy. Note:—A man's greatest foes are the evil thoughts of his heart. *David's friends.*—I. God who watched over him. II. His own alertness. III. The son and daughter of his bitter foe.

Providential protection.—John Knox was accustomed to sit at the head of the table in his own house, with his back to the window; yet on a certain night such was the impression on his mind, that he would neither sit in his own chair nor allow any other person to sit in it, but sat on another chair with his back to the table. That very night a bullet was shot in at the window, purposely to kill him, but the conspirators missed him; the bullet grazed the chair in which he used to sit, lighted on the candlestick, and made a hole in the foot of it, which it is said is yet to be seen. The Earl of Morton, who attended Mr. Knox's funeral, when the corpse was put into the ground, said, "Here lies the body of him who in his lifetime never feared, the face of man; and though often threatened with dag and dagger, hath ended his days in peace and honor."—*Whitecross*.

12—17. (12) **through a window**,^c so avoiding the officers who were patrolling the street, and the court of the house. (13) **image**, Heb. *teraphim*, household gods.^d The use of the images implied an unspiritual or superstitious state of mind; or at least a mind more disposed to follow its own fancies as to the way of worshipping God than to have a severe and strict regard to the rule of God. It is impossible to suppose that David could have either used, or countenanced the use of these images. When we read of these images we are not surprised at the defects of character which we see in Michal.—*Blaikie*. (14) **in the bed**, or *divan*. This was done to secure time for Dav.'s flight. (15) **for its bolster**, or for its head, to give the appearance of hair. **covered it**, so producing appearance of person lying sick. (15) **to see Dav.**, Saul evidently suspected some trick. (16) **come in**, near enough to examine (17) **I kill thee**, pretending that Dav. had threatened her life.

Michal's deception a fruit of Saul's example.—The falsehood of Michal, by which she deceived her father Saul, was a retribution on him; it was the fruit of his own evil example, teaching her to practice deceit by his own acts; see chap. xviii. 17, 19, 20, 21. His falsehood and treachery recoiled on himself, as Laban's falsehood and treachery against Jacob recoiled on Laban himself by the conduct of his daughters to him (Gen. xxxi. 14–20, 35). Saul had cheated David of his wife, as Laban had cheated Jacob of his wife. The daughters of Laban and Saul practiced against their fathers the lessons of deceit which they had learned at their own homes. — *Wordsworth*.

18—24. (18) **Ramah**, ch. i. 1. We have seen that there is every reason to believe that David had been taught and trained by Samuel among the sons of the prophets, and now, conscious of his innocence, he flees for refuge to his old master. — *Pulp. Com.* **Naioth**, distinct fr. Ramah, but near to it. "A suburb of Ramah, or perhaps the school buildings of the prophets there." — *Winer*. (19) **in Ramah**, indicating close proximity of the school to the town. (20) **prophets**, not students, but graduates. **propheying**, a term including songs and religious ecstasies. **as appointed**, i. e. chief, instructor; R. V., "head." **Spirit . . prophesied**, they were seized with enthusiasm, and joined in the praises. (21) In thus sharing the excitement these messengers could not take David. (22) **Sechu**, great cistern, *Bir Neballah*, bet. Tuleil-el-Full and Neby Samwil. (23) **In state of high excitement**. He was entranced, but he was not changed. He was for the time another man, but there was no permanent change; after a time, his old spirit returned. Evidently he was a man of great nervous susceptibility, and it is plain from many things that his nerves had become weakened. — *Exp. B.* (24) **clothes**, outer garment.^f See ch. x. 11.

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Saul attempts the life of David

a 1 Sa. xviii. 10, 11.

b Ps. lix., title.

"Insanity is, in a person awake, a false or mistaken judgment of things which, as occurring most frequently in life, are those about which the generality of men form the same judgment."

"I was all ear, and took in strains that might create a soul under the ribs of death." — *Milton*.

David escapes by the aid of Michal

c Comp. spies at Jericho, Jos. ii. 15–21; and Paul at Damascus, 2 Cor. xi. 33.

d "Ge. xxxi. 19; Ju. xvii. 5; 2 Ki. xxiii. 24. These teraphim may be compared to the tutelary or household gods of the Romans, the Penates, and Lares. Or to the pictures of St. Nicholas, or of the Virgin, wh. one sees in every Russian shop." — *Kittó*.

David pursued by Saul to Naioth

e "In its corrected form the name signifies 'habitations,' and from an early date has been interpreted to mean the huts of dwellings of a school or college of prophets over which Sam. presided. This interpretation is now generally accepted by the lexicographers and commentators." — *Smith's Bib. Dict.*

f Is. xx. 2; Mi. i. 8; Ps. xxxv. 27; lii. 6, 7; lix. 16, 17

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There is no fate!
Between the
thought and the
success, God is the
only agent. — *Bulwer*.

It is the crushed
grape that gives
out the blood-red
wine. It is the
suffering soul that
breathes the
sweetest melodies.
— *Gail Hamilton*.

David's flight
from Ramah to
Jonathan

a 1 Sa. xix. 6.

b Ps. lxxxviii. 3,
4; cxliii. 7.

"Death reigns in
all the portions of
our time. The
autumn with its
fruits provides dis-
orders for us, and
the winter's cold
turns them into
sharp diseases, and
the spring brings
flowers to strew
our hearse, and
the summer gives
green turf and
brambles to bind
upon our graves.
Calentures and
surfeit, cold and
agues, are the four
quarters of the
year, and all min-
ister to death; and
you can go no
whither but you
tread upon a dead
man's bones." —
Jeremy Taylor.

Jonathan
promises
to inform
David of
danger

c Nu. x. 10, xxviii.
11-15.d Comp. vs. 19.
Some comment,
as *Kitto*, think
Dav. went to
Bethlehem.e 1 Sa. xxv. 17,
Est. vii. 7.

f Jos. ii. 14.

Saul among the prophets. — I. A bad man in the company of the good. II. A bad man in good company with an evil intention. III. A bad man's evil intention supernaturally overruled.

Bringing the counsels of the heathen to naught. — "One morning at daybreak I found my house surrounded by armed men and a chief intimated that they had assembled to take my life. Seeing that I was entirely in their hands, I knelt down and gave myself away, body and soul, to the Lord Jesus for what seemed the last time on earth. Rising, I went out to them, and began talking about their unkind treatment of me and contrasting it with all my conduct towards them. I also plainly showed them what would be the sad consequence if they carried out their cruel purpose. At last some of the chiefs who had attended the worship rose and said, "Our conduct has been bad, but now we will fight for you and kill all those that hate you." Grasping hold of their leader, I held him fast until he promised never to kill anyone on my account, for Jesus taught us to love our enemies and always return good for evil! During this scene many of the armed men shrunk away into the bush and those who remained entered into a bond to be friendly and protect us." — *John G. Paton*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1-4. (1) fled, while Saul was in his ecstasy: to Gibeah, for an interview with his friend. Jon. seems not to have known of this recent attempt of Saul's, and to have put undue confidence in the oath Saul had taken.^a The violent fit at Naioth had for the time cleared his reason, and he had come back sane. Jonathan regarded all that had taken place as the effect of a mind diseased, and concluded, therefore, that David might now return to his home and wife, and resume his duties and take his place at the royal table. — *Pulp. Com.* (2) shew it me, *lit. uncover mine ear*. Jon. was unwilling to believe so evil of his father. (3) Dav. had quicker discernment than Jon.^b Prob. Jon. was not aware that his father knew of the friendship bet. him and Dav. (4) Jon. yields to admit the poss. peril of his friend.

The mystic step (vs. 3). — I. A certain step: all must take it. II. An uncertain step: when we must take it we cannot tell. III. A final step: it puts an end to human distinctions. IV. A parting step: it parts us from this world. V. A solitary step: death a lonely thing — taken alone without friends, by some without God. VI. Altogether a solemn step. It conducts either to hell or heaven. — *Dunlop*.

Uncertainty of human life. — When we consider the frailty, shortness, and uncertainty of human life, these words of David will appear applicable to mankind in general; there are particular cases, however, in which they apply with peculiar propriety. The following is a remarkable instance: —

A short time ago, a respectable old gentleman in Perth, before he was aware, had placed himself in the way of an enraged bull, which was ranging through the streets, preceded by a large crowd of people, who were flying from it in all directions. The gentleman finding himself suddenly by the side of the bull, placed himself as quickly as possible against a wall, in the hope that it might pass without giving him any molestation. The enraged animal, however, made an instantaneous and furious onset, but happily for the life of the intended victim, it was possessed of enormously large horns, which, instead of coming in contact with his body, actually enclosed him, and struck the wall with tremendous force, one horn on each side of the terrified gentleman. The bull, hurt by the reaction, ran quickly off, without inflicting injury. Deliverance from a danger so imminent, calls for the liveliest gratitude to the God of providence. — *Whitecross*.

5-10. (5) new moon, when special sacrifices were offered,^c succeeded by feasting. All the courtiers were expected that day to dine at the royal table. The feast lasted two, poss. even three days. Since this vs. clearly intimates that Saul expected Dav. at this feast, it is not unlikely that Saul's experience at Naioth led to a temporary improvement in his relations to David. There was room for doubt whether or not Saul continued to cherish any deliberate ill-feeling to his son-in-law. — *Exp. B.* the field, prob. the one in wh. he had hidden before (ch. xix. 3). (6) It does not appear that Dav. went to Beth.; he hid in the field, and the excuse made was a deception.^d (7) peace, it will evidence kindly intentions.^e (8) Ch. xviii. 3. f (9) from thee, to think I would

either betray or kill thee. (10) **Who shall tell me?** *R. V.*, “who shall tell me if perchance thy father answer thee roughly.” How shall we communicate? Interviews might become dangerous to both.

The first law of life and the law of society (vs. 5). — I. — Etiquette demanded the presence of David at the king's table. The exactions of society. II. Self-preservation required David to absent himself. The preservation of our higher life may require us to decline the honors of society.

Despair leads to many sins. — When a merchant is in difficulties, there is no great danger so long as he believes that he can retrieve himself, and hopes that he will come out all right. But when he falls into despair, he becomes regardless alike of God or man, and runs headlong into practices of which in other circumstances he would never have thought, thereby destroying alike his character and future. But it is quite similar in spiritual matters. When a man falls into despair, he is ready for any sin, and runs blindly and rashly forward upon destruction. — *W. M. Taylor.*

11—15. (11) **into the field**, so that privately they might decide on some plan of meeting. (12) Not a prayer to God, but calling on God to witness his faithfulness. The whole may be translated. “As Jehovah, the God of Israel liveth, when by this time on the third morrow I have searched my father, and, behold, there be good for David, if then I send not to thee, and uncover thy ear, Jehovah do so and much more to Jonathan.” *Pulp. Com.* sounded, tried to find out my father's intentions. (13) **send thee away**, finally from the court of Saul. (14) “Jon. had a presentiment, doubtless from God, that Dav. would be established on the throne.” — *Spk. Com.* (15) **my house**,^a or family. Read with other vowels, two of these negatives become interjections of desire — *O that*; and the whole may be translated, “And O that, while I still live, yea, O that thou wouldst show me the kindness of Jehovah, — *i. e.* great unflinching kindness, such as was that of Jehovah to Israel — that I die not, nor shalt thou cut off thy kindness from my house for ever.” — *Pulp. Com.*

The prudence of Jonathan (vs. 14, 15). — I. To what end was it here directed? The safety of himself and posterity. II. By what was it prompted? By faith in David's future, and, probably, faith in God. III. What resulted from it? Note future history of his family — Mephibosheth. IV. The highest prudence requires us to be at peace with Jesus Christ.

Jonathan's covenant with David. — One knows not whether most to wonder at the faith of Jonathan, or the sweetness of his nature. It is David, the poor outlaw, with hardly a man to stand by him, that appears to Jonathan the man of power, the man who can dispose of all lives and sway all destinies; while Jonathan, the king's son and confidential adviser, is somewhat reduced to helplessness, and unable even to save himself. But was there ever such a transaction entered into with such sweetness of temper? The calmness of Jonathan in contemplating the strange reverse of fortune both to himself and to David, is exquisitely beautiful; nor is there in it a trace of that servility with which mean natures worship the rising sun; it is manly and generous while it is meek and humble; such a combination of the noble and the submissive as was shown afterwards, in highest form, in the one perfect example of the Lord Jesus Christ. — *Blaikie.*

16—17. (16) **require it, etc.**,^b that is, may Dav.'s enemies punish any unfaithfulness to this covenant on the part of Dav., or perhaps an Orientalism wh. is an indirect way of saying: “May God punish Dav. for it.” (17) Jon. made Dav. swear bec. he felt sure that in the future power and authority would be in *his hands*.^c

Jonathan's unselfish love. — No man saw David that day, which had so much cause to disaffect him; none in Israel should be a loser by David's success, but Jonathan. Saul was sure enough settled for his time: only his successor should forego all that which David should gain; so as none but David stands in Jonathan's light; and yet all this cannot abate one jot or dram of his love. Where God uniteth hearts, carnal respects are too weak to dis sever them, since that which breaks off affection, must needs be stronger than that which conjoineth it. — *Bishop Hall.*

Friendship. —

I had a friend that loved me;
I was his soul: he lived not but in me.
We were so closed within each other's breast,

B. C. cir. 1026.

“Must I consume my life—this little life, in guarding against all may make it less? It is not worth so much!—It were to die before my hour, to live in dread of death.” — *Lord Byron.*

“False friendship, like the ivy, decays and ruins the walls it embraces.” — *Burton.*

the covenant of David and Jonathan

a 2 Sa. ix. 1, 3, 7; xxi. 7.

“The literal rendering of the passage is, ‘And not if as yet I live, and thou shalt not do towards me the kindness of the Lord, and I shall not die. And thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever, and not when God cuts off the enemies of David, every one from the face of the ground.’ — *Alexander.*

friendship of David and Jonathan

b 2 Sa. iv. 7; xxi. 8; Je li. 56.

c Song ii. 14

“A man who loves only himself, without regard to friendship and desert, merits the severest blame; and a man who is only susceptible of friendship,

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without public spirit, or a regard to the community, is deficient in the most material part of virtue." — *Hume*.

Jonathan's secret plan for informing David of danger

α Comp. Ge. xxxi. 49, 53.

"Sweet is the memory of distant friends! Like the mellow rays of the departing sun, it falls tenderly, yet sadly, on the heart." — *Washington Irving*.

"Friendship is seldom truly tried but in extremes. To find friends when we have no need of them, and to want them when we have, are both alike easy and common." — *Feltham*.

Saul inquires concerning the absence of David

b "The left-hand corner, at the upper end of a room was and still is, in the E., the most honorable place." — *Jamieson*.

c "The new moon, being a religious feast, no one could assist at it who had any ceremonial uncleanness upon him." — *Spk. Com.*

Le. vii 21; xv. 5-10; Nu. xix. 11, 14, 16; ix. 6.

"The amity that wisdom knits not, folly may easily untie." — *Shakespeare*.

Jonathan, defending David, is

The rivets were not found that joined us first,
That do not reach us yet: we were so mixed
As meeting streams, but to ourselves were lost,
We were one mass: we could not give or take
But from the same; for he was I, I he.
Return my better half, and give me all myself,
For thou art all.
If I have any joy when thou art absent,
I grudge it to myself: methinks I rob
Thee of thy part. — *Dryden*.

18-23. (18) missed, from the king's table. (19) stayed three days, at some convenient place, or at Bethlehem. quickly, *lit.* greatly, *i. e.*, perh. "a long way down into the valley." when the business was, prob. refer. to ch. xix. 2-6. Ezel, Heb. *the stone of the way*, a sort of milestone. Dav. was to hide in a cavern or ruin near this stone. (20-22) This contrivance was made that the danger of another interview might be avoided. (23) the matter, of the covenant; ^a this was Jon.'s last word. Lord be between, *i. e.* as the witness of our covenant, and the avenger of any breach of it.

Orestes and Pylades. — Engaged in an arduous enterprise, Orestes and Pylades, two sworn friends, landed on the shores of the Chersonesus to find themselves in the dominions and power of a king whose practice was to seize on all strangers, and sacrifice them at the shrine of Diana. The travelers were arrested. They were carried before the tyrant, and, doomed to death, were delivered over to Iphigenia, who, as priestess of Diana's temple, had to immolate the victims. Her knife is buried in their bosoms, but that she learns before the blow is struck that they are Greeks — natives of her own native country. Anxious to open up a communication with the land of her birth, she offers to spare one of the two, on condition that the survivor will become her messenger and carry a letter to her friends in Greece. But which shall live, and which shall die? That is the question. The friendship which had endured for years in travels, and courts, and battlefields is now put to a strain it never bore before. And nobly it bears it. Neither will accept the office of messenger leaving his fellow to the stroke of death. Each implores the priestess to select him for the sacrifice, and let the other go. While they contend for the pleasure and honor of dying, Iphigenia discovers in one of them her own brother. She embraces him, and sparing both, flees with them from that cruel shore. — *Guthrie*.

24-27. (24) to eat meat, not "flesh" in the modern sense of "meat" but food in general. (25) by the wall, place of honor.^b Obs. that each of the chief officers had his appointed place at the table. Jon. arose, perhaps, "when Abner entered Jon. resigned the place to him." (26) not clean, ceremonially.^c (27) son of Jesse, custom in E. to call men by their father's name.

Unconscious tribute to character of the good (vs 26). — I. Saul did not suppose David would be absent through fear; recognition of courage. II. Nor did he attribute the absence to intention, but to some unavoidable circumstance. III. Or he supposed ceremonial uncleanness might be in the way: tribute to his piety. IV. Worldly men often unwittingly pay similar tribute to the good.

The new moon. — The heathen and the idolatrous Jews, who copied from them, paid honor to the moon, from a belief that she had great influence over the affairs of men. The Jews, as mentioned by the prophet Amos, were anxious that the new moon should be gone that they might "sell corn" (Amos viii. 5). There was no command for them to refrain from doing business on that day, which shows it to have been a custom of their own invention, the result of some heathen opinion or superstition, which made it unfortunate or improper to sell their corn at that period. The merchants will not, except under particular circumstances, purchase stock during the first fifteen days of the new moon. On seeing the new moon for the first time, the people present their hands, in the form of adoration, in the same manner as they do to their gods. — *Roberts*.

28-34. (28) earnestly asked, Jon. makes as good a repres. as possible. (29) my brother, eldest sons had great authority in the family. Jesse, too, was now very old. get away, release me for this little visit, (30) son,

etc.^a Saul was put in a desperate passion on thus finding his secret plan defeated. No reason to think Jon.'s mother deserved the reproach. When we see Saul in one breath trying to kill his son with a javelin and to destroy his wife's character by poisoned words, and at the same time thirsting for the death of his son-in-law, we have a mournful exhibition of the depth to which men are capable of descending from whom the spirit of the Lord hath departed.—*Exp. B.* (31) Saul thought Jon. defeated his own interests by his friendship. (32) Trying to reason with a man in passion. (34) *fierce anger*, at Saul's attempt on his own life.

The passionate man.—I. Has no regard for those nearest akin to him. Saul's wife, as well as son, reproached. II. Has no power of self-control. Saul passes from words to blows. III. Men who cast off Divine control often subject themselves to the tyranny of passion or self.

Envy attempting to destroy those who trust in God is like the serpent in the fable gnawing a file. He saw the pile of chips, and imagined he was accomplishing something, till the increasing pain showed him that the chips were from his own teeth, while the file was unharmed.—*Peloubet*.

35—40. (35) *field, etc., vs. 19.* Jon. went, as if meaning to practice with his bow. *the time, R. V. margin*, "to the place." (36) *beyond him*, to pass over him; this gave Jon. opportunity for shouting out the appointed signal for Dav. to hear. (38) *Make speed, etc.*, this also intended for Dav., to indic. that the peril was urgent. (39) *anything*, of the secret sign they had made. (40) *artillery*, bow and arrows, with quiver.

The value of friendship.—Oh, friendship! of all things most rare.—*John Lilly*. "All faithful friends went on a pilgrimage years ago, and none of them ever came back;" so wrote one of the Puritan divines, whose heart was depressed at the time, most likely.—*C. S. Robinson*. Wretched, indeed, and probably deservedly wretched, is the man who has no friends.—*C. Kingsley*. Whosoever is delighted only in solitude is either a wild beast or a god. Choose friends, not for their usefulness, but for their goodness; not for their worth to us, but for their worth in themselves, and choose, if possible, people superior to ourselves.—*Kingsley*. Friendship works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in half.—*Bacon's Essays*.

41, 42. (41) *Dav. arose*, though very perilous, and beyond their intentions, the two friends could not endure to part without a last interview. *toward the south*, of the stone *Ezel, vs. 19.* *bowed himself*, as to king's son, until drawing nearer, all was forgotten in warmth of friendship. This they thought their final parting. The only other time they met was briefly, in the wilderness of Ziph.^b (42) *Go in peace, c. i. e.* fear no evil from me. *into the city*, "Jonathan's filial duty and patriotism prevented a complete rupture with his father. Jonathan's conduct in this, as in everything, was most admirable."

Loyalty and friendship.—I. We learn that no excitements or circumstances should make us forget the courtesies of life. David bowed before he embraced. II. We learn that formal courtesies yield to the feelings of the heart. David embraced as well as bowed. III. We learn that the homage of the heart to friendship yields us more pleasure than homage to title and office.

Good-bye.—

Better than earthly presence, e'en the dearest
Is the great blessing that our partings bring;
For in the loneliest moments, God is nearest
And from our sorrows heavenly comforts spring,
If God be with us.

Good-bye, Good-bye! with latest breath we say it
A legacy of hope and faith and love;
Parting must come, we cannot long delay it,
But one in Him we hope to meet above,
If God be with us.

Good-bye—'tis all we have for one another,
Our love, more strong than death, is helpless still;
For none can take the burden from his brother,
Or shield, except by prayer from any ill—
May God be with you.—*Anon.*

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attacked
by Saul

a "To an Oriental, nothing is so grievously insulting as a reproach cast upon his mother; so Saul, to sting his son to the uttermost, spoke contemptuously of his mother, regardless of the fact that Jor.'s mother was his own wife."—*Kitto*.

David is
warned by
Jonathan

"We still have slept together, rose at an instant, learn'd, play'd, eat together; and whereso'er we went, like Juno's swans, still we went coupled and inseparable."—*Shakespeare*.

David's flight
from Saul

b 1 Sa. xxiii. 16.

c Ps. vi. 6, 7;
xxxix. 12; lvi. 8;
Ge. xxxi. 49.

"Is aught so fair in all the dewy landscape of the spring? In the bright eye of Hesper in the morn, in nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair as virtuous friendship?"—*Akenside*.

"You'll find the friendship of the world a show! Mere outward show? 'Tis like the harlot's tears, the statesman's promise, or false patriot's zeal,—full of fair seeming, but delusion all."—*Savage*.

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David
obtains the
hallowed
bread

a "Long before the conquest of Jebus by Dav., the northern summit of Olivet had, it would seem, under the name of Nob, been selected as the seat of the tabernacle after the destruction of Shiloh and the loss of the ark." — Stanley.

b Mk. ii. 25, 26.

c "This was the Sab. day; on any other day bread might have been baked to meet any want that arose, but this could not be done on the Sab., and there was hence no bread to be had but the sabbath-bread." — Kittó.

d De. xviii. 7, 8.

David
obtains the
sword of
Goliath

e 1 Sa. xx. 42.

f "The ephod was that part of the high priest's dress which was necessary to be worn when he inquired of God by Urim and Thummim." — Spk. Com.

g Superscrip. of Ps. xxxiv.

h "Dav. was hard pressed, and had only a choice of dangers. Gath was near his native mountains, and prob. had more friendly relations with Is. than the more distant cities of the Phil." — Thomson.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-7. (1) **Nob**, the tabernacle was at this place, but not the ark. It was a town a little N. of Jerus., bet. it and Anathoth. **Ahimelech**, comp. ch. xiv. 3. **was afraid, etc.**, R. V., "came to meet Dav. trembling." Prob. afraid of incurring Saul's displeasure. (2) Dav. has recourse to a lie; he has lost his faith in God. This lie was fatal in its consequences to Ahimelech, cf. xxii. 18, 19. The whole chapter sets David before us in a very humiliating light. The chapter might be called "David's degradation." The determined hatred of Saul seems to have thrown him off his balance, and it was not until he got among the hills of Judah, wherein was the cave of Adullam, that he recovered his serenity. — *Pulp. Com.* **servants, R. V.**, "the young men;" some were with him. (3) **present, i. e.** whatever you have. (4) **hallowed bread**, the shewbread just replaced by the new loaves. Le. xxiv. 5-9. (5) **since I came out, etc.**, R. V., "when I came out the vessels of the young men were holy, tho. it was but a common journey; how much more then to-day shall their vessels be holy?" **vessels, i. e.** wallets. (6) **hot**, newly baked. (7) **Doeg**, tarrying for relig. purification at the tabernacle; to perform a vow; or poss. bec. it was the Sab.; or for suspected leprosy.

Doeg the Edomite (vs. 7). — I. Scrupulous in the performance of his religious vows. II. Neglecting that mercy which is better than sacrifice. III. Revolving evil thoughts in a holy place.

True life. — The mere lapse of years is not life. To eat, and drink, and sleep — to be exposed to darkness and the light — to pace round in the mill of habit, and turn thought into an implement of trade — this is not life. In all this but a poor fraction of the consciousness of humanity is awakened; and the sanctities will slumber which make it worth while to be. Knowledge, truth, love, beauty, goodness, faith, alone can give vitality to the mechanism of existence. The laugh of mirth that vibrates through the heart; the tears that freshen the dry wastes within; the music that brings childhood back; the prayer that calls the future near; the doubt which makes us meditate; the death which startles us with mystery; the hardship which forces us to struggle; the anxiety that ends in trust; are the true nourishment of our natural being. — *J. Martineau.*

8-10. (8) **neither . . me**, the real reason was that he had not dared to return to Gibeah after the last interview with Jon. (9) of **Goliath**, ch. xvii. 51, 54. **Elah**, ch. xvii. 2. **ephod**, part of high priest's dress, put on when he was consulted as oracle, Ex. xxviii. 6-30. **none like that**, the monument of God's deliverance in the past was a pledge of His help for the future. — *Cam. B.* (10) **Achish**, called also **Ahimelech**, prob. offering his services as a court minstrel, hoping to escape detection. **Gath**, the Phil. town nearest to Judah.^h

The king's business (vs. 8). — I. Jesus Christ — the Prince of Peace and Life — is the great King. II. His business is the redemption of men. III. The publishing of this redemption is a business committed to us. IV. This business requires haste, zeal, promptitude, dispatch. (1) Life is short; (2) Souls are perishing; (3) Christ is waiting till His souls be made His footstool; (4) The judgment day approaches.

The sword of the Lord. — The Bible is a complete armory, as we may read in the sixth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. We in these latter days have seen some curious specimens of cutlery. We have seen the boy with that wonderful thing in his hand of which he is so proud. He says, "That is the great blade for cutting wood and leather and hard substances; and this is a little blade for making pens and cutting pencils; and this is a lancet blade, and this is a bodkin, and this is a piercer of another kind, and this is a screw." And so he turns them all out under one haft. It is even so with this better haft. We can turn all sorts of blades out of it in every possible direction, and hold it up like a complete armory. There is none like it for ease of carriage. There are weapons that are very difficult to carry, but the sword of the Lord is not one of them. There are weapons of war very intricately constructed and very difficult of management, very cumbersome, and altogether oppressive; but the sword of the Lord does not belong to that class. There is none like it for the universality of use. Children and sick persons can use it; the poorest man can avail himself of it; the busiest man

may find a moment for its exercise. Oh, dear, dear sword! The grand old veterans of other days have passed it on to us, and we, with added victories, ought to hand it on to generations yet to come. — *Peop. Bib.*

11-15. (11) **king of the land**, not actually king, nor did they know of Sam.'s anointing; but the most kingly, the greatest captain. **sing, etc.**, see ch. xviii. 7. (12) **laid up, etc.**, thought them over, and felt they indicated that he was not safe. (13) **behaviour**, lit. *changed his sense or reason*, acted as if mad. **feigned . . hands**, he roamed restlessly and in terror in their presence. **scrabbled**, scrawled, made marks. **doors, etc.**, of Achish's palace. **spittle, etc.**,^a this in the E. is regarded as an intolerable insult. (14, 15) Dav.'s conduct produced disgust, and he was sent away fr. the palace. **my house? i. e., my service?**

Assumed madness. —

I have bethought myself,
To take the basest and the poorest shape,
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;
Blanket my loins: put all my hair in knots;
And with presented nakedness outface
The winds, and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voice,
Strike into their numb'd and mortified bare arms,
Pins, wooden pegs, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible aspect from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes and mills,
Sometimes with lunatic bans, sometimes with prayers,
Enforce their charity. — *Shakespeare.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

1-5. (1) **Adullam**, about 6 m. S. W. of Bethlehem. The limestone cliffs of *Lekieh* and *Deir Dubbân* on the edge of the plain are pierced with caves. — *Stanley.* **father's house, etc.**, now in peril through Saul's enmity. (2) This *vs.* indicates that Saul's temper and tyranny were producing discontent among the people. To govern this motley band was an evidence of Dav.'s governmental abilities. (3) **Mizpeh**, watch-tower, referring to some *fort*; the site is not identified. He had family connection with Moab through *Ruth*.^b **God . . me**, Dav. had now regained his composure and faith in God. (4) **hold**, prob. the *Mizpeh* of *vs.* 3. (5) **Gad**,^c first mentioned here. Poss. sent by Sam. **Hareth**, site unknown, on the mountain-chain (of Hebron), prob. some 3 or four miles fr. Adullam. Here he became the protector of Judah against the Phil. and the natural hero of all Israel.

The cave of Adullam (*vs.* 1). — It is an innumerable succession of arched chambers, like the crypts of a cathedral. These are the "sides of the cave" in which David and his men concealed themselves (1 Sam. xxiv. 3), nor can anything be imagined more suitable for concealment. Hundreds of men could be in these "sides," and yet a person entering the cave would not be aware of their presence. Each chamber is a stately hall, on all sides of which the rocks drop down like Gothic pillars, leaving only here and there gateways by which you pass into the adjoining chambers. You might spend days in exploring these vast apartments, for the whole mountain seems excavated, or rather honeycombed. We did not penetrate into the interior very far; still we groped our way through the passages into a good many of these apartments, and found them all much alike. Sticking some wax lights which we had, here and there, on some little projection, we kept up communication with the outer chamber, so as to have no difficulty in finding our way out. In some places we observed stalactites: though these were not numerous, owing probably to the great dryness of the rock. The air was intensely hot, but quite fresh and dry. — *Bonar.*

6-11. (6) **discovered**, it was found out to what district he had escaped. **tree**,^d or under a grove on a hill, fixing his court under some shady canopy. **spear**, the sceptre, or sign of his royalty. (7) **ye Benjamites**, showing that

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David flees to Achish and assumes madness

^a "This last was convincing. Considering the regard in wh. the beard is held, the care taken of it, and the solicitude of the owner to protect it fr. insult and pollution, who could poss. doubt the abject and absolute madness of the man who thus defiled his own beard?" — *Kitto.*

^b Pss. xxxiv. and lvi. are supposed to refer to this time.

David escapes to Adullam

^c Ru. i. 2, 4; iv. 21, 22.

^d "Brought up, prob., in School of Proph., under Sam.; informed that Dav. had been anointed; afterwards called Dav.'s seer (2 Sa. xxiv. 11), and the chronicler of his acts (1 Chr. xxix. 29)." — *Wordsworth.*

Saul receives the report of Doeg

^d "Under the terebinth on the

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hill,' or high place, of Gibeah, Saul's own city." — *Wordsworth*.

a Ps. lii. 2-4.

"Here the back-biter concealeth the necessary circumstances, whereby Ahimelech might have been excused, as that David asked bread, being hungry, and that he told not Ahimelech that he was out of Saul's favor; but he turneth all his speech to this end, to bring the priest into suspicion with Saul." — *Perkins*.

Saul charges Ahimelech with conspiracy

"Justice is never so slender to us when we first practice it. It grows in the imagination. It is enlarged by experience. It includes more elements, it touches things with a finer stroke, and it demands more exquisite duties, every single day and year that a man lives, who lives at all right." — *Beecher*.

Doeg charged with execution of Ahimelech

b 1 Sa. viii. 11.
c "And thus they were more faithful to Saul than if they had obeyed his order." — *Wordsworth*.

d "Doeg prob. had a band of assistants under his command, foreigners like himself." — *Spk. Com.*

e "These barbarous atrocities were intended to terrify all the subjects of Saul fr. affording Dav. an asylum." — *Jamieson*.

f 1 Ki. i. 7, 19, 42; ii. 26, 27; Mk. ii. 26.

Saul had surrounded himself largely by Benjamites, and now appeals to tribal jealousies. (8) Jealous of Dav. and of his own son, Saul now becomes suspicious of his people, thinks all are set against him. (9) *Doeg*,^a ch. xxi. 7. set . . servants, R. V., "which stood by the servants." said, Doeg wishes to turn Saul's suspicions fr. the servants to the priests. (11) sent to call, evidently in a heat of passion; glad to get some one to vent his rage on.

The informer (vss. 9-11). — Doeg — I. Was moved by sycophancy. II. Was ready to tell the worst he knew. III. Was criminally reticent on extenuating circumstances. IV. Was himself ready to perform deeds of cruelty.

Saul's base speech. — It accuses his people of having conspired against him, because they had not spoken to him of the friendship of his son with David, although that fact must have been notorious. It accuses the noble Jonathan of having stirred up David against Saul, while neither Jonathan nor David had ever lifted a little finger against him, and both the one and the other might have been trusted to serve him with unflinching fidelity if he had only given them a fair chance. It indicates that nothing would be more agreeable to Saul than any information about David or those connected with him that would give him an excuse for some deed of overwhelming vengeance. Did ever man draw his own portrait in viler colors than Saul in this speech. —

Exp. Bib. Doeg the Edomite. — The execration of ancient Jewish history followed the Edomite, and Jewish imagination was even strained to depict the horrible destiny to which that evil man was driven: we read that Doeg the Edomite was encountered by three destructive demons, one of whom deprived him of his learning, a second burned his soul, and a third scattered his dust in the synagogues.

12-16. (12) Hear now, spoken in great excitement. (13) rise against me, Saul regarded Dav.'s company of warriors as proof of his rebellion. (14) The priest answers simply, according to his knowledge, and tries to soothe Saul. *thy bidding*, R. V., "is taken into thy council," *i. e.* is a trusted privy councillor. (15) Did I then, *etc.*, R. V., "have I to-day begun," *i. e.*, this is not the first time I have inquired of the Lord at the king's command. (16) die, a most tyrannous and wicked decision.

The trial of Ahimelech. — I. His accuser — Saul. II. The offense with which he was charged — conspiracy, rebellious employment of official functions. III. Ahimelech's defense. 1. A denial of any conspiracy; 2. Explanation of his treatment of David on the ground that he was the king's son-in-law; 3. Assertion of ignorance of David's relations with the king. IV. The sentence: unjust — 1. Because based on the evidence of one, while the law required at least two witnesses; 2. Because it included a punishment — death — not allowed for such an offense; 3. Because it was an act of private revenge.

A fulfilment of prophecy. — Long ago, it had been foretold to Eli, when he tolerated so calmly the scandalous wickedness of his sons, Behold, "the days come that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, but there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy in My habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thy house for ever." Ahimelech was a grandson of Eli, and the other massacred priests were probably of Eli's blood. Here, then, at last, was the fulfilment of the sentence announced to Eli; doomed as his house had been, their subsistence for years back was of the nature of a respite; and here, at length, was the catastrophe that had been so distinctly foretold. — *Exp. Bib.*

17-23. (17) footmen, Heb. runners,^b Saul's bodyguard. would not, *etc.*,^c deterred not only by the wickedness of the act, but also by its sacrilege. This resistance of his authority only exasperated Saul the more. (18) thou, a foreigner. fell upon,^d they made no resistance. (19) Such indiscriminate slaughter showed blind infatuation.^e So heavy a blow was inflicted upon the family of Ithamar, that when David organized the courses of the priests for the temple service only eight "chief men" could be found in it, against sixteen in the family of Eleazar (1 Chr. xxiv. 4). — *Cam. B.* (20) Abiathar,^f comp. ch. xxiii. 6. (21) shewed, told. (22) knew it, suspected and feared it. (23) in safeguard, so long as Dav. had safety to offer. A common enemy rendered interests identical.

A refuge to the oppressed (vs. 23). — These words may well remind us — I.

Of the danger to which our sins have exposed us. II. Of the only place of safety for the guilty and lost. III. Of the deliverance from fear for those who trust in Jesus. IV. Of the assurance of protection which He gives.

Sin and its consequences.—Those who heard the lectures of the greatest living English historian, during his visit to these shores, will not soon forget how solemnly he said, “that often in the Providence of God, the full consequences of an evil course fall not upon the head of him who was guilty of it, but on those who in after days are his representatives,” and added, amidst a stillness which showed how fully his audience understood his reference, “If Sir John Hawkins, in the day when he went negro-hunting on the coast of Africa, could have foreseen Gettysburg, he would sooner that his ship and all on board had gone to the bottom, than that he should have done anything to produce such a terrible result.”—*W. M. Taylor.*

A devout governor's loyalty to honor.—When the infamous Catherine de Medici had persuaded Chas. IX. of France to massacre all the Protestants in the kingdom, that detestable Prince sent orders to the governors of the different provinces, to put all the Huguenots to death in their respective districts. “Sire,” answered one Catholic governor, who will ever be dear to humanity, “I have too much respect for your Majesty not to persuade myself that the order I have received must be forged; but if, which God forbid, it should really be your Majesty's order, I have too much respect for your Majesty to obey it.”—*Whitecross.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

1-6. (1) **Then they told, R. V.,** “and,” no mark of time. Dav. is looked upon as the champion of Israel. Keilah,^a city of the Shephalah, or lowland district of Judah; Jos. xv. 44. (2) **enquired, etc.,^b** if Abiathar had not yet joined him (*vs.* 6), this was done through prophet Gad (*ch.* xxii. 5). (3) **here in Judah, i. e.** the highlands of Judah, where the band could easily elude Saul. Why then add Phil. to the list of their enemies and thus shut up one avenue of escape in the hour of peril. (4) **again,** for further assurance. (5) **saved, etc.,** obs. their return for his work (*vs.* 12). (6) **to Keilah,** some think he came first to Dav. when at this town; others, that he followed Dav.'s fortunes by going with him to it. **ephod,** rescued fr. the ruin at Nob.

Danger in duty (*vs.* 3).—We learn—I. That while danger threatens, duty may summon us to greater perils. II. That the greater danger, with God as our helper, involves less of real risk than the lesser danger without Divine aid. III. That we should at all times look less to the peril than to the sources of help and strength. IV. The great danger encountered at God's bidding will find us with the help required. There was the ephod in Keilah.

Answer to prayer.—I once saw a letter written from a western city to a convict in the State prison of Massachusetts by one who had been himself for some time an inmate of that jail. The person to whom he wrote had committed burglary, but was hopefully converted in the prison, and had tried to benefit some of his fellow-prisoners. His correspondent had been impressed with his words, and was wishing, after his release, to live another life. With this object he went West, but found it hard to get on. His money was gone; there seemed to him only two alternatives—either starvation or crime; but—and here I must tell the story in his own words, rude tho' they may seem to ears polite: “I thought of what you once said about a fellow's calling on the Lord when he was in hard luck, and I thought I would try it once, anyhow; all I could say was, ‘Lord, give a poor fellow a chance to square it for three months: for Christ's sake, Amen;’ and I kept a thinking of it over and over as I went along. About an hour after that I was in Fourth street: and this is what happened: As I was walking along I heard a noise, and saw a horse running away with a carriage, with two children in it. I grabbed up a piece of box-cover from the sidewalk, and when the horse came up, I smashed him over the head with it as hard as I could drive. The board split to pieces and the horse checked a little and I grabbed the reins and pulled till he stopped.” He then tells how the gentleman to whom the children belonged rewarded him very handsomely, befriended him, and helped him into a respectable situation where he could earn an honest living: so that now he is not only a good citizen but an humble Christian.—*W. M. Taylor.*

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“Justice and truth are two points of such exquisite delicacy that our coarse and blunted instruments will not touch them accurately. If they do find out the point, so as to rest upon it, they bruise and injure it, and lean at least more on the error that surrounds it than on the truth itself.”—*Pascal.*

Abiathar escapes from Saul and flies to David

a Neh. iii. 17, 18.

b “The murder of the priests had deprived Saul of access to God by Urim and Thummim, and had opened it to David.”—*Wordsworth.*

As no rain falls in Palestine in the harvest season, the corn is threshed out in the open air by a heavy wooden sledges made of two boards, and curved up in front, with pieces of basalt inserted for teeth, drawn over it by horses, or it is trampled out by cattle.

The true soldier wins his victory before the battle. It is a victory in the heart.—*Anon.*

Any weapon is enough if the Lord is only behind it.—*William Ashmore.*

Put your trust in God, but mind to keep your powder dry.—*Edward Hayes.*

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David at Keilah

a Ps. x. 9; xxxiii. 12, 13.

"Alas! there are times when fore-shadowings of evil, vaporous and undefined, rise up over the soul, like the night mists over the meadowland, obscuring not only the landmarks of earth, but dimming even the star-guides of heaven. At such periods we find our only safety in solitude and prayer."—A. B. Edwards.

David in the wilderness of Ziph

"The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair if they were not cherished by our virtues."—Shakespeare.

"We ought to love life; we ought to desire to live here so long as God ordains it; but let us not so encase ourselves in time that we cannot break the crust, and begin to throw out shoots for the other life."—Beecher.

the Ziphites make a compact with Saul

b "Fr. the Tell of Ziph a panorama of the whole sur-

7-12. (8) all the people, fr. adjoining districts, not all the nation. (9) secretly practised, R. V., "devised," poss. plotted with men of Keilah to give him up, as well as raised the expedition to seize him." (10, 11) The prayer by wh. the oracle was consulted. **men**, i. e., governing body, not the body of citizens. (12) **deliver**, mark the cowardice and ingratitude.

Inquiring of God.—I. We have here the servant of God in a great strait. In a walled city, surrounded by traitors, ignorant of their designs. II. We have the servant of God inquiring of the Lord concerning the course he should pursue. III. We have David's Master revealing the purpose of men to His servant.

Prayer for protection.—The missionaries to the Fiji Islands were threatened with destruction by the enraged natives, and had no means of defense, except prayer. Their enemies heard them praying, and became fearful, and fled. The reason was given by one of themselves: "They found you were praying to your God, and they know your God is a strong God; and they are gone."

Need of faith in prayer.—Is it not a sad thing that we should think it wonderful for God to hear prayer? Much better faith was that of a little boy in one of the schools in Edinburgh who had attended a prayer-meeting and at last said to his teacher, who conducted it: "I wish my sister could be got to read the Bible; and I wish the next time there is a prayer-meeting you would ask the people to pray for my sister, that she may begin to read the Bible." "Well, well, it shall be done, John." So the teacher gave out that a little boy was very anxious that prayer should be offered that his sister might begin to read the Bible. John was observed to get up and go out. The teacher thought it very rude of the boy to disturb the people in a crowded room, and so the next day, when the lad came he said: "John, I thought it was very rude of you to get up in the prayer-meeting and go out. You ought not to have done so." "Oh, sir," said the boy, "I did not mean to be rude; but I thought I should just like to go home and see my sister reading her Bible for the first time."

13-18. (13) six hundred, comp. ch. xxii. 2. **went . . go**, scattering themselves for a time. (14) **wilderness**, bet. hill country of Judah and the Dead Sea. **Ziph**, now Tell-Zif, a hill about four miles S. E. of Hebron; Jos. xv. 54-62. **every day**, i. e. continually, not literally every day. (15) **a wood**, a thick wood. Lieut. Conder is of the opinion that no thick wood could ever have flourished over this unwatered and sun-scorched region, and conjectures that the Heb. word "chôresh" was a proper name. (16) **strengthened, etc.**, encouraged him to trust on. Jon.'s strong confidence would cheer his friend. (17) Either Jon. knew of Dav.'s being anointed, or he saw that Saul was going to ruin. (18) **made**, renewed. This was the last time these two friends met.

The true in life (vs. 16).—Two lessons in this chapter:—(1) That the most heroic heart may sometimes be overcome by fear. (2) That the crimes of a father may alienate the hearts of his children. The text gives us three facts. I. The deep depression of a true soul. II. The distinguishing power of a true man: to strengthen a brother's heart in God! III. The highest function of a true friend. It is one thing to have the power to strengthen, and another thing to use it when and where required. He who uses it is the truest friend.—Thomas.

Jonathan's unselfishness.—In that spirit of Jonathan there is a goodness altogether Divine. Oh what a contrast to his father, to Saul! What a contrast to the ordinary spirit of jealousy, when some one is like to cut us out of a coveted prize! Some one at school is going to beat you at the competition. Some one in business is going to get the situation for which you are so eager. Some one is going to carry off the fair hand to which you so ardently aspire. Where, oh where, in such cases, is the spirit of Jonathan? Look at it, study it, admire it; and in its clear and serene light, see what a black and odious spirit jealousy is: and oh, seek that *you*, by the grace of God, may be, not a Saul, but a Jonathan!—Exp. Bib.

19-24. (19) **came . . Saul**,^b so currying favor. **Hachilah**, S. side of Tell-Zif, "the long ridge called El Kôlah." **Jeshimon**, the waste, or wilderness; not a proper name. (20) **our part**, as knowing the district. (21) Saul changes fr. desperate passion to maudlin sentiment. (22) **his haunt is, lit.** his foot shall be; find his habits, etc. **subtily**, Ge. ii. 1. (23) **thousands, i. e.**

families. (24) **Maon**,^a Jos. xv. 55; bet. Hebron and Engedi. **plain** . . **Jeshimon**, R. V., "in the Arabah on the south of the desert."

David's confidence in God.—At the time when David received tidings that the Ziphites had betrayed him, his soul poured itself forth in the fifty-fourth Psalm. Here he first directs his eye from the earth, where faithlessness and wickedness so much surrounded him, upwards to heaven, and prays to God that He would save and judge him (*i. e.* justify him), since the people of his own tribe had risen up against him as enemies, yea, like the heathen. But not less does he give utterance to his confidence that the Lord would be his helper and would uphold his soul, and that the wickedness of his enemies would recoil upon themselves.—*Krummacher*.

25-29. (25) **into a rock**, or to the cliff. (26) **mountain**, not single hill, but range of rocky cliffs. **compassed**, *i. e.* Saul divided his forces into two divisions, seeking to surround Dav.'s 600. (27) **invaded**, made a raid to carry off booty of corn or cattle. (28) **Sela-hammahlekoth**,^b the rock of slipping away, or escaping. (29) **En-gedi**,^c *fountain of the kid*. Anciently called *Hazezon-Tamar* (Ge. xiv. 7), the felling of palm trees; now *Ain-Jidy*, 200 yards W. of Dead Sea. This verse properly belongs to ch. xxiv.

Evil overruled for good.—An incident from the life of John G. Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides, is an interesting illustration of God's providence. "One evening I awoke three times to hear a chief and his men trying to force the door of my house. Tho' armed with muskets, they had some sense of doing wrong, and were wholesomely afraid of a little retriever dog which had often stood between me and death. God restrained them again; and next morning the report went all around the harbor, that those who tried to shoot me were smitten, weak with fear, and that shooting would not do. A plan was therefore deliberately set on foot to fire the premises and club us if we attempted to escape. But our native teacher heard of it, and God helped us to frustrate their designs. When they knew that their plots were revealed to us, they seemed to lose faith in themselves and cast about to circumvent us in some more secret way. Their evil was overruled for good."

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

1-4. (1) **following**, Heb. *after*. (2) **chosen**, *i. e.* choice, equivalent to well-grown. **rocks** . . **goats**, "the high rocks and precipices, in wh. these animals delight." (3) **sheepcotes**,^d caves used for shelter of flocks fr. the heat, or bad weather. **cover his feet**, Ju. iii. 24. **sides**, the deeper recesses; they would be hidden by the darkness, but would clearly see any one entering.^e (4) **skirt**, he either approached softly fr. behind, or took advantage of Saul's sleeping.^f

David's forbearance towards Saul (vss. 4-6).—Consider David in a three-fold relation. I. As a subject towards his prince. II. As a saint towards his oppressor. III. As a believer towards his God.—*Simeon*.

Conquering one's self.—There is a Northern legend of a man who thought he was pursued by a troll. His ricks were fired, his barns unroofed, his cattle destroyed, his lands blasted, and his first-born slain. So he lay in wait for the monster, where it lived in the chasms near his house, and in the darkness of the night he saw it. With a cry he rushed upon it, and gripped it about the waist, and it turned upon him and held him by the shoulder. Long he wrestled with it, reeling, staggering, falling and rising again; but at length a flood of strength came to him, and he overthrew it, and stood over it, covering it, conquering it, with his right hand set hard at its throat. Then he drew his knife to kill it, and the moon shot thro' a rack of cloud, opening an alley of light about it, and he saw its face, and lo! *the face of the troll was his own.*—*Hall Caine*.

5-8. (5) **smote him**, what he had done was an insult. (6) **my master**, refusing to admit any rebellion against him. **Lord's anointed**,^g therefore all respect was due to him. (7) **stayed**, checked, *lit. cut off* the purpose; a strong expression showing that Dav. had to exercise his authority to prevent his men from fr. killing Saul as an act to wh. Providence had opened the way. (8) **stooped** . . **earth**, in attitude of allegiance and reverence.

Conscience.—Your eye may be very accurate, but who would trust you to

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rounding district is to be seen. So the Ziphites could easily tell Dav.'s lurking places."—*Van de Velde*.

^a "The name still exists in *Main*, a lofty hill seven miles S. of Hebron."—*Dict. Bib.*

David finds refuge at Engedi

^b "Fr. *chalak*, to be smooth, and in one form of the verb, to slip away, to escape."—*Gesenius*.

^c "On all sides the country is full of caverns, wh. serve as lurking-places for outlaws at the present day."—*Robinson*.

Saul and David in the cave of Engedi

^d "Among wandering tribes, grotts and caverns are usually preferred for sheepcotes, bec. they offer both shelter and security."

^e See Ps. lvii.

^f "Saul had compassed himself to the usual short rest during the afternoon heat."—*Kitto*.

David reveals himself to Saul

^g 1 Sa. x. 1.

David stayed his servants, or, liter-

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ally, it reads, he "divided" or "cut them off." The word denotes both the eagerness and violence of David's men in attempting to carry out their design, and his resoluteness in opposing them, as it were, by force.

David proves that he has spared Saul

a2 Kl. v. 13.

"Calumny would soon starve and die of itself, if nobody took it in and gave it lodging."—*Leighton*.

In appealing to God to avenge him upon Saul, we must not understand David to pray to God to punish the king for the injuries he had done him, but only to deliver and vindicate him, in which sense the word is used in old English, as in the parable of the unjust judge.

Broken friendship may be soldered, but never made sound. A reconciled friend is a double foe.—*Spanish*.

Saul and David are reconciled

b1 Sa. xx. 15.

"When a man in great sorrow is spoken of, it is said, 'Ah, how he did lift up his voice and weep!' 'Alas, how great is their trouble, they are all lifting up the voice.'"—*Roberts*.

"Kneel not to me: the power that I have on you is to spare you; the malice towards you to forgive you; live,

build a wall if you have no dependence but your eye? You must drop the plumb-line along side and lay the level upon your work, and then the united action of eye, plumb-line and level helps you to make a perfectly upright wall. In the matter of truth and duty your eye is the fallible conscience, the plumb-line and level the revealed will of God, and the action of the two together enable you to build a character, and to do works that are according to the will of God. Christ had to come as the prophet to supply us with the plumb-line and level. — *Arthur T. Pierson*.

9-15. (9) **men's words**, flatterers at court, who were Dav.'s slanderers. (11) **my father**,^a term indicating his obedience and respect. **evil, etc.**, that evil of *rebelliousness* wh. Saul persisted in recognizing. **my soul, or life**. (12) **avenge**, Ro. xii. 19. (13) Dav. affirms his integrity. (14) And pleads his insignificance. He neither deserved, nor was worth the trouble of such enmity as Saul's. (15) **the Lord, etc.**, Ps. xxxv. 1. **deliver, i.e.** by right sentence wh. shall set me free.

David's victory. — David follows Saul from the cave more joyous now than after the conquest of Goliath. Indeed, this last victory was the more glorious one — the spoils were more precious, the trophies more honorable. Then, he had needed a sling, stones, and battle array; this time his reason had been a sufficient weapon — without arms he had won the victory, without having shed blood he had erected the trophy. He came forth, therefore, not carrying the head of a Philistine, but a mortified heart, a conquered anger; and it was not to Jerusalem that he consecrated his spoils, but to heaven, to the city on high. We see no women coming forth to meet him with songs of praise, but the angels applauded his deed and admired his wisdom and piety. For he returned after having given many wounds to his adversary; not to Saul, whom he had saved, but to his real enemy, the devil, whom he had pierced through with many thrusts. For as our anger and lust and our mutual collisions rejoice the devil, so peace and concord and victory over passion grieve and conquer him who hates peace and is the father of jealousy. David comes forth, then, from the cavern with a crown upon his head. . . it is not the diadem of Saul, but the crown of justice which adorns him — it is not the royal purple which enwraps him, but a wisdom more than human, before which the most gorgeous robe becomes pale. — *Chrysostom*. *Heroism*. — It is a calumny to say that men are moved to heroic action by ease, hope of pleasure, recompense — sugar-plums of any kind in this world or the next. In the meanest mortal there lies something noble. It is not to taste sweet things, but to do noble and true things, and to vindicate himself under God's heaven, as a God-made man, that the poorest son of Adam surely longs; show him the way of doing that, the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero. They wrong man greatly who say he is to be seduced by ease. Difficulty, abnegation, martyrdom, death are the allurements that act on the heart of man. — *Carlyle*.

16-22. (16) **wept**, in compunction. He really loved David, and was for a time melted by the sparing of his life in the cave. (17) **more righteous**, right-minded. (18) **well**, mercifully. (19) **find his enemy**, get him at advantage, as you have done. (20) Saul lets out the secret conviction wh. impelled him to try and kill Dav. (21) **seed after me**,^b Saul's trouble was that he might not found a dynasty. (22) **into the hold**, fearing Saul's better feeling would prove but temporary, Dav. removed fr. Engedi to the pastoral land around Hachilah. Thus for the moment David's condition is greatly improved.

The reconciliation of Saul (vs. 16). — I. While the good man sees his own perils, let him also see the restraints which are put upon the wicked. II. Let the bad man put to himself some serious questions respecting the restraints which limit his power. III. Though mediation may fail in carrying out its purposes, yet let no wise mediator suppose that his work is in vain. IV. Observe the infinite superiority of power that is moral, as compared with power that is physical. 1. In the worst men there is something that may be touched; 2. In every life there is at least one opportunity of showing the real quality of the heart. — *Parker*.

Warnings of conscience. — Upon the coast of France, the sailors say there is a buried city; and on quiet nights, as they are rocked upon the deep, they think they can hear the tones of the buried bells coming up from the steeples

far down in the ocean depths with muffled sound. So in the hearts of men of the world who have lived lives of self-indulgence and evil there are muffled tones from the depths of their nature, ringing in the steeples of conscience, that tell them to choose what is right and to shun the wrong. — *F. B. Meyer.*

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and deal with others better." — *Shakespeare.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

1-3. (1) **Samuel died**, closing a noble and useful life of steadfast integrity. For nearly eighty years he had lived before Israel as prophet, judge, and counsellor. He ranked next to Moses. **in his house**, within its precincts.^a **wilderness of Paran**,^b name prob. applied to the district round about Beersheba, westward and far to the south. The term was used with great latitude. (2) **Maon**, ch. xxiii. 25. **Carmel**, ch. xv. 12. **very great**, *i. e.* very rich in flocks and herds. (3) **Nabal**, *foolish, churlish*. **Abigail**, *father's joy*, or better, "source of joy." **house of Caleb**, a Calebite.

Sunset on Ramah (vs. 1). — Let us inquire what it was that made the name of Samuel so revered. — I. His kindness of heart: this was accompanied with the kindred virtues of generosity, unselfishness, and delicate consideration for the feelings of others. II. His firmness. III. His integrity: He was a true patriot. IV. His piety: He was emphatically a man of prayer. — *Macduff.*

Samuel. — He made incessant war on that cold worldly spirit, so natural to us all, that leaves God out of account as a force in our lives, and strives to advance our interests simply by making the most of the conditions of material prosperity. — *Exp. B.*

4-9. (4) **shear his sheep**, usually time of free-handed hospitality.^c (5) **greet him**, salute him. (6) **that liveth**, the Hebrew is obscure, but the rendering of the *A. V.* is untenable, and also very tame. Literally it is, "Ye shall say to him, For life!" Probably it was a colloquial form of greeting, and equivalent to "good luck," "success," *life* in Hebrew being sometimes used for prosperity. — *Pulp. Com.* (7) **hurt them not**, a wandering tribe like Dav's. might have used the strong hand, and *taken* what they wanted. Dav's. course was the natural one, his demand was not blackmail. (8) **good day**, a feasting joyous day. (9) **ceased**, rested: perhaps bec. no ans. was given at once: they waited for it.

Modern Nabals. — Let no one suppose that when we come upon this Nabal, we are like the geologist when in the crust of the earth, he lights upon some huge old megalosaurus, and that we have here the petrified fossil of a kind of animal which was common in oolite period, but has now entirely disappeared. Not at all! You very likely met him yesterday. You may meet him, perhaps, to-morrow. The man with heavy purse and light head, with full pockets and empty cranium is everywhere a Nabal, and if, haply, he combines with these the gluttony of the gourmand or the thirst of the drunkard, he will only make the identity more complete. — *W. M. Taylor.*

10-13. (10) **servants . . master**,^d implying that Dav. was a runaway slave. (11) **bread, water**, here used for meat and drink. **know not whence**, Nab. had so much right on his side, that Dav. was not one of the known Arab chiefs. (13) **Gird, etc.** the insolent ans. roused Dav.; he did not explain his intention, but it was very manifest. **stuff**,^e baggage.

The message of the church to men of wealth (vs. 10, 11). — Wherever classes are held apart by rivalry and selfishness instead of drawn together by the law of love — wherever there has not been established a kingdom of heaven, but only a kingdom of the world — there exist the forces of inevitable collision. I. The causes of this false social state. 1. False basis on which social superiority was held to rest; 2. A false conception respecting rights; 3. Circumstances. II. The message of the church to the man of wealth. 1. The spiritual dignity of man as man; 2. The law of sacrifice; 3. Rightful influence. — *F. W. Robertson.*

Nabal. — A descendant of the lion-hearted Judah and of the courageous Caieb, this Nabal came of a noble stock; but cursed with a narrow heart, a senseless head, and a grovelling nature, he fell as far below average humanity as his great ancestors had risen above it. — *Blaikie.* *Instances of civility.* — Washington was polite when he promptly returned the salute of a colored

the death of Samuel

^a "In the East still every respectable family has its own house of the dead; often this is in a little detached garden, consisting of a small stone building, resembling a house, wh. is called the sepulchre of the family." — *Jamieson.*

b Nu. x. 12.

David seeks hospitality of Nabal

^c "Now, on such a festive occasion as a sheep-shearing, near a town or village, an Arab sheik of the neighboring desert would hardly fail to put in a word, either in person or by letter, and his message would be a transcript of that of David." — *Robinson.*

Nabal's churlish answer

^d "In accordance with his character he turns away the deputation, and adds some insulting expressions about Dav." — *Ewald.*

e 1 Sa. xxx. 24.

"Courtesy which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds, with smoky raf-

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ters, than in tapestry halls and courts of princes." — *Milton*.

Abigail informed

David's anger

a From Fr. *railler*, to swagger, bluster, scold.

b "When such tribute is denied to the Arab chiefs, they are wont to enforce it as a right." — *Jamieson*.

Abigail takes provisions to David

c "The Arabs invariably carry their milk, water, etc., in such leathern vessels. The provisions were ready to Abigail's hand, as prepared for the feast." — *Spk. Com. d Comp. Ge. xxxii. 3-21*.

e "A deep dip into the hill, into which she came down fr. the N., when Dav. came down to it fr. S." — *Wordsworth*.
f Ps. cix. 5; Pr. xvii. 13.

Abigail meets David

g "The main argument rests on the description of her husband's charac., wh. she draws with that union of playfulness and seriousness wh., above all things, turns away wrath." — *Stanley*.

she appeaseth the anger of David

man; Arnold was polite when the poor woman felt that he treated her as if she were a lady; Chalmers was polite when every old woman in Morningside was elated and delighted with his courteous salute, and so was Robert Burns when he recognized an honest farmer in the street of Edinburgh, declaring to one who rebuked him, that "it was not the great coat, the scone bonnet, and the Saunder's boot-hose that he spoke to, but the man that was in them." — *Wm. Matthews*.

14-17. (14) **railed on**,^a Heb. *flew upon*. (15) **conversant with**, while the flocks were pasturing in the neighborhood. **in the fields**, *i. e.* the wilderness. (16) **a wall**, admitting their good services. Dav.'s 600 were as good as a city wall in protecting Nabal's property. (17) **evil is determined**, the man knew the custom of these tribes.^b **son of Belial**, De. xiii. 13. **speak to him**, therefore he came to Abigail.

Wealth sometimes a calamity. — Riches are oftener an impediment than a stimulus to action; and in many cases they are quite as much a misfortune as a blessing. The youth who inherits wealth is apt to have life made too easy for him, and he soon becomes sated with it because he has nothing left to desire. Having no special object to struggle for, he finds time hang heavy on his hands; he remains morally and spiritually asleep, and his position in society is often no higher than that of a polypus over which the tide floats.

"His only labor is to kill the time
And labor dire it is, and weary woe." — *Smiles*.

18-22. (18) **bottles, skins of goats**.^c **parched corn**, a delicacy in the E. (19) **before me**, to appease Dav. with the present.^d (20) **covert of the hill**, *lit. secret place*: prob. defile or glen.^e (21) **had said**, to some of his leading men. **in vain**,^f to no profit; only to meet with refusal and insult. (22) A rash oath. For form comp. Ru. i. 17. **enemies of Dav.**, "The enemies of David" may possibly be an euphemism, introduced by a corrector who was unwilling to let David invoke vengeance upon himself for an oath which he afterwards broke. Comp. the note on xx. 16. — *Cam. B.*

The control of anger. — Socrates, finding himself in great emotion against a slave, said: "I would beat you if I were not angry." Socrates meeting a gentleman of rank in the streets, saluted him; but the gentleman took no notice of it. His friends in company, observing what passed, told the philosopher "they were so exasperated at the man's incivility that they had a good mind to resent it." But he very calmly made answer: "If you meet any person in the road in a worse habit of body than yourself, would you think you had reason to be enraged at him on that account? Pray, then, what greater reason can you have for being incensed at a man for a worse habit of mind than any of yourselves?"

23-26. (23) **lighted off**, dismounting in presence of a superior in token of respect. By her action, as well as words, seeking to make amends for her husband's insult. (24) **fell at his feet**, coming near, in earnestness of her supplication. (25) **regard**, pay heed to; lay to heart the foolish answer. **folly**,^g silliness. (26) Dav. was acting on self-will, and may well be reminded to ask himself if God was with him in this expedition.

Oriental tokens of respect (vs. 23). — A rider was expected to dismount when he met a person of more elevated rank. This explains the reason that Achsah, the daughter of Caleb, and Abigail, the wife of Nabal, alighted from their asses; it was a mark of respect which the former owed to her father, and the latter to David, a person of high rank and growing renown. It was undoubtedly for the same reason that Rebecca alighted from the camel on which she rode, when the servant informed her that the stranger whom she descried at a distance, in the field, was his master; and that Naaman, the Syrian grandee, alighted from his chariot, at the approach of Gehazi, the servant of Elisha. — *Paxton*.

27-31. (27) **blessing**, present. **young men**, not presuming to offer it to Dav himself. (28) **forgive the trespass**, vs. 24; taking on herself the wrong of at first refusing Dav.'s request, basing her request on the ground that she was saving Dav. fr. the rash sin of blood-guiltiness. **evil hath not**, *etc.*, R. V., "shall not be found," *i. e.* when the time comes for thee

to take the kingdom no one shall be able to allege against thee any offense by which thou hast lost thy title to the kingly office; nor afterwards as king shalt thou be guilty of any breach of thy duty to Jehovah, Israel's supreme Ruler, so as to incur rejection as Saul has done.—*Pulp. Com.* (29) **Yet a man, etc., R. V.,** "and though man be risen up." sling out, delicate allusion to feat with Goliath.^a (30, 31) **no grief,** she is sure he will, by-and-by, be glad if he broke his rash vow, *vss.* 21, 22.

The bundle of life (vs. 29).—Anything which is important or valuable is called a *kattu*, *i. e.*, "a bundle, a pack, a bale." A young man who is enamored of a female, is said to be "bound up in the *kattu*, bundle, of love." Of a just judge, the people say, "He is bound up in the bundle of justice." "Why do those people act so? Because they are bound up in the bundle of desire." David, therefore, was to be bound up in the bundle of life—nothing was to harm him.—*Roberts.*

32-35. (32) which sent thee, admitting that God was restraining his hand. (33) **advice, R. V.,** "wisdom." (34) Only such persuasion could have turned him fr. his intention. (35) **received,** this reception was the seal of peace bet. them. Easterns will not injure those fr. whom they consent to receive food.

David's wrath restrained.—But if we blame David, as we must, for his heedless passion, we must not less admire the readiness with which he listens to the reasonable and pious counsel of Abigail. With the ready instinct of a gracious heart he recognizes the hand of God in Abigail's coming,—this mercy had a heavenly origin, and cordially praises him for His restraining providence and restraining grace. He candidly admits that he had formed a very sinful purpose; but he frankly abandons it, accepts her offering, and sends her away in peace.—*Exp. Bib.*

Woman's mission.—

Woman's warm heart and gentle hand in God's eternal plan,
Were formed to soften, soothe, refine, exalt and comfort man
And win from pleasure's poison cup to life's pure fount above,
And rule him as the angels rule, by deeds of peace and love.

—*Sarah J. Hale.*

36-40. (36) **like . . king,** for abundance and liberality. **drunken,** no doubt of intoxic. charac. of this wine. (37) **gone out of,** and he would feel very weak and exhausted. **died within him,**^b became stiff and senseless, and never recovered. (38) His death came to be regarded as Div. judgment. (39) **communed with,** negotiating a marriage.^c (40) **Carmel,** as *vs.* 2.

Death from fright (vss. 37, 38).—About fifty years ago the bridge over the *Usk*, near Caerleon, Monmouthshire, was washed away, and a new one had to be constructed. Whilst the buttresses were being built a commercial traveler, who had been absent some time from the place, drove up one night in his gig to the river side, where the bridge used to be. It was a very dark night, and he gave the reins to his horse, who, he knew, was well accustomed to the road. They crossed safely over what he took to be the bridge, and came to an inn near the river. The landlady asked him, being an old acquaintance, what part of the country he had come in from. "From Newport," he answered. "Then you must have crossed the river?" said the woman, in astonishment. "Yes, of course. How else could I have come?" "But how did you manage it, and in the dark, too?" "The same as usual: there is no difficulty in driving over the bridge, even though it be dark." "Bless the man!" said the landlady, "there is no bridge to drive over. You must have come along the planks left by the men." "Impossible," was the answer; and nothing could persuade the traveler that night that there was no bridge. But early in the morning he went to the river side, and found, as he was told, that the bridge was gone. His horse had taken him safely over three planks, left by the workmen, where one false step, to the right or to the left, would instantly have plunged him into the swollen river beneath. So terrified was he at the dreadful danger he had gone through, and so marvelously escaped, that the unhappy man went back to his inn, took to his bed, and actually died within the week of the effects of the impression the discovery made on him.

B. C. *cir.* 1021.

a 1 Sa. xvii. 40;
Jer. x. 18.

"The sun should not set upon our anger, neither should he rise upon our confidence. We should freely forgive, but forget rarely."—*Colton.*

David's
reply to
Abigail

"Anger and the thirst of revenge are a kind of fever; fighting and lawsuits, bleeding. The latter occasions a dissipation of money; the former, of those fiery spirits which cause a preternatural fermentation."—*Shenstone.*

Nabal's
sudden
death

b "The affair drives him into such a brutal rage that he falls into a fit and dies fr. a stroke of apoplexy."—*Ewald.*

c "After the customary mourning of seven days, she would prob. feel herself at liberty."—*Spk. Com.*

"The thing in the world I am most afraid of is fear, and with good reason, that passion alone in the trouble of it exceeding all other accidents."—*Montaigne.*

"I feel my sinews slacken'd with the fright, and a cold sweat trills down all o'er my limbs, as if I were dissolving into water."—*Dryden.*

B. C. chr. 1021.

Abigail
becomes
the wife
of David

a Not the Jezreel
in Issachar.

b 2 Sa. iii. 14, 15.

c Is. x. 30.

"Sincerity is to speak as we think, to do as we pretend and profess, to perform and make good what we promise, and really to be what we would seem and appear to be."—*Tillotson*.

41-44. (41) be a servant, with E. extravagance of fig., expressing her sense of the honor done her in the request. (42) five damsels, being rich, she had these for waiting-maids; Ge. xxiv. 61. It is a proof that David considered himself practically secure against Saul's attempts that he thus married and allowed women to accompany his small force, as their presence would not only impede the rapidity of his movements, but also implies a certain amount of ease and comfort for their maintenance. — *Pulp. Com.* (43) took, had taken. Jezreel,^a a town of Judah, near Carmel, Jos. xv. 56. (44) Phalti, or Phaltiel,^b Gallim, bet. Gibeah and Jerusalem.^c

David's sin. — Abigail's meeting with David under the covert of the hill, and David's chivalrous answer to her chivalrous appeal — all the scene, which painters have so often delighted to draw, is a forefeeling, a prophecy, as it were, of the Christian chivalry of after ages. The scene is most human and most divine; and we are not shocked to hear that after Nabal's death the fair and rich lady joins her fortune to that of the wild outlaw, and becomes his wife, to wander by wood and wold. But, amid all the simple and sacred beauty of that scene, we cannot forget, we must not forget, that Abigail is but one wife of many, that there is an element of pure, single, all-absorbing love absent, at least in David's heart, which was present in the hearts of our forefathers in many a like case, and which they have handed down to us as an heirloom, as precious as that of our laws and liberties. And all this was sin unto David, and, like all sin, brought with it its own punishment. — *Kingsley*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SIXTH.

the Ziphites
tell Saul
where
David is

d "Prob. this is another account of the circum. narrated ch. xxiii. This view is taken in *Spk. Com.* The view that distinct incidents are dealt with is taken by *Keil*, *Cam. B. etc.*

1-4. (1) Ziphites, ch. xxiii. 19.^d (2) down, from Gibeah. (3) before Jeshimon, "looketh towards the waste." — *Cam. B.* by the way, comp. ch. xxiv. 3. saw, learned fr. spies. (4) spies, this necess. to secure information of Saul's movements.

Arab encampments. — I noticed at all the encampments which we passed that the sheik's was distinguished from the rest by a tall spear stuck upright in the ground in front of it. So Saul, when he lay sleeping, had his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster, and Abner and the people lay round about him. The whole of that scene is extremely Oriental and perfectly natural, even to the deep sleep into which all had fallen, so that David and Abishai could walk among them in safety. The Arabs sleep heavily, especially when fatigued. Often, when traveling, my muleteers and servants have resolved to watch by turns in places thought to be dangerous; but in every instance I soon found them fast asleep. — *Thomson*.

David visits
Saul's camp

e Comp. 2 Sa. xi. 3.

f 2 Sa. xxiii. 18.

g Ju. vii. 9-11.

h 1 Sa. xxiv. 4.

"Flatter not thyself in thy faith to God, if thou wantest charity for thy neighbor; and think not thou hast charity for thy neighbor, if thou wantest faith to God. Where they are not both together, they are both wanting; they are both dead, if once divided." — *Quarles*.

5-8. (5) Abner, ch. xiv. 50. trench, *R. V.*, "place of wagons." Camp was formed in a circle, the baggage and animals on the outside, the chief's tent in centre. (6) Hittite,^e indic. that some of the Canaanites had joined Dav. Abishai,^f the brother of Joab. Zeruah, sister of Dav. (7) to the people, i. e. the army. by night, comp. Gideon's adventure.^g spear, etc., this the sign of royalty. bolster, *R. V.*, "at his head." (8) at once, *R. V.*, "at one stroke." the second time, it shall be instant and painless death. Comp. request of Dav.'s men at *Engedi*.^h

The spear and the bolster (vs. 7). — Saul, as a king, and as sleeping apparently in the open air, may have had a bolster; but the present text does not say that he had; and we think it more than doubtful that bolsters had yet come into use for other than sick persons and women. Such things were probably, at this period of simple manners, considered marks of effeminacy. Sir Walter Scott, in a note to the *Lady of the Lake*, has an anecdote that will illustrate this view: "Hardihood was so essential to the character of a Highlander, that the reproach of effeminacy was the most bitter that could be thrown upon them. It is reported of Sir Ewen Cameron, of Lochiel, when upwards of seventy, that he was surprised by night on a hunting or military expedition. He wrapped himself in his plaid, and lay contentedly down on the snow. Among his attendants, who were preparing to take their rest in the same manner, he observed that one of his grandsons had rolled a large snowball and placed it under his head. The wrath of the ancient chief was awakened by a symptom of what he considered to be degenerate luxury. 'Out upon thee!' said he, kicking the frozen bolster from the head which it supported; 'art thou so effeminate as to need a pillow?'" — *Kitto*.

9-12. (8) **stretch . . . guiltless**, it would be wrong as wilful forcing of God, as murder, and as sacrilege. (10) **the Lord shall smite**, I will leave it all to God. **descend, etc.**, as happened ch. xxxi. 3-6. (11) **cruse of water**,^a so as to refresh, if necess., in the night. (12) **sleep fr. the Lord**, expression showing that a special Div. protection was recognized.

David's forbearance (vss. 8, 9). — I. We have here an example of searching temptation. II. As the temptation was great, the victory was proportionably illustrious. It was a great victory, inasmuch as it was gained alone. III. Instead of claiming the victory as his own, he piously traces it to its right source, and makes a grateful acknowledgment of the Divine kindness. — *T. Binney*.

Sleeping on guard. — A great commander was engaged in besieging a strongly fortified city. After a while he concentrated his forces at the point where the fortifications were stronger than any other, and at 2 P. M. under a bright sun and a clear sky, ordered an assault. When expostulated with by an under officer, the commander replied, "At this point such a general is in command. At this hour of the day he is accustomed invariably to retire for a long sleep. When informed of our approach, he will deny the fact and send a messenger for information. Before the messenger returns we shall gain possession of the fortress." The fact turned out exactly as predicted. "Yonder weak point," said the commander, "is held by General ——. There is no use in attempting to surprise him. He is never for a moment off his guard." — *Mahan*.

13-16. (13) **other side**, of the ravine. **great space**, securing David's safety: yet not out of hearing in the clear air. (14) **people, etc.**, not this time does he make direct appeal to Saul. (15) Such taunting is characteristic of the East;^b comp. ch. xvii. 43, 44. **who . . . Israel**, signifies that Abner was the most powerful subject in the kingdom. **kept, guarded**. (16) **see where**, plainly proving in what imminent peril Saul had been placed.

Sleeping on guard is ever punished with death, because on the carefulness of the watch may depend the safety of the army and the nation. "In the temple during the night the captain of the temple made his rounds, and the guards had to rise at his approach and salute him in a particular manner. Any guard found asleep on duty was beaten, or his garments were set on fire." *M. R. Vincent*.

17-20. (17) Ch. xxiv. 16. (18) **what evil**, Saul knew he was not punishing rebellion, but trying to put a rival out of the way. (19) **Lord have stirred**, "let me know my offense, and I am ready to make an offering for it to the Lord." — *Wordsworth*. **offering, minchah**, gift. Le. ii. 1. **abiding, continuing**. Virtually banishing him from Jehovah.^c The word "to-day" is emphatic: as much as to say, "It has at last come to this that I must flee the country: and such a banishment is tantamount to bidding me go serve false gods, for it is only in the land of promise and at the place which He has chosen that Jehovah manifests Himself and can be worshiped." — *Cam. B.* (20) **before . . . Lord**, very plainly intimating that God would avenge his death, or it may be trans. as by the *R. V.*, "away from the Presence," *i. e.* Dav. fears the death of an outlaw in a heathen land. **flea**, such a pursuit is unworthy of Saul's dignity.

Waiting God's time. — What an admirable spirit of self-restraint and patience David showed in being willing to bear all the risk and pain of a most distressing position until it should please God to bring to him the hour of deliverance. The grace we specially commend is that of waiting for God's time. Alas! into how many sins, and even crimes, have men been betrayed through unwillingness to wait for God's time. A young man embarks in the pursuits of commerce; but the gains to be derived from ordinary business come in far too slowly for him; he makes haste to be rich, engages in gigantic speculation, plunges into frightful gambling, and in a few years brings ruin on himself and all connected with him. How many sharp and unhand-some transactions continually occur just because men are impatient, and wish to hurry on some consummation which their hearts are set on. — *Exp. Bib.*

21-25. (21) **have sinned**, ch. xv. 30. **soul, life**. **played the fool**, Saul's repentance is as gushing and impetuous as his sin. (22) **over and fetch it**, Dav. gives no indic. of trusting Saul's sudden impulse. (23) Comp. ch. xxiv.

B. c. cir 1021.

David spares Saul the second time

^a"No one ventures to travel over these deserts without his cruse of water, and it is very common to place one at the bolster, so that the owner can reach it during the night." — *Thomson*.

David taunts Abner

^b"David's bantering tone in regard to Abner (coupled with vs. 19) makes it prob. that David attributed Saul's persecution of him in some degree to Abner, who would be likely to dread a rival in the young conqueror of Judah." — *Spk. Com.*

David expostulates with Saul

^cPs. xlii. 1-5.

Others suppose that Dav suggested to Saul that he should offer a sacrifice to God, in order that he may be relieved of his unworthy suspicions.

Saul and David are again reconciled

B. C. cir. 1019.

"Nothing is more moving to man than the spectacle of reconciliation; our weaknesses are thus indemnified, and are not too costly, being the price we pay for the hour of forgiveness; and the archangel, who has never felt anger, has reason to envy the man who subdues it. When thou forgive, the man who has pierced thy heart stands to thee in the relation of the sea worm, that perforates the shell of the mussel, which straightway closes the wound with a pearl." — Richter.

17-19. **render, R. V.**, "shall render." Dav. declares his confidence that God will plead his cause. (24) **tribulation**, De. iv. 30. Vs. 24 would be better translated, "And behold, as thy life was great (in value) in my sight this day, so shall my life be great (in value) in the sight of Jehovah, and he shall deliver me out of every strait," every narrowness and difficulty into which Saul's persecution might drive him. — *Pulp. Com.*

Saul's second reconciliation (vs. 25). — I. It is proved that the deepest and sincerest emotion may be transient in its moral effects. II. It is shown that self-control is in proportion to the estimate formed of the Divine element that is in man. III. It is shown how much better it is to trust our interests to the working out of Divine laws than to care for them with narrowness of spirit. IV. It is clearly shown that flight from danger is perfectly compatible with the highest courage. There is a time to fight (Goliath); there is a time to fly (Saul). There are differences of conquest. David conquered Saul as surely as he conquered Goliath. — *Parker.*

Saul's superficial repentance. — How wonderful is the effect of a single flash of lightning, when previously the heavens had been veiled in deepest gloom, and the darksome night had thrown over all nature its dreariest mantle. How completely, for a moment, it lifts that mantle. Houses, trees, streets — they burst upon you; you seem never to have seen them so distinctly before. And yet it is but for a moment; while you look the flash is gone. It lasted long enough to make you feel its effect and then departed. "I have played the fool and erred exceedingly;" tells of such a sudden gleam. To our view, it lays open in a moment the whole features of Saul's history, as he saw them himself. Nothing escapes him; each avenue opens up its concealment, each pathway reveals the footsteps imprinted upon it, and then the gloom returned. It was not the dawn of true repentance, gradually unfolding reason for encouragement, and losing itself in brighter hopes and lasting joy, but it was the sudden flash which conscience, excited, will send through a soul, preliminary only to a deeper despair — to hopeless ruin. — *Miller.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

David flees
to the king
of Gath

1-7. (1) in his heart, falling into despondency; hopeless of ever really appeasing Saul. This Dav.'s time of darkness; explains his seeking refuge in Gath.^a Could anything show more clearly that even the most eminent graces of the saints spring from no native fountain of goodness within them, but depend on the continuance of their vital fellowship with God? — *Ecp. B.* (2) **Achish**,^b as ch. xxi. 11, or a son. **Maach**, 1 Ki. ii. 39. **Gath**, ch. xxi. 10. (3) with his household, explaining request for a town to dwell in, vs. 5. (4) **no more**, as Dav. expected, vs. 1. (5) **why**, . . . **city**, so occasioning expense, and perhaps national trouble. (6) **Ziklag**, a Simeonite town, wh. had been taken by the Phil.^c In the south country, or *Negeb*. **unto this day**, this phrase, coupled with the title, *the kings of Judah*, implies that this was written after the revolt of Jeroboam, and before the Babylonish captivity. — *Spk. Com.* (7) **time**, *lit.* number of days. "In this city Dav. laid the foundation of his kingdom." — *Ewald.*

The unbelieving fears of David (vs. 1). — Consider — I. In what light we should regard these fears of David. 1. There was great occasion for fear. The malignity of Saul against him was deeply rooted; bent on David's destruction, he had recourse to every expedient he could devise; besides his own immediate servants, Saul had traitors in confederacy with him; moreover, he persevered, notwithstanding checks from God and his own conscience; 2. Still, in entertaining desponding fear, David sinned. II. What similar apprehensions we have to guard against. We have God's promises of future glory; but we have many enemies. — *Simeon.*

Overcoming environment. — The celebrated philanthropist, Howard, who spent the best part of his life in traveling over all the countries of Europe — "to plunge into the infection of hospitals — to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain — to remember the forgotten, and to visit the forsaken, under all climes" — was not unhappy amid its toils. In a letter from Rega during his last journey, he says, "I hope I have sources of enjoyment that depend not on the particular spot I inhabit; a rightly cultivated mind under the power of religion and the exercise of beneficent dispositions affords a ground of satisfaction little affected by heres and theres." — *Whitecross.*

^a "This was wrong as acting apart fr. the Div. oracle; and as rushing into the evil associations of an idolatrous land." — Jamieson.

^b "It is not determined whether Achish was a personal name or an official title." — Wordsworth.

^c Comp. Josh. xv. 31; xix. 5; 2 Sa. i. 1; iv. 10.

8-12. (8) Geshurites. Jos. xiii. 2. Gezrites, prob. should be *Gerzites*. Amalekites, some branches left fr. destruction of Saul.^a Shur, Ge. xvi. 7. What the narrator means to say is that these three Bedouin tribes were the aboriginal inhabitants of the northwestern portion of the desert between Egypt and South Palestine. (9) left . . alive, lest his intended deception of Achish should be discovered, vs. 11. came to Achish, to give him his royal portion of the booty. (10) made a road, i. e. an invasion. south of Judah, producing the impression that he had utterly given up his own country, and was helping the Phil. do it mischief. Jerahmeelites, 1 Chr. ii. 5-9. Kenites,^b Ge. xv. 19. (11) bring tidings, R. V., "bring them." so will he, R. V., "and so hath been his manner." See vs. 9. (12) utterly to abhor, as a public enemy.

Value of the exile experience. — Hard as these seven years of exile were for David to bear, yet they were most fruitful years to him, as his *apprenticeship for the kingdom, as his schools and schoolmasters*. (1) By his exile among other nations, he learned their characteristics and how best to deal with them. (2) He could contrast the effects of their religion with those of the religion of Jehovah, and thus become confirmed in true religion and patriotism. This led to the marvelous development of religious institutions and of the service of song under his administration. (3) The exile experiences preserved him from the dangers to which his sudden elevation to power and popularity would expose him. He learned his weakness and his need of divine help. (4) He had the best of opportunities for becoming acquainted with the people, — their grievances under Saul, their needs, their dispositions and tendencies. He understood their spiritual as well as their temporal wants. (5) He had practice in the art of governing. (6) He gained experience in war. (7) He obtained a knowledge of the country. (8) "In this school of fighting men were trained those generals and wise strategists who in the golden days of David's rule commanded his armies, and raised Israel from the obscurity of an 'Arab' tribe, who with difficulty held their own among the ancient Canaanites, to the position of one of the great nations of the old Eastern world." — *Peloubet*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

1-6. (1) those days, end of period, ch. xxvii. 7. gathered their armies, this was a war upon a larger scale than any waged since Phil. defeat at Elah. The Phil. marched northward through their own territory, raising the whole of the military population as they went, and then, turning eastward, broke into the Israelite territory by the valley of Jezreel. — *Pulp. Com.* thou shalt go, etc., Achish made sure of his willingness.^c (2) surely . . do, R. V., "Therefore thou shalt," etc., an equivocal answer, wh. sounded like acceptance. keeper of mine head, captain of my bodyguard. (3) Comp. xxv. 1; introduced to show why Saul sought Witch of Endor. He had prob. put away the wizards, etc., in early part of his reign. familiar spirits, etc., Ex. xxiii. 18; Le. xix. 31, xx. 27, etc. (4) Shunem, present *Sôlam*, E. side of plain of Jezreel, 8 m. S. W. of Mt. Tabor. Gilboa, now *Jebel-Fukûah*.^d (5, 6) enquired, as usual before a battle. answered him not, that Saul received no answer when he "enquired of the Lord" was a reason for self-abasement, and self-examination to find out and, if possible, remove the cause, but was no justification whatever of his sin in asking counsel of familiar spirits. For this he is justly described as one who "enquired of a familiar spirit, and enquired not of the Lord." — *Spk. Com.* Urîm, Saul must have had a new ephod made to replace that taken by Abiathar to Dav.

A difficulty explained (vs. 1, 2). — David answered Achish: Therefore thou shalt know what thy servant will do; i. e. as some interpret the words; Achish met with a cheerful compliance from David; and Mr. Bayle affirms that it was not owing to David that he did not fight under the standard of this Philistine prince against the Israelites, in the unhappy war wherein Saul perished. I am extremely glad, however, that the princes of the Philistines, who may reasonably be supposed to know as much of David's dispositions and views as any modern writers can do, were of a quite different opinion from Mr. Bayle and his followers. And, indeed, David's answer to Achish implies nothing like a cheerful compliance with him, to engage with his forces against his own people. It seems rather to imply a kind of denial: "You shall see what I will do. I make no promise, but I will go with you to the

B. c. cir. 1017.

David
invades
the Geshu-
rites, etc.

a 1 Sa. xv. 2.

b Nu. xxiv. 21, 22;
1 Sa. xv. 6.

"When any word, or sentence, admits of more significations than one, and if the sense of one's own mind agrees to any one of these interpretations, it is no lie, though we should have reason to think that he who hears us should take it in the other. Such a manner of speaking should not be used rashly; but it may be justified by antecedent causes; as when it is for the instruction of him who is committed to our care, or when it is to avoid an unjust interrogation." — *Grotius*.

Little presents keep up friendship. — *French*.

Saul
perplexed
by the
Philistines

c "Dav.'s deceptions secured the favor of the king, but very seriously injured himself." — *Ewald*.

d "The position occupied by Israelites under Gideon." — *Stanley*.

"Fear naturally represses invention, benevolence, ambition; for, in a nation of slaves, as in the despotic governments of the East, to labor after fame is to be a candidate for danger." — *Goldsmith*.

"Fear sometimes adds wings to the heels, and sometimes nails them to the ground, and fetters them from moving." — *Montaigne*.

B. C. cir. 1017.

"Fear is far more painful to cowardice than death to true courage." — *Sir Philip Sidney.*

Saul repairs to a witch at Endor

a "Phil. lay encamped between Saul's camp at Gilboa and Endor. Saul prob. kept to the E. of Jezreel, crossed the valley below Ain Jalud, and thence over the shoulder of Hermon to Endor." — *Thompson.*

b 1 Chr. x. 13, 14.

Let patience have her perfect work and bring forth her celestial fruits. Trust to God to weave your thread into the great web, though the pattern shows it not yet. — *George Macdonald.*

Saul desired the witch to raise up Samuel

c "Something unutterably pathetic in that yearning of the disappointed king, now in his utter desolation, to change words once more with the friend and counsellor of his youth, and if he must hear his doom, to hear it fr. no other lips but his." — *Trench.*

d 1 Sa. xv. 27.

Samuel speaks to Saul

e "Why does not Saul name the

camp, where you yourself will be judge of my conduct." An evidently cold and evasive answer. — *Chandler.* *God's abandonment of Saul.* — What dreadful silence and loneliness, are here revealed! "We read of the silence of the desert, the silence of midnight, the silence of the churchyard and the grave; but this is something more profound and appalling — the silence of God when appealed to by the sinner in his extremity. It is not the silence of indifference, nor of inability to hear, nor of weakness, nor of perplexity; but of refusal, of rejection, of displeasure, of abandonment." — *Bonar,* "*Bible Thoughts.*"

7-10. (7) *woman, etc., lit. one who is mistress of an ob, or skin-bottle.* It is generally taken to refer to the distended belly of the conjurer, into which the summoned spirit of the dead was supposed to enter, and thence speak. *Endor,* a village on N. side of Little Hermon. (8) *disguised,* with faith and hope gone, Saul seizes with feverish anxiety upon an untrustworthy and unlawful necromancy. 1 Ki. xx. 38, xxii. 30. *divine,* Ge. xlv. 15; De. xviii. 14. *bring . . . up, fr. Sheol,* this the supposed art of *necromancy.* (9) (vs. 3). *snare,* by inducing her to do what would subject her to law. (10) *by the Lord,* a wicked oath, seeing he was not serving the Lord.

Endor (vs. 7). — As we approached Endor we could fancy the very walk which Saul took over the eastern shoulder of the hill to reach the witch's abode, skirting Little Hermon, on the front slopes of which the Philistines were encamped, in order to reach the village behind them; a long and weary distance from his own army by the fountain of Jezreel, on the side of Gilboa. It might be fancy, but the place has a strange, weird-like aspect; a miserable village on the north side of the hill, without a tree or a shrub to relieve the squalor of its decaying heaps. It is full of caves, and the mud-built hovels are stuck on to the sides of the rocks in clusters, and are, for the most part, a mere continuation or enlargement of the cavern behind, which forms the larger portion of the human den. The inhabitants were the most filthy and ragged we had seen; and as the old crones, startled at the rare apparition of strangers strolling near their holes, came forth and cursed us, a Holman Hunt might have immortalized on canvas the very features of the necromancer of Israel. Endor has shrunk from its former extent; and there are many caves around, with crumbling heaps at their mouths, the remains, probably of what once were other habitations. — *Tristram.*

11-14. (11) *bring . . . Samuel,* in his extremity, Saul turns to the friend of his earlier days. (12) *she cried,* evidently amazed at her own success. It is clearly intended to declare that this was a *real* appearance of Samuel. Some commentators regard it as a well-played piece of jugglery on the part of the woman, who recognized Saul at once on his entrance, but professed not to know him till his name was revealed to her by the pretended apparition, in whose name she reproached him for his crimes, announced to him, what now all were convinced of, that David was to be his successor, and foretold his defeat and death. — *Pulp. Com.* *thou art Saul,* being sure Sam. would come for no one else than the king, and recog. him by stature, etc. (13) *gods, elohim,* put generally to express a supernatural appearance. R. V., "I see a god coming up out of the earth." (14) *what form, etc., aspect. mantle, the meil, or coat,* as ch. ii. 19, characteristic garment of Sam.^d

Saul at Endor (vs. 11). — "Bring me up Samuel." This is the cry of a soul — I. Consciously deserted of God. 1. God does sometimes desert the sinner even in this world; 2. The consciousness of this desertion is the greatest misery. II. Profoundly convinced of the value of a once neglected ministry. III. That had become the victim of delusions. IV. Plunging into the depths of despair. — *Thomas.*

Superstition. — Superstition is related to this life; religion to the next: superstition is allied to fatality; religion to virtue; it is by the vitality of earthly desires that we become superstitious; it is, on the contrary, by the sacrifice of these desires that we become religious. — *Mme. De Staël.*

15-20. (15) *Sam. said,* he being the first to speak. The ans. of Saul reveals his pettish, passionate spirit; he is evidently not heart-humbled, only vexed. (16) *of me,* seeing I am the Lord's servant. *thine enemy,* prob. the Sept. has the right trans.: "has turned to be with thy neighbors." (17) *to him, or for himself. rent,* as ch. xv. 27, 28, Obs. the refer. to Saul's violent death

and that of his sons in this term. (18) **upon Amalek**, ch. xv. 11-3. (19) **Israel with thee**, Saul's disobedience involving the people in defeat and ruin. **with me**, *i. e.* in Hades. (20) **all along, his full length**; fainting at the dreadful tidings.

The pangs of conscience. — Nero was haunted by the ghost of his mother, whom he had put to death. Caligula suffered from want of sleep, being haunted by the faces of his murdered victims. Everyone knows Victor Hugo's beautiful poem, "La Conscience" — the story of Cain fleeing away from the eye of God. He walks thirty days and thirty nights until he reaches the shores of the ocean. "Let us stop here," says he. But as he sits down, his face turns pale; he had seen in the mournful skies, the eye at the same place. His sons, full of awe, try to erect barriers between him and the eye: a tent, then a wall of iron, then a tower and a city, but all in vain. "I see the eye still," cries the unhappy man. At last they dig a tomb. The father was put into it. But tho' "overhead they closed the awful vault, the eye was in the tomb and looked on Cain." — *Peloubet*.

21-25. (21) **sore troubled**, more mentally than bodily. Prob. Saul only received Sam.'s message. **life in my hand**, running great risk to serve you. (22) She entreats him much as one would a spoilt child. (23) **compelled him**, urged him until they succeeded. **bed**, bench, which in E. runs along the wall. (24) **killed it**, by broiling slices it would soon be ready.^a (25) **that night**, the night before Saul's doom (*vs.* 19).

Communion with the dead. —

How pure in heart and sound in head,
With what Divine affection bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou or any call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say,
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imaginations calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest. — *Tennyson*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

1-5. (1) **Aphek**,^b comp. 1 Sa. iv. 1, name is given to several places in Canaan. **fountain, etc.**, fine spring, *Ain Jalud*.^c (2) **lords**, Ju. iii. 3. **rereward**, forming a part of the rearguard (ch. xxviii. 2). (3) **princes**, as distinct fr. lords, the chiefs of the smaller cities. **fell**, deserted his master and came to me. (4) **wroth**, they feared Dav.'s going over to Saul's side in the battle. **his place**, *Ziklag*. (5) Comp. ch. xviii. 7, xxi. 11.

A renegade's reward. — I. We have David in a new and strange character: the friend and ally of the foes of his king and country. II. Notwithstanding his declarations of prowess (xxviii. 2) he is sent into the rear; the place of honor reserved for others. III. Even there he is an object of suspicion.

David's chastisement. — David was mercifully saved from the peril of smiting his own people, and the pressure of any obligation which human friendships and customs may have laid upon him was removed, and the prospects of his being welcomed as king in Israel were brightened; yet in his own heart he was made to feel all the pain and shame of being regarded as a man of treacherous character. He could not but smart under the contempt of heathen princes if, as is likely, he knew of their language concerning himself. "Make this fellow return," and for the reason "lest in the battle he be an adversary to us." To profess to be true and faithful, and yet to be scorned and treated as one whose word and profession are worthless, this was one means by which Providence caused the erring one to suffer from the fruit of his own deeds. — *Pulp. Com.*

B C. cir. 1017.

Urim. — He shrank from naming to Sam. that which must bring to mind his slaughter of the priests at Nob." — *Kitto*.

the witch provides food for Saul

a Ge. xviii. 7, 8.

"What see you there that hath so cowarded and chased your blood out of appearance?" — *Shakespeare*.

"Oh! that fear, when the heart longs to know what it is death to hear." — *Croly*.

David marching with the Philistines

^b "Not neces. near Shumen (*vs.* 11), but on the road thither fr. the Phil. district." — *Bib. Dict.*

"It is unlikely that the Phil. lords would suffer David to march with them all the way to Jezreel; it is much more prob. that they mustered at Aphek in Mt. Ephraim." — *Spk. Com.*

^c Ju. vii. 1; well of Harod.

B. c. cir. 1017.

**Achish
dismisses
David**

a "The clue to this difficult expression may be found in the fact that about this time a considerable number of Manassites joined Dav., and went back with him to Ziklag." — *Spk. Com.*

"If a spring be fouled on its way down the brae, it will soon brighten up again, for the clear water behind will wash away all impurities; but when the fountain-head has the foul stain in it, there is naething can purify that away, — naething else but mixing it with the ocean of eternity, and then rising again to the heavens, purified to dew." — *Hogg.*

"On what strange grounds we build our hopes and fears: man's life is all a mist, and in the dark our fortunes meet us." — *Dryden.*

**Ziklag taken
by the
Amalekites**

b 1 Sa. xxvii. 8, 9. "My grief lies all within; and these external manners of lament are merely shadows to the unseen grief that swells with silence in the tortured soul; there lies the substance." — *Shakespeare.*

**David
inquires
of the Lord**

c Comp Ps. iii. 6; vi., xlii., xvi., xvii.

6-11. (6) as the Lord liveth, perhaps not the very words of Achish, but the Heb. equivalent of his oath. in the host, or army. (7) displease not, Achish might fear his own rupture with the other lords. (8) However difficult David's position may have been, still every one must condemn his conduct towards Achish as dishonorable; but God, who often deals with men more mercifully than they deserve, nevertheless rescued him from his state of perplexity, and saved him from the necessity of either fighting against his own countrymen or of still more dishonorably breaking his word to Achish by deserting in the battle. — *Pulp. Com.* (9) as an angel, faithful, true and pure as one; a fig. of Eastern extravagance. (10) master's servants, a 1 Chr. xii. 19-21. (11) early, with the first light, as vs. 10.

David's atheistic reasoning (vs. 6). — Review the afflictions laid on David by the Philistines. I. The secret of David's ill-fortunes amongst the Philistines, found in xxvii. 1. He took the case into his own hands. Three things in life which must lead to disappointment, shame and ruin: (1) Atheistic self-trust; (2) Immoral and unnatural associations; and (3) Duplicity and equivocation. II. The question was how to get out of those difficulties and resume the old relations? Way of error never easy. He is delivered through the wrath of his enemies. III. Though David had experienced severe trials manifestly sent by the hand of God, he was to be saved from ruinous conclusions by seeing what it was to fall into the hands of men. IV. A better spirit came unto David. For a time David had taken his life into his own hand, now he returned unto God and made his peace with heaven. — *Parker.*

A Persian fable. —

"One day

A wanderer found a lump of clay,
So redolent of rich perfume,
Its odor scented all his room.
'What art thou?' was his quick demand
'Art thou some gum from Samarcand?
Or spikenard in a rude disguise,
Or other costly merchandise!'
'Nay, I am but a lump of clay.'
'Then whence this wondrous sweetness, say?'
'Friend, if the secret I disclose,
I have been dwelling with the rose.'
Meet parable! and will not those
Who love to dwell with Sharon's Rose,
Distil sweet scents o'er all around,
Tho' poor and mean themselves be found!
Good Lord, abide with us, that we
May catch these odors fresh from Thee!"

CHAPTER THE THIRTIETH.

1-5. (1) third day, i. e., after leaving Phil. army. Amalekites, Ge. xiv. 7, not all the tribes destroyed by Saul. Dav. had attacked them.^b the south, Negeb. Jos. xv. 21. (2) slew not any, bec. no warriors were left to fight them, so all was carried off as booty. (3) burned, prob. still burning. (4) wept, in desperation of grief. (5) two wives, 1 Sa. xxv. 42, 43.

Grief. —

The world had just begun to steal
Each hope that led me lightly on;
I felt not as I used to feel,
And life grew dark and love was gone!
No eye to mingle Sorrow's tear,
No lip to mingle Pleasure's breath,
No tongue to call me kind and dear —
T'was gloomy and I wished for Death. — *Moore.*

6-10. (6) grieved, Heb. bitter, desperate, exasperated. encouraged himself, learning in his extremity of trouble to take hold of the help of God.^c (7) Abiathar, ch. xxiii. 6. (8) he answered, God through the high priest. (9) brook Besor, a torrent flowing into the Mediter. near Gaza. The Wady Sheriah. (10) so faint, with the journey fr. Aphek, the grief of the loss, and

the hurried pursuit. Leaving them with the baggage enabled the rest to get on more quickly.

David Livingstone.—A similar manifestation of the magical power of trust took place in the life of a more modern David, one who in serving God and doing good to man, had to encounter a life of wandering, privation, and danger seldom surpassed—the African missionary and explorer—David Livingstone. In the course of his great journey from St. Paul de Loanda on the west coast of Africa to Quilimane on the east, he had to encounter many an angry and greedy tribe, whom he was too poor to be able to pacify by the ordinary method of valuable presents. On one occasion, in the fork at the confluence of the River Loangwa and the River Zambesi, he found one of those hostile tribes. It was necessary for him to have canoes to cross—they would lend him only one. In other respects they showed an attitude of hostility, and the appearances all pointed to a furious attack the following day. Livingstone was troubled at the prospect,—not that he was afraid to die, but because it seemed as if all his discoveries in Africa would be lost, and his sanguine hopes for planting commerce and Christianity among its benighted and teeming tribes knocked on the head. But he remembered the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, “Go ye therefore into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” On this promise he rested, and steadied his fluttering heart. “It is the word of a gentleman,” he said, “the word of one of the most perfect honor. I will not try, as I once thought, to escape by night, but I will wait till to-morrow, and leave before them all. Should such a man as I be afraid? I will take my observations for longitude to-night, though it should be my last. My mind is now quite at rest, thank God.” He waited as he had said, and next morning, though the arrangements of the natives still betokened battle, he and his men were allowed to cross the river in successive detachments, without molestation, he himself waiting to the last, and not a hair of their heads being hurt. It was a fine instance of a believing Christian strengthening himself in God. When faith is genuine, and the habit of exercising it is active, it can remove mountains.—*Exp. Bib.*

B. C. cir. 1017.

God looks not at the pomp of words and variety of expression, but at the sincerity and devotion of the heart. The key opens the door, not because it is gilt, but because it fits the lock.

“Many favors which God giveth us ravel out for want of hemming; for though prayer purchaseth blessings, giving praise doth keep the quiet possession of them.”—*Fuller.* “Pray always.” You will never want a motive to prayer if you never forget the promises made to believing prayer.

11-15. (11) in the field, one who had fallen sick, vs. 13. (12) spirit came, he had fainted for want of food. (13) servant, slave. left me, “an incidental trait of cruelty in the character of the Amalekites; they had camels, but left the poor slave to die in the desert.”—*Wordsworth.* (14) Cherethites,^a another name for the Philistines, prob. the southern part of their country, vs. 16. coast, border. (15) swear, etc., anxious to secure his own safety.

the Egyptian guide

^a Some connect this word with the island Crete. Comp. Eze. xxxv. 16; Zeph. ii. 5; Jer. xlvii. 4; Am. ix. 7. See also 2 Sa. viii. 18; xv. 18; xx. 23.

To whom belondest thou? (vs. 13).—No neutralities in religion. I. Have you been “born again?” Without the new birth, you cannot be Christ’s. II. In whom do you trust? Those who believe in Jesus are the sons of God. III. Whose work are you doing? He whom you serve is thereby owned to be your Lord. IV. What company do you keep? “Birds of a feather,” etc. V. What is your conversation? heavenly or earthly? VI. What have you learned of your Master? If you are Christ’s, let me advise you to do four things. You belong to—I. Jesus: obey Him. II. The Beloved; then love Him. III. The Son of God; trust Him. IV. The King of kings: then be decided for Him.—*Spurgeon.*

Agone, vs. 13. The *a* in such forms seems to be simply intensive, both in verbs and other parts of speech. Thus, “a-gone,” or “gone,” in this passage would signify merely “three days past.” The Anglo-Saxon *a-gangen* became “agan,” “again,” “agoo,” “ago,” “agone.”

Humanity.—

He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast,
He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us
He made and loveth all.—*Coleridge.*

16-20. (16) spread abroad, not suspecting danger, so taking no precautions against surprise. dancing, *R. V.*, “feasting.” (17) twilight,^b evening time, pursuing them in their flight during the next day. young men, the servants who had charge of the camels (vs. 13). (18) all, except what was consumed in the feasting. (19) It was much indeed to recover all uninjured. (20) David’s spoil, best to follow the Vulgate, with which the Sept. in the main agrees, and read, And he took all the flocks and the herds, and drove them before him: and they said, This is David’s spoil: i. e. he not only recov-

David spoils the Amalekites

^b “If the twilight is the morning twilight, as the contrast bet. twilight and evening rather

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suggests, the natural explanation would be that David arrived at night, and found them drinking and dancing, but put off his attack till the twilight, when they were still sleeping securely after their revelry."—*Spk. Com.*

the spoil divided

a See marg. Ju. xviii. 15.

b Ju. xix. 23.

c Nu. xxxi. 27; Jos. xxii. 8.

"The character of covetousness is what a man generally acquires more through some nigardiness or ill grace in little and inconsiderable things, than in expenses of any consequence. A very few pounds a year would ease that man of the scandal of avarice."—*Pope.*

David sends presents to his old friends

d "It was the dictate of an amiable and grateful heart—and the effect of this well-timed liberality was to bring a large accession of numbers to his camp."—*Jamieson.*

e Prob. same as Baalath-Beer.

f Ruins found in Wady 'Ar-arah, about 11 miles W. S. W. fr. Beer-sheba."—*R o b i n-son.*

g LXX. gives it Carmel.

the death of Saul and his sons

ered his own property, but took a rich booty besides, which his men drove off with shouts of triumph. — *Cam. B.*

God's providence. — Often little things in life are like the swift movements of a railroad switch, which change the destination of trains. "The flight of birds from north to south changed the course of Columbus' ships to the southern half of this western hemisphere, and led to the settlement of that section by the Latin race." God's providence chose this northern continent for a Protestant people with an open Bible. An axe carelessly left placed near the compass of the Mayflower changed the direction of the ship and led to the landing of the pilgrims at Plymouth instead of New York." — *Peloubet.*

21-25. (21) forth to meet, being now rested and refreshed. saluted,* kindly. (22) wicked . . Belial,^b De. xiii. 13. Their argument was that these men had fainted from the work, so had no right to share its results. (23) Indication of Dav.'s firmness, fairness and power to rule. Lord hath given us, Dav. has recovered his high religious tone. (24) stuff,^c baggage. All sharing the work were to share the spoil. (25) statute, etc., a recognized war regulation.

The reward of the willing but weak (vs. 24). — I. In the great conflict between the forces of truth and error, there will always be some (aged, sick, etc.) unable to engage in the battle. II. In such a case, the harsh judgment of the uncharitable shall not decide their relation to the victory. III. The truly willing shall not be impoverished by their inability. IV. The moral effect of this rule upon those who fight and those who stay at home.

David's wise discipline. — Rough, wild men were many among them, equally depressed in the day of adversity, and recklessly elated and insolent in prosperity. Nor is it merely the discipline which David knew how to maintain in such a band that shows us the "skillfulness of his hands" in guiding them, but the gentleness with which he dealt with them, and above all the earnest piety with which he knew how to tame their wild passions, prove the spiritual "integrity" or "perfectness of his heart." — *Edersheim.*

26-31. (26) elders of Judah, this was Dav.'s first opportunity of acknowledging the kindness and protection accorded to him during his persecutions. It was also a piece of good policy in making them favorable to his claim of kingship.^d (27) Ramoth,^e R. V., "Ramoth of the South," Jos. xix. 8. Jattir, in the mountains of Judah, a priestly city, Jos. xv. 48. (28) Aroer, unknown town in Judah.^f Not Aroer on the Arnon. Siphmoth, site unknown. Esh-temoa, a priestly city, now Es Semûa, about nine miles southerly fr. Hebron: Jos. xv. 50. (29) Rachal,^g unknown. Jerahmeelites, ch. xxvii. 10. Kenites, ch. xv. 6. (30) Hormah, Jos. xii. 14. Chor-ashan, a Simeonite city of the Negeb, originally allotted to Judah; comp. Jos. xv. 42. Athach, poss. Ether, of Jos. xix. 7. (31) Hebron, Jos. xiv. 14, 15. "One of the most ancient cities in the world." 20 miles so. of Jerus. Now El Khulil (the friend), in memory of Abraham, who was called "the friend of God." — *Cam. B.* went to haunt, during persecution.

Liberality in business. — The history of business teems with illustrations of brilliant results that flow from a generous, noble-minded policy. It was remarked of Lafitte, the celebrated Parisian banker, that tho' the generosity of his nature made him the dupe of whoever tried to impose upon him, he yet rose from the condition of a penniless clerk to be the first banker of his day, and one of the most eminent public characters of his country. His case reminds one of the remark of Jenkinson, in the Vicar of Wakefield, about his simple, kind-hearted neighbor, Flamborough, whom he had contrived to cheat, in one way or another, once a year; "and yet," said he, "Flamborough has been regularly growing in riches while I have come to poverty and a jail." — *Wm. Matthews.*

CHAPTER THE THIRTY-FIRST.

1-6. (1) slain, or wounded, espec. by Phil. arrows. in mount Gilboa, either the battle took place in plain of Jezreel, and Is. sought refuge in the mount, or battle was fought on sides of Gilboa, which the Phil. stormed. (2) upon Saul, completion of victory was capturing the king. his sons, ch. xiv. 49; 1 Chr. viii. 33; x. 2. (3) hit him, R. V., "overtook him,"

wounded, *R. V.*, "greatly distressed by reason of the archers." (4) **uncircumcised**, usual descrip. of Phil., ch. xiv. 6. **abuse me**, as a captive king; ^a for their amusement or sport. **a sword**, *R. V.*, "his sword." (5) This act indic. attachment bet. an armor-bearer and his lord. (6) **all his men**, ^b prob. refers to the royal body-guard.

The Philistines slew Jonathan.—A Jonathan slain by Philistines. They knew nothing of him, except that he was a king's son, and their enemy. They knew not of the disinterested love which lived in his breast—which could forego a crown rather than prejudice the future of a friend. They knew not of the marvelous wisdom by which he remained a filial son, albeit he was the friend of one to whom his father was an adversary. They knew not of the wealth of virtue, piety, and valor of which they deprived the world in slaying Jonathan; nor did they care to know. I have seen a noble and ingenuous youth, night by night, reverently saluting his mother; day by day filially obeying his father; year by year brightening his parents' hearts with joy and gratitude. In an evil hour, a wild, worldly companion gains his ear—laughs at his tenderness and gentleness—weans him from home and childlikeness. And I said, "The Philistines have slain Jonathan, and knew not the moral beauty of which they deprived a house." I have seen a husband—the strong and gentle companion of a trusting wife—gradually led away by vicious men to a gay and wicked course, and I have said, "The Philistines have slain Jonathan, and knew not what a wealth of love has perished from society." Alas, other swords than those of steel, and other men than soldiers, repeat the catastrophe of Gilboa? Go anywhere in society, and you see men who are no more like their former selves than the corpse was like living Jonathan.—*Griffin.*

B. c. cir. 1017.

^a Jos. viii. 29; ^{x.} 24; Ju. viii. 21.

^b 1 Chr. x. 6.

"There is no enemy can hurt us but by our own hands. Satan could not hurt us, if our own corruption betrayed us not; afflictions cannot hurt us without our own impatience; temptations cannot hurt us without our own yieldingness; death could not hurt us without the sting of our own sins; sins could not hurt us without our own impotence."—*Ep. Hall.*

7-10. (7) **other . . valley**, either west of Jezreel, or north, and so including the cities of Naphtali and Zabulon. **other side Jordan**, or Jordan-wards; the district bet. the battlefield and the river; not here distinctly referring to country E. of the river. **forsook the cities**, expecting Phil. would plunder and destroy. **dwelt in them**, so at Saul's death one part of the land was virtually in the hands of his rival, and the other part in the hands of his foes. (8) **morrow**, after a day of fighting. (9) **publish it**, *R. V.*, "carry the tidings." **house**, or temple. (10) **Ashtaro**, Ju. ii. 13. **Beth-shan**, Jos. xvii. 11, now Beisan.

disposal of Saul's body and armor

"This was the great retribution for the fall of their champion of Gath."—*Stanley.*

A mean revenge (vs. 9, 10).—I. These Philistines never forgot or forgave the fall of their champion, Goliath. II. They gave vent to their feelings by heaping insults on the dead body of their foe. This has been done in modern times; the dead exhumed and gibbeted. III. The same spirit of mean revenge is manifested by those who will sometimes insult the weak who may bear the name of the strong.

"Three Bakhti-arees had been condemned to death by the prince for robbery; one was beheaded and the second blown up; the third was cut in half, and the two parts of his body hung on two of the most frequented gates of the city, as a warning to other thieves. The horrid spectacle was displayed for three days."—*Morier.*

Saul of Tarsus and Saul of Gibeah.—And is it a mere fancy to trace with those same Christian writers the last faint likeness of this mixed history, when, after a lapse of many centuries, the tribe once more for a moment rises to our view; in the second Saul, also of the tribe of Benjamin? Saul of Tarsus, who, like the first, was at one time moved by a zeal bordering almost upon frenzy, and who, like the first, startled all his contemporaries by appearing among the prophets the herald of the faith which once he destroyed; but, unlike the first, persevered in that faith to the end, the likeness in the Christian church, not of what Saul was, but of what he might have been.—*Stanley.*

the burial of Saul

11-13. (11) **Jabesh-gilead**, comp. ch. xi. 1-11. (12) **burnt them**, this was not the Heb. custom, but sufficient reasons can be assigned for its being done in this case. The bodies were dismembered and disfigured. They would also be corrupted and offensive; and burning would secure the royal remains fr. possibility of further insult. (13) **bones**, indic. that the burning was imperfectly done. **under a tree**, *R. V.*, "under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh." Dav. afterwards removed them to Zelah. **seven days**, as a sign of general mourning.

^c 2 Sa. xxi. 12-14.

The valiant men of Jabesh-gilead (vs. 12).—I. These brave men were grateful, note xi. 1-11. They did not forget the old kindness of Saul. II. Their gratitude prompted them to attempt the perilous rescue of the bodies of the slain, and provide for them an honorable burial. III. Good deeds are not always forgotten or unrequited in the present life.

"The Chaldee and other versions render the words, 'and they burnt or kindled a light or lamp over them there, as they are accustomed to burn over kings.' Upon which a rabbi observes,

Gratitude.—At Agra, where so many poor fellows had been scorched and

B. c. cir. 1017.

that this has reference to a custom, delivered down from their ancestors, of burning the beds and other utensils of the dead upon their graves, or to the burning of spices over them (see Jer. xxxiv. 5). — *Burder.*

wounded in their encounter with the enemy, they were brought into the fort and tenderly nursed by the ladies; and the rough, gallant fellows proved gentle as any children. During the weeks that the ladies watched over their charge, never a word was said by any soldier that could shock the ear of the gentlest. And when all was over, — when the mortally wounded had died, and the sick and maimed who survived were able to demonstrate their gratitude, — they invited their nurses and the chief people of Agra to an entertainment in the beautiful gardens of the Tag, where, amidst flowers and music, the rough veterans, all scarred and mutilated as they were, stood up to thank their gentle country-women who had clothed and fed them, and ministered to their wants, during their time of sore distress. — *Smiles.*

The fall of Saul. — If Samuel is the great example of an ancient saint growing up from childhood to old age without a sudden conversion, Saul is the first direct example of the mixed character often produced by such a conversion, a call coming in the midway of life to rouse the man to higher thoughts than the lost asses of his father's household, or than the tumults of war and victory. He became "another man," yet not entirely. He was, as is often the case, half-converted, half-roused. His mind moved unequally and disproportionately in its new sphere. Backwards and forwards in the names of his children, we see alternately the signs of the old heathen superstition, and of the new purified religion of Jehovah. Jonathan, his firstborn, is the "gift of Jehovah;" Melchi-shua is "the help of Moloch;" his grandson Meribbaal is "the soldier of Baal;" and his fourth son, Ish-baal, "the man of Baal;" and here again, "Baal" is swept out, and appears only as "Bosheth," the "shame or reproach," — Mephi-bosheth, Ish-bosheth. He caught the prophetic inspiration not continuously but only in fitful gusts. Passionately he would enter into it for a time, as he came within the range of his better association, tear off his clothes and lie stretched on the ground under its influence for a night and day together. But then he would be again the slave of his common pursuits. His religion was never blended with his moral nature. It broke out in wild, ungovernable acts of zeal and superstition, and then left him more a prey than ever to his own savage disposition. With the prospects and position of a David, he remained to the end a Jephtha, or a Samson, with this difference, that, having outlived the age of Jephtha and of Samson, he could not be as they; and the struggle, therefore, between what he was and what he might have been grew fiercer as years went on; and the knowledge of Samuel, and the companionship of David, became to him a curse instead of a blessing. Of all the checks on the dangers incident to the growth of an Oriental monarchy in the Jewish nation, the most prominent was that which Providence supplied in the contemporaneous growth of the prophetic office. But it was just this far-reaching vision of the past and the future which Saul was unable to understand. At the very outset of his career, Samuel, the great representative of the prophetic order, had warned him not to enter on his kingly duties till he should appear to inaugurate them and to instruct him in them. It would seem to be almost immediately after his first call that the occasion arose. The war with the Philistines was impending. He could not restrain the vehemence of his religious emotions. As king he had the right to sacrifice. Without a sacrifice it seemed to him impossible to advance to battle. He sacrificed, and by that ritual zeal defied the warning of the prophetic monitor. It was the crisis of his trial. He had shown that he could not understand the distinction between moral and ceremonial duty, on which the greatness of his people depended. It was not because he sacrificed, but because he thought sacrifice greater than obedience that the curse descended upon him. — *Stanley.*

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

[778]

Synopsis.

(According to Horne.)

The Second Book of Samuel contains the history of David, the second king of Israel, during the period of about forty years — *i. e.* from B. C. 1017 to 977 : and by recording the translation of the kingdom from the tribe of Benjamin to that of Judah, it relates the partial accomplishment of the prediction delivered in Gen. xlix. 10. The victories of David, his wise administration of civil government, his efforts to promote true religion, his grievous sins and deep repentance, together with the various troubles and judgments inflicted upon him and his people by God, are all fully described. This book consists of three principal divisions, relating the triumphs and troubles of David, and his transactions subsequent to his recovery of the throne, whence he was driven for a short time by the rebellion of his son Absalom.

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CHAPTER THE FIRST.

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1-4. (1) **now**, the narrative is continued without any break. The division of the Books did not exist in the Hebrew. **Ziklag**, 1 Sa. xxvii. 6. (2) **clothes, etc.**, outward signs of disaster and grief. The man was anxious to ingratiate himself with David, so did everything he thought would please him. **fell . . . obeisance**, his conduct is evidence of a wide-spread feeling that Dav. was set apart to be King of Israel. (3) **escaped**, at once intimating the defeat. (4) Dav.'s patriotism led him to feel the utmost interest and anxiety in the result of a battle, in wh. he was nearly compelled to take part.

Waiting on Providence. — In the case of David, we can trace some of the features of a true waiting on Providence. I. Deep conviction of being devoted to a holy cause. II. Freedom from selfish and malevolent desires. III. Recognition of God's ceaseless control over obstacles, and of His steadily unfolding purpose. IV. Readiness for action, regulated by resolve only to act in harmony with highest law. V. Judicious use of time. — *C. Chapman.*

The Amalekites. — Of the tribes of the desert the chief were the Amalekites, whose home was the bare region lying between the south of Judah and Egypt. We have ample proof that this race was utterly hostile to all order and quietness; it lived by the plunder of others, and, sheltering itself in the recesses of the wilderness, broke out thence on every opportunity to carry ravage and ruin into all the neighboring districts. The Amalekite was thus every man's enemy, and the object of universal dislike; and the cruelty which he habitually practiced would justify to David's mind the barbarity with which he put to death all whom he found, man and woman alike. — *Pulpit Com.*

5-10. (5) **knowest thou**, if he had fled for his own life, how could he be sure about the king and his sons? (6) This account may be *made up*; or it may be reconciled with that in 1 Sa. xxxi., by supposing the Amalekite came up to Saul before he was quite dead, and gave him the finishing stroke. Probably the story of the Amalekite is fiction and utterly untrue. He knew nothing as to the manner of Saul's death, but found the body, probably some time after the king had fallen; and he was able to strip it because the pursuing Philistines were hurrying forward to make their victory complete, without being aware of what was the crowning glory of their success. — *Pulp. Com.* (7, 8) **Amalekite**, this fabrication had the expectation of a large reward. (9) **anguish**,^b or **dizziness**. (10) **fallen**, *i. e.*, after the defeat of the army of Israel. **crown**, kind of a diademed helmet. **bracelet**, in E. a most ancient symbol of royalty.^c

Judging others by our own standard. — I. The nationality of this messenger. Amalekite: a nation just conquered by David (vs. 1). II. His motive. Self-preservation. III. His method. He would curry favor with the conqueror. IV. His mistake. He supposed that David would rejoice in the death of his enemy by whatsoever means it might be accomplished. Had no understanding of a man who, even for his own gain, would not rejoice in iniquity.

11-16. (11) **rent them**, the impulsive act of desperate grief. **all . . . him**, in imitation of him. (12) **and for Jonathan**, the *tone* of this mourning is given by Dav.'s personal feeling in the loss of his friend. **people of the Lord**, *i. e.* the army. (13) **stranger**, *i. e.* settler, one who had migrated into Israel to reside there. (14) **Lord's anointed**,^d so Dav. regarded Saul, but too much to expect the Amal. to think of him thus. (15) **young men**, his personal attendants. (16) **upon thy head**, responsibility must be your own. This Amalekite judged Dav. by his own immoral standard, but found that his lie only formed the basis of a judgment wh. cost him his life.

The reward of lying lips (vs. 16). — I. Here is a lie told in the hope of personal advantage. This Amalekite had not killed Saul (1 Sa. xxxi. 4, 5). II. Here is a man taken at his own word and judged by his own mouth. III. How many brave words of boasting are words of shame. *The lying Amalekite.* — Proceeding, he told six lies successively. 1. That Saul called him; 2. That he came at his call; 3. That Saul demanded who he was; 4. That he returned an answer; 5. That Saul commanded him to kill him; 6. That he killed him accordingly. For a wilful falsehood told is a cripple not able to stand by itself without another to support it. — *Thomas Fuller.*

Generosity of mind. — Papirius Carbo, the Roman Consul, being impeached

news of
Saul's death
brought to
David

a Comp. 1 Sa. iv.
12.

"Trembling lips,
tuned to such
grief that they say
bright words
sadly." — *Dobell.*

"Her big swollen
grief surpassed the
power of utter-
ance." — *Ovid.*

the false
account of
Saul's death

b The Heb. word
occurs nowhere
else.

c "Such as may be
seen in the exist-
ing regalia of
Persia, India,
China, and other
lands." — *Kitto.*

"The crown was
prob. a small me-
tallie cap, or
wreath, wh. encir-
cled the temples,
serving the pur-
pose of a helmet,
with a very small
horn projecting in
front, as the em-
blem of power." —
Jamieson.

David
punishes the
self-accused
slayer of
Saul

d 1 Sa. xxiv. 6,
xxvi. 2, 10.

When Cæsar had
Pompey's head
presented to him,
he wept and said,
"I sought not re-
venge, but vic-
tory."

vs. 15. "He that be-
trayed Rhodes to
the Turk was

B. C. 1017.

served in like sort, ending his life with shame and torment. So was Earl Godwin here, and Earl Doring in Bohemia by Duke Reda."—*Trapp*.

David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan

a "Comp. titles of some Psalms, e. g. 'Hind of the Morning,' 'Mute Dove among Strangers,' 'Lilies,' etc. So this is called *Keseth* or, *The Bow*,"—*Kitto*.

b Jasher, = The Upright. Jos. x. 13.

the Song of the Bow

the mighty fallen

c "Lit. 'the gazelle, or antelope of Israel.' In B. this animal is the chosen type of beauty and symmetrical elegance of form."—*Jamieson*.

the shield of the mighty

d "On the green strip wh. breaks the slope of the mountain upland as it rises fr. the fertile plain, the final encounter took place. Filled as it seemed with the pledge of future harvests and offerings, hence forth a curse might well be called to rest on it, and the bareness of the bald mountain, without dew or rain, to spread itself over the fertile soil."—*Stanley*.

e Is. xxi. 5.

as an accomplice in the assassination of the second Africanus, one of his servants whom he had affronted, stole the box in which his master kept all of his papers, and carried it to Licinius Crassus, who was employed to make good the indictment. Crassus was at an enmity with Papirius, and these papers would have furnished him with ample matters to gratify it; but the generous Roman had such an abhorrence of the treachery that he sent back the slave in chains, and the box unopened, saying that he would rather let an enemy and a criminal escape unpunished, than destroy him by base and dishonorable means.—*Whitecross*.

17, 18. (17) this lamentation, a dirge or funeral song. Dav.'s poetic soul expressed its joys and griefs in psalm and song. The writing of such a song, the spirit of admiration and eulogy which pervades it, and the unusual enactment that it should be taught to the people, show how far superior David was to the ordinary feelings of jealousy, how full his heart was of true generosity.—*Exp. B.* (18) The words—*the use of*—should be omitted, and the words—*The Bow*—be put in capitals, as being the title heading this dirge in the Book of Jasher, i. e. the Hero-book of Israel.

Sorrow for Saul's failure.—I. Failure in life's mission is the great disaster of life. II. The sorrow felt for it is deepened by the apprehension of its effect on the reputation and progress of the kingdom of God. III. The recognition of the magnitude of this disaster depends on a spiritual perception of the gravity of our earthly life.—*C. Chapman*.

Unselfish grief.—The only deep mourning for Saul, with the exception of that of the Jabeshites, proceeded from the man whom he had hated and persecuted for so many years, even to the time of his death; just as David's successor wept over the fall of Jerusalem, even when it was about to destroy himself.—*Von Gerlach*.

19—20. (19) the beauty, or more vigorously, thy glory, O Israel! The king and his son regarded as embodying the excellency of the nation. **high places**, Gilboa. Is. felt usually safe fighting on their own hills. **fallen**, this is the refrain or chorus. (20) **Gath** (1 Sa. xxi. 10), the royal city. **Askelon** (1 Sa. xxxi. 10), the chief seat of worship. **the uncircumcised**, epithet for the Phil. who had no part in Jehovah's covenant with Israel.

Joy among Christ's enemies (vs. 20).—I. Its occasions. 1. The misfortunes of the church; 2. The inconsistencies of professing Christians; 3. Divisions among Christians; 4. Failures in their work. II. Its causes. 1. Hatred of God and goodness; 2. Encouragement in sin, derived from the faults of good men. III. Christians should be careful to give no occasion for such exultation.—*G. Wood*.

Seeing the best in others.—I believe it is not dangerous but safe, not a homage to falsehood but to truth in our judgments of those who are departed, to follow David's example—to dwell upon bright and hallowed moments of lives that have been darkened by many shadows, polluted by many sins; these moments may be welcomed as revelations to us of what God intended His creature to be; we may feel that there has been a loveliness in them which God gave them, and which their own evil could not take away. We may think of this loveliness as if it expressed the inner purpose of their existence; the rest may be for us as though it were not. As nature, with her old mosses and her new spring foliage, hides the ruins which man has made, and gives to the fallen tower and broken cloister a beauty scarcely less than that which belonged to them in their prime, so human love may be at work too, "softening and concealing, and busy with her hand in healing" the rents that have been made in God's nobler temple, the habitation of His own Spirit.—*Maurice*.

21, 22. (21) **no dew, etc.**,^d as if the very ground may well be under a curse on wh. such a calamity came. **fields of offerings**, that would afford firstfruits, poetical fig. for land "fertile and blessed of God." The greatest curse wh. can befall it is to be cut off fr. rendering service to Jehovah.—*Cam. B.* **not anointed with oil**,^e cast aside amid the blood and dirt, "the polish of the consecrated oil was gone—it was a defiled and polluted thing." (22) This verse indicates that the battle had been severe, and heroic actions performed to the last.

God's love present even in sorrow. —

The dial
Receives many shades, and each points to the sun
The shadows are many, the sunlight is one.
Life's sorrows still fluctuate; God's love does not,
And His love is unchanged when it changes our lot.
Looking up to this light, which is common to all,
And down to these shadows, on each side that fall
In time's silent circle, so various for each,
Is it nothing to know that they never can reach
So far but what light lies beyond them forever?

— Owen Meredith.

23, 24. (23) Prefer form of address, "Saul and Jon. lovely and pleasant were ye!" Perhaps rather, "loving and kindly." The words express the mutual affection which existed between father and son. Jonathan remained faithful to his filial duty even when his father was persecuting his closest friend, and Saul, in spite of temporary outbursts of passion, loved his son to the last. — *Cam. B.* eagles, lions, noblest of birds and beasts. (24) in scarlet, from the spoils of his wars. delights, *R. V.*, "delicately," indicates that the women had made a great advance in prosperity and culture during Saul's reign.

Friendship. — Blessed influence of one true, loving soul on another! Not calculable by algebra, not deducible by logic, but mysterious, effectual, mighty as the hidden process by which the tiny seed is quickened, and bursts forth into tall stem and broad leaf and glowing tasseled flower. Ideas are often poor ghosts; our sun-filled eyes cannot discern them; they pass athwart us in thin vapor, and cannot make themselves felt. But sometimes they are made flesh, they breathe upon us with warm breath; they touch us with soft, responsible hands; they look upon us with sad, sincere eyes, and speak to us in appealing tones; they are clothed in a living, human soul, with all its conflicts, its faith, and its love. Then their presence is a power, then they shake us like a passion, and we are drawn after them with gentle compulsion, as flame is drawn to flame. — *George Eliot.* True friendship. — What, then, is the true way of loving one's friends? It is to love them in God, to love God in them; to love what He has made them, and to bear, for love of Him, with what He has not made them. The love of God, loving friends apart from self, knows how to love patiently through all their faults. What is lacking in anyone it knows may yet be made up if God wills. — *Fénelon.*

25-27. (25) Jonathan, throughout the special subject of the dirge. (26) very pleasant, in intercourse of near friendship. Jonathan is a truly lovely and lovable character. (27) how . . . fallen, the final refrain. weapons of war, metaphorically, of Saul and Jonathan; cf. Elisha's lament over Elijah. 2 Kings, xi. 12.

The love that is wonderful (vs. 26). — The love of Jonathan to David was wonderful in — I. Its condescension. The heir to the throne of Israel loved the shepherd-lad. II. Its depth and intensity. Jonathan loved David "as his own soul." III. Its unselfishness. IV. Its practice. Note how the practicality of Jonathan's love was shown. V. Its constancy. No change in David's circumstances altered the character of his friendship. — *The Study.*

Hope beyond the grave. — I think that the two things above all others that have made men in all ages believe in immortality, — apart, as far as we know, from any revelation save that which is written on the human heart. — have been the broken loves and the broken friendships of the world. Men could not believe that this young life, broken off so suddenly, was done forever. It suggested its own continuance. Instinctively friendship triumphed over the grave. Love was too strong for death. — *Phillips Brooks.*

A lost friend. —

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
So far, so near in woe and weal;
O loved the most, when most I feel
There is a lower and a higher;
Known and unknown; human, divine;
Sweet human hand and lips and eye;

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Saul and
Jonathan
in life
and death

"Beyond all wealth, honor, or even health, is the attachment we form to noble souls; because to become one with the good, generous, and true, is to become in a measure good, generous and true ourselves." — *Arnold.*

"Blessed is the man who has the gift of making friends; it is one of God's best gifts."

special
lament for
Jonathan

a "This recurrence of the same idea is perfectly congenial to the nature of elegy, since grief is fond of dwelling upon the particular objects of the passion, and frequently repeating them" — *Bp. Leath.*

"The soul of woman lives in love." — *Sigourney.*

"There is in the heart of woman such a deep well of love, that no age can freeze it." — *Lytton.*

B. C. chr. 1017.

"Falsehood and cowardice are things women highly hold in hate."—*Shakespeare*.

Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,
Mine, mine, forever, ever mine;
Strange friend, past present and to be;
Love deeper, darker understood;
Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee. — *Tennyson*.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

David
anointed
king of
Judah

a1 Sa. xxiii. 9;
xxx. 7, 8, etc.

b "Selected, doubtless, as the ancient sacred city of the tribe of Judah, the burial-place of the patriarchs, and the inheritance of Caleb."—*Stanley*.

"The strongest and most important place within the limits of the tribe of Judah."—*Kittó*.

c1 Sa. xvi. 13.

"If two angels were sent from heaven, one to conduct an empire, and another to sweep a street, they would feel no inclination to change employments."—*Newton*.

Abner
makes
Ish-bosheth
king of
Israel

d "Prob. Dav.'s informants thought he would resent the act of the men of Jabesh."—*Spk. Com.*

e1 Chr. viii. 33;
ix. 39.

"Without a regard for things divine you will fail in your behavior before men."—*M. Aurelius*.

"Death is the fore-shadowing of life. We die that we may die no more."—*Hooker*.

Joab goes
out to confer
with Abner

f Comp. 1Sa. xviii.

1-4. (1) **enquired**, etc., characteristic of Dav. is this constant seeking of counsel and direction from God.^a The death of the king and his son altered Dav.'s position, and made action necessary. **Hebron**,^b Ge. xxiii. 2. (2) **two wives**, 1 Sa. xxv. 42, 43. (3) **cities**, neighboring villages and towns. (4) **they anointed**, the will of the people thus acknowledging the call of God.^c Just as Saul was first secretly anointed by Samuel (1 Sam. x. 1), and afterwards made king by all the people at Gilgal (xi. 14, 15), so it was with David. His first anointing indicated God's secret purpose, his second the accomplishment of that purpose. — *Spk. Com.*

David anointed king of Judah (vs. 4). — I. What a power is there arrayed against every humble disciple of the Saviour, Ep. vi. 12. II. David's deliverances and escapes were numerous, and none of them effected in any mode which could diminish the estimation of danger. III. It was to Providence that David owed his several deliverances from the animosity and power of Saul. IV. At last the sorrows of the wanderer, the persecuted fugitive, are over, and he is crowned—the ruler of the mightiest tribe in Israel. — *C. M. Henry*.

Small achievements. — You cannot set the world right or the times, but you can do something for the truth; and all you can do will certainly tell, if the work you do is for the Master, who gives you your share, and so the burden of responsibility is lifted off. This assurance makes peace, satisfaction and repose possible even in the partial work done upon earth. Go to the man who is carving a stone for a building; ask him where is that stone going, to what part of the temple, and how is he going to get it into place, and what does he do? He points you to the builder's plan. This is only one stone of many. So when men shall ask where and how is your little achievement going into God's plan, point them to your Master, who keeps the plans, and then go on doing your little service as faithfully as if the whole temple were yours to build. — *Phillips Brooks*.

5-11. (5) David's first royal proclamation. The east of Jordan favoring the house of Saul, Dav. tries to secure their allegiance.^d (6) **requite you**, or show my confidence and thanks, by sending this message of peace to you. (7) **valiant**, sons of valor, with idea of *virtue*, right-thinking men. (8) **Abner**, 1 Sa. xiv. 50; a man of great influence who would naturally act as the defender of Saul's house and the champion of the favored tribe of Benjamin. **Ish-bosheth**, (or *Esh-baal*),^e man of shame, or bashful. A person of little energy of character. **Mahanaim**, E. of the Jordan and secure fr. the attacks of the Phil. Ge. xxxii. 2. (9) Names here prob. indic. the territory recovered by Abner fr. the Phil. **Ashurites**, or tribe of Asher. (10) **two years**, comp. vs. 11. (11) **seven . . months**, either Dav. reigned 5½ years after Ishb.'s death or 5½ yrs. were occupied in the reconquest of "all Israel" and then Ishb. reigned two years.

Courtesy and love (vs. 5). — Courtesy is said to be love in little things. And the one secret of politeness is to love. Love *cannot* behave itself unseemly. You can put the most untutored persons into the highest society, and if they have a reservoir of love in their hearts, they will not behave themselves unseemly. They simply cannot do it. You know the meaning of the word "gentleman." It means a gentle man—a man who does things gentle with love. And that is the whole art and mystery of it. The gentle man cannot in the nature of things do an ungente and ungentlemanly thing. — *Drummond*.

12-17. (12) **went out**,^f assuming the offensive against Judah. **Gibeon**, now *El-Jeb*, 7 miles W. of Jerusalem; close upon the frontier of Judah. (13) **Joab**, introduced to us here. The eldest of Dav.'s three warlike nephews. He commanded the army of Judah and next to Dav. was the most important

character during his whole reign. He was a continual source of vexation to Dav., but too valuable to be dispensed with. **pool of Gibeon,**^a Jer. xli. 12. (14) **play,**^b exhibit their skill in fighting. A sort of champion fight before a general engagement. (15) A fixed arrangement to take twelve a side. (16) The Benjamites tried to take advantage of their skill in using the *left hand*; but the men of Judah proved quite a match for them in quickness and dexterity. **Helkath-hazzurim,** "the field of the sharp knives." (17) **battle,** general engagement.

Asahel overtaken by death (vss. 18—23). — I. Death often comes upon us by ways that we least suspect. II. How often we are betrayed by the accomplishments we are proud of. Asahel's swiftness, which he presumed so much upon, did him no kindness, but forwarded his fate; and with it he ran upon his death, instead of running from it. — *M. Henry.*

Seizing by the beard (vs. 16). — They did this by the hair of the head, or beard (2 Sa. xx. 9). Plutarch tells us, in his *Apophthegms*, that all things being prepared for a battle, Alexander's captains asked him whether he had anything else to command them. "Nothing," said he, "but that the Macedonians shave their beards." Parmenio wondering what he meant, "Do not you know," says he, "that there is no better hold in fight than the beard?" On arriving near the village, I stopped to copy an inscription, sending my attendants forward to procure lodgings and provisions. My attention, however, was soon attracted by the screams of women and children; and, on entering the village, I found the people throwing sticks and stones at my servants, while the papas were encouraging the assailants. At length, Logotheti's man, on receiving a wound from a large stone, took the priest by the beard, and drawing his sword, would probably have endangered the lives of all our party by some rash action, had I not arrived at that moment, and by holding the hand of the Libadiote, put an end to the fray. — *Dodwell's Tour.*

18—24. (18) **Asahel,**^c remarkable for powers of running. "The darling of his brothers." (19) **pursued . . Abner,** bec. the grandest trophy of a battle was the armor of the general. (20) **behind him,** as he ran. (21) **his armour,**^d "be content with the spoil of some inferior soldier; you are but a stripling, beware of contending with so tried a warrior as I am." (22) **again,** urging him a second time. **to Joab,** on whom would fall the duty of *blood revenge*. (23) **hinder end,** blunt end; but the strength of Abner's hand, and the swiftness of Asahel's running, made it a death-wound. **fifth rib,**^e R. V., "in the belly." (24) **Joab . . Abishai,** in contrast to those who halted by Asahel. **Ammah, etc.,** these names not identified.

Roe and antelope (vs. 18). — In our version, the original term is translated roe and roebuck; but Dr. Shaw and others have proved by several conclusive arguments that it is not the roe, but the antelope, which the sacred writers intend. The swiftness of this beautiful creature has been celebrated by writers of every age, in terms of high admiration. Its exquisite symmetry, its active form, and the delicate turn of its limbs, clearly show that it is intended by its Maker to hold a distinguished place among the fleetest animals that scour the desert. Sir John Malcolm says it may be termed the fleetest of quadrupeds. It seems rather to vanish than to run from the pursuer; and when closely pressed, bounds with so great agility, that it hardly seems to touch the ground in its career. The surprising agility which Asahel, the brother of Joab, displayed in his pursuit of Abner, drew this eulogium from the sacred historian: "And Asahel was light of foot as one of the antelopes that are in the field." Another allusion to the amazing speed of that animal occurs in the description of the warlike qualifications which distinguished a troop of Gadites in the service of David: "They were men of might, men of war, fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes (the antelopes) upon the mountains." — *Paxton.*

25—28. (25) **children, etc.,** Abner chose a strong position and rallied together in one band Saul's own tribe. (26) "Abner, who had made a jest of shedding blood, now professes repugnance for bloodshed." (27) A difficult expression; may mean either, If you had not made the challenge for the play of the champions there would have been no war, or, Without your speaking, I should have stopped the pursuit. **in the morning,** or from the morning. Abner seeks to throw the blame for bloodshed upon Joab, who charges

B. C. *chr.* 1017.

30; 2 Sa. **xxi.** 17; 1 Chr. **xx.** 1.

a "On the east of the hill is a copious spring, wh. Issues in a cave excavated in a limestone rock, so as to form a large reservoir. In the trees further down are the remains of a pool or tank of considerable size. This is doubtless the pool of Gibeon." — *Smith's Dict. Bib.*

b "Some think the proposal was only for an exhibition of a little tilting match for diversion. Others suppose that both parties being reluctant to commence a civil war, Abner proposed to leave the contest to the decision of 12 picked men on either side." — *Jamieson.*

defeat and pursuit of Abner

c 1 Ch. li. 16; xii. 8; Ps. xviii. 33; Song ii. 17; viii. 14.

d Ju. xiv. 19.

e 2 Sam. iii. 27; iv. 6; xx. 10.

"God hath made goodness a noble and a stately thing; hath impressed on it that beauty and majesty which command a universal love and veneration, which strike presently both a kindly and an awful respect into the minds of all men. Power may be dreaded, riches may be courted, wit and knowledge may be admired; but only goodness is truly esteemed and honored." — *Barrow.*

armistice between Joab and Abner

"Advice is offensive, not because it convicts us of any

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fault which has escaped our notice, but because it shows us that we are known to others as well as ourselves; and the officious monitor is persecuted with hatred, not because his accusation is false, but because he assumes the superiority which we are not willing to grant him."—*Johnson*.

"Who overcomes by force hath overcome but half his foe."—*Milton*.

burial
of Asahel

Joab returns
to Hebron

a "From Heb. bathar, to cut."—*Gesenius*.

b vs. 8.

"Oh, world! oh, men! what are ye, and our best designs, that we must work by crime to punish crime? And slay, as if death had but this one gate, when a few years would make the sword superfluous."—*Byron*.

him in turn with commencing the battle. (28) **a trumpet**, the call for staying pursuit.

Ambition. — It is said of Napoleon Bonaparte, that at that period of his life when the consequences of his infatuated conduct had fully developed themselves in unforeseen reverses, being driven to the necessity of defending himself within his own kingdom, with the shattered remnant of his army, he had taken up a position at Brienne, the very spot where he had received the rudiments of his education; when, unexpectedly, and while he was anxiously employed in a practical application of those military principles which first exercised the energies of his young mind in the college of Brienne, his attention was arrested by the sound of the church clock. The pomp in his imperial court, and even the glories of Marengo and of Austerlitz, faded for a moment from his regard, and almost from his recollection. Fixed for a while to the spot on which he stood, in motionless attention to the well-known sound, he at length gave utterance to his feelings, and condemned the tenor of all his subsequent life by confessing that the hours then brought back to his recollection were happier than any he had experienced throughout the whole course of his tempestuous career.

29—32. (29) **the plain**, arâbâh, or valley of the Jordan. **all Bithron**,^a or the gorge, or ravine, bet. the Jabbok and Mahanaim.^b (30) **gathered, etc.** to count up his loss. (31) **died**, so the wounded are not reckoned in. (32) **father**, his name unknown. **went all night**, clearly the night after Asahel's burial, not the night after the battle. The fighting was not over till after sunset (vs. 24), and it would have been impossible to collect the army, make necessary arrangements, and march a distance of at least 26 miles from Gibeon to Hebron, burying Asahel on the way. Joab no doubt spent the night at Gibeon, marched to Bethlehem the next day, and after burying his brother, hastened on to report himself to David at Hebron. — *Cam. B.*

Retreat from Moscow. — "The French soldiers," says an eyewitness, "on their retreat from Moscow, would, on halting at night, throng into the houses, throw themselves down on the first dirty straw they could find, and there perish in large numbers with hunger and fatigue. From such sufferings, and from the infection of the air, in the warmer season, by putrefied carcasses of men and horses that strewed the road, there sprang two dreadful diseases, the dysentery and typhus fever, before which they melted away like dew before the sun. At times they were so overwhelmed with whirlwinds of snow that they could not distinguish the road from the ditches, and often found their grave in the latter. The roads, league after league, were checkered with dead bodies covered with snow, and forming undulations, or hillocks, like those in a graveyard. Many of the survivors scarce retained the human form. Some had lost their hearing, others their speech; and many, by excessive cold and hunger, were reduced to a state of such stupid frenzy that they roasted the dead bodies of their companions, and even gnawed their own hands and arms."

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

David's
increase
and children

See *Bp. Hall, Contemp.*, "Abner and Joab."

"Grace and glory are one and the same thing, in a different print, in a smaller and greater letter. Glory lies couched and compacted in grace, as the beauty of a flower lies couched and eclipsed in the seed."—*Hopkins*.

1—5. (1) **war**, civil war; no doubt helping to prepare for division of the kingdom in the time of Rehoboam. (2) **Amnon**, ch. xiii. (3) **Chileab**, *his father's picture*, called Daniel in 1 Chr. iii. 1, wh. was prob. his right name, while Chileab was a term of endearment. **Geshur**, a region in Syria north of Israel. This marriage was a political one, to strengthen Dav. by a northern alliance. (5) **Eglah**, supposed to be another name for Michal; see vs. 13-16. Mentioned last because she was restored to Dav. towards the close of his residence in Hebron. This polygamy showed Dav.'s weakness and brought upon him and the kingdom untold misfortune.

Conflict and progress (vs. 1). — I. David's regal state; crowned, and first act — praises men of Jabesh-gilead (ch. ii). II. David's domestic life. III. David's elevation not dependent on Abner's treaty. IV. David's justice in executing the murderers of Ish-bosheth. The text sets forth a sad history: (1) There was war: the Christian life a warfare; (2) There was a long war: the Christian life a war to its close; (3) Meanwhile David waxed stronger and stronger: so should it be with us; (4) The house of Saul grew weaker: so will it be with our foes. — *C. M. Fleury*.

Happiness in fidelity. — Puritan strictness of morals is, after all, a right

wholesome and most blessed thing. Who shall say that the sum of a man's enjoyment is not far greatest in the end of life when he has kept with unflinching steadfastness his early vow of faithfulness, and, as his reward, has never lost the freshness and the flavor of his first love, nor ceased to find in his ever-faithful partner that which fills and satisfies his heart? Compared to this, the life of him who has flitted from one attachment to another, heedless of the soured feelings or, it may be, the broken hearts he has left behind, and whose children, instead of breathing the sweet spirit of brotherly and sisterly love, scowl at one another with the bitter feelings of envy, jealousy, and hatred, is like an existence of wild fever compared to the pure, tranquil life of a child.—*Blaikie*.

6—11. (6) **made himself strong**, *R. V.*, *margin*, "showed himself strong," *i. e.* Abner was the mainstay of the throne and dynasty of Ishb. At length foreseeing the impossibility of continuing a successful opposition to David's growing power, he took the opportunity of a quarrel with Ish-bosheth to make such overtures to David as might secure him favorable terms and an influential position.—*Cam. B.* (7) **a concubine**, secondary, or inferior wife, *see* Ge. xvi., xxii. 24, xxx. Aiah, is an Edomitish name; as a foreigner, she could not prob. be a full wife. *wherefore, etc.*,^a we do not know whether the accusation was true or false. (8) **a dog's head**, *R. V.*, "Am I a dog's head that belongeth to Judah? This day, etc.," *i. e.* am I a worthless thing on the side of Judah, I, who have shown kindness, *etc.*, and have protected thy throne? *Comp.* 1 Sa. xvii. 43; 2 Ki. viii. 13. (9) **so do God**, *Ru. i. 17*. It is clear that Abner was aware that Dav. was designated by God to succeed Saul. (10) **to translate**, pass over. (11) **feared him**,^b Ish-bosheth not a strong-minded man.

How to defeat calumny.—I. Despise it: to seem disturbed at it is the way to make it believed; and stabbing your defamer will not prove you innocent. II. Live an exemplary life; and then your general good character will overpower it. III. Speak tenderly of every one, even of your defamer; and by so doing you will show the world that you are innocent.

The influence of noble character.—It is not what the best men do, but what they are, that constitutes their truest benefaction to their fellow-men. Certainly, in our own little sphere, it is not the most active people to whom we owe the most. Among the common people whom we know, it is not necessarily those who are busiest, not those who, meteor-like, are ever on the rush after some visible change and work. It is the lives like the stars, which simply pour down on us the calm light of their bright and faithful being, up to which we look, and out of which we gather the deepest calm and courage.—*Phillips Brooks*.

12—16. (12) **on his behalf**, *R. V.*, "*margin*, where he was," *i. e.* forthwith, immediately. *whose, etc.*, acknowledging that none had right superior to Dav. (13) **bring Michal**, no doubt Dav. was attached to her as his first wife, but he makes this demand now for *political* reasons—to have Saul's daughter would incline adherents of that house to join him, and at the same time expose the weakness of Ishb.'s authority. (14) **espoused, etc.**, (1 Sa. xviii. 25, 27). (15) **Phaltiel**, or *Phalti* (1 Sa. xxv. 44). (16) **Bahurim** (2 Sa. xvi. 5), we must remember that Phal. did wrong in marrying the wife of another man.

David's demand for Michal (vs. 13).—I think David was most certainly in the right to demand her; for whatever may be said as to his other wives, he had certainly the strongest claim to this, for he had purchased her for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines. And supposing there was nothing of a sensual disposition that influenced David in this instance, there might be other very substantial reasons to induce him to insist upon her being sent to him. He purchased her at the hazard of his life, and she was a living proof of his military valor and ability. She was his predecessor's daughter, and he did not probably choose to lose the honor and advantage of the alliance. It might conciliate some of Saul's family and tribe to his interest, when they saw one of his daughters owned and treated as David's wife, and that he did not pursue his resentment to Saul, to the injury or disgrace of any of the branches of his family. There was also a real generosity in the thing, both to her and Saul, in that he received her after she had been another man's; remembering probably how once he owed his life to her affection, and knowing that she was partly separated from him by her father's authority; whereas many

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Most people would succeed in small things, if they were not troubled with great ambitions.—*Longfellow*.

Ish-bosheth quarrels with Abner

a "In the E., the wives and concubines of a king are the property of his successor to this extent, that for a private person to aspire to marry one of them would be considered a virtual advance of pretensions to the crown."—*Jamieson*.

b "It is prob. that Abner before this had begun to incline towards David."—*Spk. Com.*

"It does not depend upon me, said the Grecian, to prevent being spoken evil of; it is only in my power that it be not done deservedly."—*Laconics*.

Abner makes a league with David

c *See* 2 Sa. xvii. 17—21, xxiii. 31; 1 Chr. xi. 33.

"Women are formed for attachment. Their gratitude is unimpeachable. Their love is an unceasing fountain of delight to the man who has once attained it, and knows how to deserve it. But that very keenness of sensibility which, if well cultivated, would prove the source of your highest enjoyment, may grow to bitterness and wormwood if you fail to attend to it, or abuse it."—*Hogg*.

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princes, for much less provocations of a wife's father, would have turned off their consorts in revenge of them, and even put them to death for having been married to another.—*Chandler*.

Abner seeks to bring Israel over to David

a "The narrative here is parallel, not subsequent to, the preceding, as is very usual in Heb. history." — *Spk. Com.*

17-21. (17) **had**, previous to his application to Dav.^a **elders of Israel**, authorities of the northern tribes. **ye sought for**, there is no word of regret for his having opposed what he knew to be God's purpose and promise, no apology for the disturbance he had wrought in Israel, no excuse for all the distress which he had caused to David by keeping the kingdom and the people at war. He does not come as a rebel to his sovereign, but as one independent man to another.—*Exp. B.* Only Abner's influence had prevented the union of the nation under Dav. (18) **the Lord, etc.**, the highest argument poss. was that in deciding for Dav. they would be following the Divine lead. **out . . enemies**, who were still afflicting the land. (19) **Benjamin**, as the tribe directly interested in the dynasty of Saul. (20) **twenty men**,^b as official attendants: possibly escorting Michal; but privy and consenting to his intrigue with Dav. (21) **all Israel**, the national assembly. **in peace**, treated as a friend.

b "He was honorably received by Dav., and discussed with him the conditions under which the union of the whole kingdom was to be effected. Though we are not informed what was to become of Ish-bosheth, no doubt his honorable retirement was stipulated for." — *Ewald*.

David and Abner. — In this whole affair David's conduct to me seems perfectly honorable. He received a rebel general to his favor upon his submission, agreed with him that he should bring in all the tribes to do what they desired to do, and were bound by the order of God to do, even to make him king over them, that hereby he might have the peaceable possession of the whole kingdom. Abner had openly told Ish-bosheth of his design. Abner sent messengers to David, and not David to Abner, on the affair. It was Abner who conferred with the princes of Israel, and came openly to David at Hebron to agree upon proper measures. David carried on no secret intrigues to bring over Abner and the eleven tribes to his party. He only consented to a just proposal that was made him of recovering his own right, without invading the real right of a single person; and indeed it was the only method he could take, and he would not have acted like a saint or a wise and just prince had he not hereby put an end to the civil war, secured his own rights, and restored and established the peace and prosperity of his people.—*Chandler*.

Joab slays Abner

c "Joab ought not to have acted as goel, seeing Asahel was killed in open warfare. It was convenient to put out of the way a rival such as Abner would be sure to prove." — *Wordsworth*.

22-27. (22) **from . . troop**, *R. V.*, "from a foray," the regular means of supporting an army. **sent him away**, to avoid Joab, who regarded himself as the goel, or avenger of the blood of Asahel. (23) **they told**, *i. e.* people about the court. (24) **what . . done?** a question indic. the authority Joab was assuming. (26) **well of Sirah**, 20 furlongs fr. Hebron. (27) **gate**, the shadow of the gate, as if for privacy.^c **fifth rib**, *R. V.*, "in the belly." Abner killed Asahel in self-defense, and Joab had no right to demand blood-revenge.

Joab. — Joab, with his usual sagacity, saw at once that if Abner was reconciled to David, his own post as second in the state would be forfeited, and then with characteristic unscrupulosity he proceeded to take Abner's life. The feud on account of Asahel's death was probably only a convenient pretext.—*Spk. Com.*

David repudiates the death of Abner

d "We must remember that under the O. T. temporal rewards, or disabilities directly attended upon virtue and vice."
1 Ki. ii. 32, 33.

28-30. (28) **guiltless**, he refused altogether to accept the responsibility of Joab's act. It must be regarded as wholly a *private feud*. (29) **let it rest**, *R. V.*, "let it fall," a very forceful expression in the Heb.; expression of Dav.'s indignation.^d **on a staff**, or crutch. **on the sword**, *R. V.*, "by the sword." (30) and **Abishai**, he prob. agreed and shared by subsequent approval of Joab's act.

A noble revenge.—In the time of the Caliphs, when Abdallah, the shedder of blood, had murdered every descendant of Ommiah within his reach, one of that family, named Ibrahim, the son of Soliman, had the good fortune to escape and reach Koufa, which he entered in disguise. Knowing no person in whom he could confide, he seated himself under the portico of a large house. Soon after the master of the house arriving, followed by several servants, alighted from his horse, entered, and, seeing the stranger, asked him who he was. "I am an unfortunate man," answered Ibrahim, "and request from thee an asylum." "God protect thee!" replied the host, "enter, and remain in peace." Ibrahim lived several months in this house without being questioned by his host. But astonished to see him every day go out on horseback, and return at a certain hour, he ventured one day to inquire the reason. "I have been informed,"

"Revenge, that thirsty dropsy of our souls, makes us covet that which hurts us most." — *Massieu*.

said his host, "that a person named Ibrahim, the son of Soliman, is concealed in this town: he slayed my father, and I am searching for him in order to be revenged." "Then I know," said Ibrahim, "that God has purposely conducted me to this place: I adore His decree, and resign myself to death. God has determined to avenge the offended man: thy victim is at thy feet." The host, astonished, replied, "O stranger, I see thy misfortunes have made thee weary of life: thou seekest to lose it, but my hand cannot commit such crimes." "I don't deceive thee," said Ibrahim; and he proceeded to explain the occasion on which the affair happened and all the circumstances attending it. A violent trembling then seized the worthy host; his teeth chattered as if from intense cold; his eyes alternately sparkled his fury and overflowed with tears. At length, turning to Ibrahim, "To-morrow," said he, "destiny may join thee to my father, and God will have retaliated. But as for me, how can I violate the asylum of my house? Wretched stranger! fly from my presence! There, take these hundred sequins; begone quickly, and let me never behold thee more!" — *Percy Anec.*

B. c. cir. 1010.

"Revenge is the inflicting of pain upon the person who has injured or offended us further than the just ends of punishment or reparation require." — *Paley.*

"He who refuses forgiveness breaks the bridge over which he must pass, for all need forgiveness." — *Royal Helps.*

31—35. (31) to **Joab**, so make a public humiliation for his crime. Dav. ordered a public funeral and mourning, as if Abner had been one of his own officers. The blood-feud furnished Dav. the excuse for sparing Joab, whose death would have deprived Israel of his two great warriors. (32) **Hebron**, not in his native place,^a but in Dav.'s own royal city. (33) **lamented**, or composed a funeral dirge. **Died Abner, etc., R. V.**, 'should Abner die as a fool dieth?' Was this ignoble death to be the fate of so brave a warrior? (34) **not bound**, "how was it that thou wast slain while thy hands were at liberty to defend thyself, thy feet free to escape by flight? It was because thou wast attacked unsuspectingly by treacherous enemies." **before wicked men, i. e.** by assassination. (35) Fasting was a customary part of mourning.^b

David mourns for Abner

^a Gibeon, or Zelzah; 1 Ch. ix. 35, 36; viii. 29, 33.

^b 2 Sa. i. 12; xii. 17; Ez. xxiv. 17.

"Let each day take thought for what concerns it, liquidate its own affairs, and then we shall be always ready. To know how to be ready is at bottom to know how to die." — *Amiel.*

"There is a tear for all that die; a mourner over the humblest grave." — *Byron.*

Preparation for death. —

So live that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, that moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams. — *Bryant.*

36—39. (36) **pleased them**, such genuine expressions of honor and regret paid to a public enemy. And esp. bec. it assured them that Dav. had not plotted Abner's death. (37) **of the king**, of his counsel. (38) **his servants**, the close attendants of his throne. (39) **weak**, Dav. felt he had not things thoroughly under his own control. Abner would have become a counterpoise to the too-commanding influence of the impetuous Joab and Abishai. Dav. never succeeded in shaking off the influence of these sons of Zeruiah.^c

a prince and great man fallen in Israel

Departed greatness (vs. 38). — I. Some of the lessons that may be gleaned from the life just passed away. (1) How much good can be accomplished with duty as a guiding star; (2) The benefit of clothing domestic life with spotless sanctity; (3) The patriotism that swayed his life and conduct; (4) The value of the cultivation of the mind and of the higher faculties of our nature. — *R. W. Bush on the death of the Prince Consort.*

^c 2 Sam. xix. 7, 13; xx. 10; 1 K. ii. 5, 6, 33, 34; Ps. xxviii. 4; lxii. 12; 2 Ti. iv. 14.

"He's a king, a true, right king, that dare do aught save wrong; fears nothing mortal but to be unjust; who is not blown up with the flattering puffs of spongy sycophants; who stands unmoved despite the jostling of opinion." — *Marston.*

Obsequious flattery of kings. —

Wherefore pay you
This adoration to a sinful creature?
I'm flesh and blood, as you are; sensible
Of heat and cold; as much a slave unto
The tyranny of my passions as the meanest
Of my poor subjects. The proud attributes
By oil'd-tongue flattery imposed upon us
As sacred, glorious, high, invincible,
The deputy of heaven, and in that
Omnipotent; with all false titles else,
Coin'd to abuse our frailty, though compounded,

B. C. cir. 1010.

"Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours, makes the night morning, and the noontide night." — *Shakespeare*.

And by the breath of sycophants applied,
Cure not the least fit of an ague in us.
We may give poor men riches; confer honors
On undeservers; raise or ruin such
As are beneath us; and with this puff'd-up
Ambition would persuade us to forget
That we are men: but He that sits above us,
And to whom, at our utmost rate, we are
But pageant properties, derides our weakness;
In me, to whom you kneel, 'tis most apparent;
Can I call back yesterday, with all their aids
That bow unto my sceptre? or restore
My mind to that tranquillity and peace
It then enjoy'd? — *Massinger*.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

Mephibosheth

a Jos. ix. 17; xviii. 25.

b Comp. Ch. ix., xvi., xix. 25, etc.

"Weakness is the only fault that is incorrigible." — *Laconics*.

"When men hath tamed nature, asserted his place

And dominion, behold! he is brought face to face

With a new foe, himself.

— *Owen Meredith*.

assassination of Ish-bosheth

c LXX. add, "And behold the (female) porter of the house was cleaning wheat, and she fell asleep, and (so) the brothers escaped (notice) and entered into the house."

"Ignorance, poverty, and vanity, make many soldiers." — *Zimmerman*.

the assassins are put to death

d Ge. xlviii. 16; 1 Ki. i. 29; Ps. xxxi. 5.

e "The exposure

1-4. (1) **Saul's son, Ish-bosheth, were feeble**, R. V., "became," the one strong man who supported his trembling kingdom was gone. (2) **Beeroth**, now *Bireh*, on the western frontier of Benj.^a (3) **Beerothites**, original Canaanite inhabitants. **Gittaim**, Ne. xi. 33; the name is the dual form of Gath, poss. Gath in Philistia is intended. (4) **Mephibosheth**,^b *extermination of idols*; called *Meri-baal*, 1 Chr. viii. 34. His lameness, according to E. notions, unfitted him for sovereignty, therefore, with the death of Ishb. the cause of Saul's house became hopeless.

The regicides (vs. 2); their names and pedigree. — This is added to show us that these two regicides were not only officers in the king's army, but of the same tribe with Saul, and therefore had more ties than one upon them to be honest and faithful to his family. For there is reason to believe that Saul, who lived in the borders of Benjamin, conferred more favors upon that tribe than any other, and might therefore justly expect, both to him and his, a greater esteem and fidelity from those of his own tribe than from others. This patronymic is, therefore, very properly prefixed to the names of Rechab and Baanah, to show what vile, ungrateful villains they were, and how justly they deserved the severe and exemplary punishment which David inflicted on them. — *Stackhouse*.

5-8. (5) **house, etc.**, at Mahanaim. **lay . . noon**, in E. quite usual to rest during heat of the day. (6) **fetch wheat**, the portions allotted to their soldiers, vs. 2. **fifth rib**, ch. ii. 23. (7) **bed**, or divan. **beheaded him**, to take the proof of his death to David. **plain**, valley of Jordan, ch. ii. 29. (8) **which**, refers to Saul. These assassins expected praise and reward. **the Lord hath avenged**, they impiously ref. to themselves as the messengers of Providence.

Soldiers' rations in the East (vs. 6). — It is still a custom in the East, according to Dr. Perry, to allow their soldiers a certain quantity of corn, with other articles of provisions, together with some pay; and as it was the custom also to carry their corn to the mill at break of day, these two captains very naturally went to the palace the day before to fetch wheat, in order to distribute it to the soldiers, that it might be sent to the mill at the accustomed hour in the morning. The princes of the East, in those days, as the history of David shows, lounged in their divan, or reposed on their couch, till the cold of the evening began to advance. Rechab and Baanah, therefore, came in the heat of the day, when they knew that Ish-bosheth, their master, would be resting on his bed; and as it was necessary, for the reason just given, to have the corn the day before it was needed, their coming at that time, though it might be a little earlier than usual, created no suspicion, and attracted no notice. — *Paxton*.

9-12. (9) **redeemed**,^d delivered; brought safely through. One who was under the protection of Jehovah had no necessity to resort to crimes. (10) **Saul is dead**, ch. i. 15. (11) **righteous**, i. e. one who was under no sentence of execution, nor had wronged his murderers. (12) **hands**, with wh. they had shed blood. **feet**, with wh. they had escaped with their tidings. **over the pool**, prob. a great reservoir, wh. was in some prominent place.

A misunderstood hero.—Truly, it is a sad thing for a people, as for a man, to fall into skepticism, into dilettantism, insincerity, not to know a sincerity when they see it. . . . That a true king be sent them is of small use; they do not know him when sent. They say scornfully, "Is this your king?" The hero wastes his heroic faculty in bootless contradiction from the unworthy; and can accomplish little. For himself he does accomplish a heroic life, which is much, which is all, but for the world he accomplishes comparatively nothing. . . . God's greatest gift to this earth is sneeringly flung away. The miraculous talisman is a paltry plated coin, not fit to pass in the shop as a common guinea.—*Carlyle*.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1-5. (1) **all the tribes**,^a the national assembly composed of all the warriors above 20 yrs. of age who chose to come. **thy bone and thy flesh**,^b close relationship, this was the first reason for selecting Dav.; his military capacity was the second; his divine appointment the third. (2) **leddest**, etc., acknowledg. that Dav. had been the foremost man, and the favorite of the people. **captain, R. V.**, "prince," i. e. civil administrator. (3) **all the elders**, comp. vs. 1, *all the tribes*. league, national contract or compact. **before the Lord**,^c so accepting heartily the position of a *theocratic*, not an independent, king. **anointed Dav.**, prob. this the *third* time.^d (4) This vs. helps us to fix time for Dav.'s wanderings.^e (5) See ch. ii. 11.

The trials of prosperity.—Many are not able to suffer and endure prosperity; it is like the light of the sun to a weak eye; glorious, indeed, in itself, but not proportioned to such an instrument; Adam himself (as the Rabbins say) did not dwell one night in paradise, but was poisoned with prosperity, with the beauty of his fair wife, and a beauteous tree; and Noah and Lot were both righteous and exemplary, the one to Sodom, and the other to the old world, so long as they lived in a place in which they were obnoxious to the common suffering; but as soon as the one of them had escaped from drowning and the other from burning, and put into security, they fell into crimes which have dishonored their memories for above thirty generations together.—*Bp. Taylor*.

6-10. (6) **to Jerusalem**, to possess it, and make it the capital of the new kingdom. **Jebusites**,^f Ge. x. 16. **except . . . lame**,^g confident in the strength of their fortress they showed how they despised their enemy by entrusting its defense to the blind and lame. (7) **Zion**, the upper and fortified part; the S. W. hill. (8) **gutter**, comp. Ps. xlii. 7, *waterspouts*; some part of the defense by wh. a skillful climber might get in. **wherefore**, they say, meaning it has become a proverb. **house**, not specifically the temple. (9) **fort**, or *stronghold*, vs. 7. **Millo**, Ju. ix. 6, 46, 49; prob. the old Jebusite keep. By thus taking possession of Mount Zion and commencing those extensions which helped to make Jerusalem so great and celebrated a city, David introduced two names into the sacred language of the Bible which have ever since retained a halo, surpassing all other names in the world.—*Exp. B.* (10) **went on**, lit. *going and growing*.

The capital city.—Political, civil, and military considerations pointed to Jerusalem as the most suitable capital for the united kingdom. (a) Its position within the territory of Benjamin yet close upon the borders of Judah, was excellently adapted for binding together the two royal tribes, and conciliating the good will of Benjamin, without alienating Judah. (b) Its situation was virtually central, not only with regard to these two great tribes, but for the whole land. (c) As a military post it was unrivaled.—*Cam. Bible*.

Jerusalem.—Unless David was illuminated from above to a far greater degree than we have any reason to believe, he could have little thought, when he captured that citadel, what a marvelous chapter in the world's history he was beginning. Century after century, millennium after millennium has passed; and still Zion and Jerusalem draw all eyes and hearts, and pilgrims from the ends of the earth, as they look even on the ruins of former days, are conscious of a thrill which no other city in all the world can give. Nor is that all. When a name has to be found on earth for the home of the blessed in heaven, it is the new Jerusalem; when the scene of heavenly worship, vocal with the voice of harpers harping with their harps, has to be distin-

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of the mutilated remains was intended as not only a punishment of their crime but also the attestation of David's abhorrence."—*Jamieson*.

David confers with the elders of Israel at Hebron

^a Comp. 1 Chr. xii. 23-40.

^b Ge. ii. 23.

^c Ju. xi. 11.

^d 1 Sa. xvi. 13; 2 Sa. ii. 4.

^e "If Dav. was 20 yrs. old at the time he slew Goliath, four years in Saul's service, four years wandering fr. place to place, one year and four months in the country of the Phil., a few months after Saul's death, would make up the 10 yrs. necessary to complete the 30."—*Spk. Com.*

the city of David

^f Ge. xv. 21; Ex. iii. 8, 17; Nu. xiii. 29; Jos. xi. 3; Ju. i. 8, 21; xix. 10-12; i Ki. ix. 20.

^g "Thou canst not come in hither; but the blind and lame will keep thee off."—*Keil*.

"But as we meet and touch each day

The many travelers on our way,
Let every such brief contact be
A glorious helpful ministry"

—*S. Coolidge*.

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Hiram builds David a palace

a 1 Chr. xiv. 1.

b See Law and warning, De. xvii. 17.

"Home, my own home, thy though thou be, to me thou seemest an abbey."
 "My home, my mother's breast."
 "Every dog is a lion at home." — *Italian*.

Baal-perazim

c Comp. 2Sa. xxiii. 13, 14.

"God's grace is necessary to quicken our endeavors. We are not to sit still, and do nothing, however, under pretence of dependence upon Divine assistance, but attend to the motions of God's providence, and the influences of His spirit. When God goes before, we should gird up our loins and follow Him." — *Orton*.

"Prayer is a key, which, being turned by the hand of faith, unlocks all God's treasures." — *Hannah More*.

If you always wait till you are disposed to pray, very likely you will not pray at all.

Rephaim

d "Fr. *bacah*, to weep. Some tree that weeps with gum like the balsam, or that hangs down its leaves like the willow." — *Wordsworth*.

guished, it is said to be Mount Zion. Is not all this a striking testimony that nothing so ennobles either places or men as the gracious fellowship of God? *Blakie*.

11—16. (11) **Tyre**, one of the two great cities of Phœnicia noted for its commerce, wealth and civilized arts. Jos. xix. 29. **masons**,^a *lit.*, workers in stone for walls; indicates the poverty and absence of civilized life wh. marked the inauguration of Dav. (12) **perceived**, realized by the favor of other nations thus gained. (13) **more**, *etc.*,^b and precisely in this his dangers lay, and out of this his troubles came. (14—16) Comp. 1 Chr. iii. 5-9; xiv. 3-7.

The poor man's estate. — An aged poor man, dependent, as we may say, upon charity for his crust, though really dependent only on God, at one of those periodical social meetings of Christians for prayer and praise and holy conversation, which are found so profitable, was endeavoring to illustrate, in his humble way, how "the meek shall inherit the earth." "I went through my lord's park," said he, "and the great house looked so grand. Well, I said, 'Bless the Lord, it is a fine house.' I didn't envy it, bless the Lord! but I seemed so to enjoy the great house. I said, 'That's mine, surely; I enjoy it, I do.' Then the sheep looked so nice, and the cattle and the horses; and I said, 'Bless the Lord! they are all my Father's and they are all mine.' I didn't want to have them, but I did enjoy them so. And the trees, and the grass, and the plantations, all looked so beautiful, I 'peared to enjoy 'em so. I said, 'Lord, they are all Lord —'s; but they're all mine too.'" And so they were. — *Vanderkiste*.

17—21. (17) **down to the hold**, to some place in lower ground, where he could meet the Phil. army. Poss. the hold at Adullam:^c place suitable for concentrating Dav.'s army. (18) **Rephaim**, Jos. xv. 8. (19) **enquired**, *etc.*, this is carefully noticed in all Dav.'s undertakings. (20) **Baal-perazim**, "the place of breakings forth." (21) **images**, lares, or household gods. This indicates that the engagement was sudden, and unexpected by the Phil. **burnt them**, R. V. "took them away." Thus the disgrace wh. the Phil. placed upon the Ark was signally avenged.

Seeing God in nature. — The unworldly Christian, if he has the true mettle of a great life in him, never looks away from the things of time, but looks only the more piercingly into them and through them. He does not expect to find God beyond them, but in them, and by means of them. O these grand, unworldly souls, how majestic their aspirations, how solid their objects, how firm their sense of God! They live in the present as a kind of eternity, never sick of it, and never wanting more, but only what this signifies. — *Horace Bushnell*.

The elevating influence of prayer. —

When one that holds communion with the skies
 Has filled his urn where these pure waters rise,
 And once more mingles with us meaner things,
 'Tis even as if an angel shook his wings!
 Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
 That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.
 So when a ship, well freighted with the stores
 The sun matures on India's spicy shores,
 Has dropped her anchor, and her canvas furled,
 In some safe haven of our western world,
 'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went;
 The gale informs us, laden with the scent. — *Cowper*.

22—25. (22) **yet again**, to avenge the prev. defeat. (23) **not go up**, in the same way as before. God arranges for him even the plan of attack. **fetch a compass**, R. V., "make a circuit," *i. e.* surprise them again by a flank and reverse movement. **mulberry trees**, orig. word, *baca*,^d prob. balsam. (24) **a going**, R. V., "marching," as moved by the wind. (25) **Geba**, prob. Gibeon; 1 Chr. xiv. 16. **Gazer**, or *Gezer*, Jos. x. 33. The Chronicler concludes the account of these victories with the words: "And the fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations."

The sound in the mulberry trees (vs. 24). — I. There are certain special

duties, which are not duties to everybody. but only to some people. If we wish to know whether we are to perform these duties, we must seek signs concerning them, and not go and rush into a duty to which we are not called, unless we get a sign, even as David got the rustling among the mulberry leaves. II. There are certain duties which are common to all of us, but when we see some sign of God's Holy Spirit being in motion, or some other signs, these are seasons when we ought to be more than ever active, and more than ever earnest, in the service of our Master. — *Spurgeon*.

Advance of the Scots at Preston Pans. — At last the order was given to advance. A brief and solemn pause ensued, during which the clansmen, with one accord, took off their bonnets, and, reverently raising their faces to the blue heaven above them, uttered a short prayer, invoking God for victory. Then pulling their bonnets over their brows they cast aside their plaids, and began the charge. Slowly and silently they advanced at first; but as they proceeded their pace quickened, and they moved with such rapidity that they had to halt once or twice to re-dress their broken ranks, before closing in the death struggle. Their pipes struck up in each clan the onset of its name, and shouts and war-cries began to rend the air. The mist now rolled away before the morning wind, and the spectators could see distinctly the steady and glittering line of the regulars, and the dark columns of the clans closing in upon them with brandished weapons. — *J. Grant*.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1—5. (1) **again**, as a national assembly. **thirty thousand**,^a comp. 1 Chr. xiii. 1: these were delegates fr. all the tribes. (2) **Baale**, Canaanitish name of Kirjath-jearim; Jos. xv. 9, 60. **ark**, 1 Sa. vii. 1, 2. **whose name**, R. V. "which is called by the name, even the name of the LORD of hosts." (3) **new cart**, copying the Phil.^b instead of obeying the law.^c in Gibeah, better not as proper name, but *the hill*. Obs. that in this Dav. appears to have made no special inquiry of God. (4) **accompanying**, *lit. with*: the text of these verses is corrupt. Some words have been accidentally repeated by a scribe in copying the Hebrew, and should be struck out, on the authority of the LXX, and the end of vs. 3 and vs. 4 read thus: "Now Uzzah and Ahio the sons of Abinadab were driving the cart with the ark of God, and Ahio was going before the ark." — *Cam. B.* (5) **played**, attended the progress with music and dancing: **fir**, or *cypress*.

Bringing back the ark. — David's first care is to bring the ark of Jehovah from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem. In this he had a twofold object. First, it was an act of piety, testifying David's gratitude to God, who had so quickly raised him from the condition of a despairing fugitive hiding away in the cave of Adullam to that of a victorious king reigning over an independent and free people. David had also a political purpose. The weakness of Israel in the past was the result of its divisions. He would heal this by giving it a capital, whither the tribes would come up for worship, and where they would feel that they formed one nation. — *Pulp. Com.*

6—11. (6) **Nachon**, *Chidon*,^d 1 Chr. xiii. 9. **took hold**, according to Mosaic law, an unlawful act; Nu. iv. 15. **shook**, stumbled; the road was a very steep, rough, and difficult one. (7) **error**, rashness; and doubtless to check Dav. in the very beginning of wilfulness, and reminded him that he must act and rule *within the written law*. (8) **displeased**, with himself partly: more in grief than anger. **made a breach**, R. V., "had broken forth." Ex. xix. 23. (9) **afraid**, with a new reverence for the hallowed symbol. (10) **Gittite**,^e of *Gath* or *Gath-rimmon*, a Levitical city in Dan, or Manasseh. (11) **blessed**, with external signs of prosperity; this quiets Dav.'s fears and leads him to make a second attempt, but this time after careful inquiry of the law.

The ark in the house — The ark in the house of Obed-Edom may be considered as representing religion in the home. Wherever this truly dwells there is: I. A consciousness of the presence of God. II. Obedience to His commandments. III. Confidence in His mercy. IV. The enjoyment of His fellowship. V. Repose under His protection. VI. The reception of His blessing. VII. The promotion of His honor and glory. — *G. Wood*.

The fear of God. — Among the children of God, while there is always that

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"Earth's crammed with heaven. And every common bush afire with God; But only he who sees takes off his shoes." — *Mrs. Browning*.

"Blessed are the ears that gladly receive the pulses of the Divine whisper, and give no heed to the whispering of this world." — *Thomas à Kempis*.

the ark brought from Kirjath-jearim

^a Seventy thousand — LXX.

^b 1 Sa. vi. 7, 14.

^c Nu. iv. 15. vii. 9, x. 21.

"The way to begin a Christian life is not to study theology. Piety before theology. Right living will produce right thinking. Theologies are well in their place; but repentance and love must come before all other experiences." — *Beecher*.

the death of Uzzah

Obed-edom

^d "Neither of these are proper names; *nachon*, means *smiting*, *chidon*, the *dart* or *stroke*; and these names were fixed on this place after the event." — *Wordsworth*.

^e 1 Sam. xv. 18, 21, 24.

"Most of our churches have two doors. Superstition

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crept in long since at the one, and profaneness, in later days, shouldered in at the other." *Spencer.*

Robert Boyle never mentioned the name of God without a visible pause in his discourse.

"Rather let my head stoop to the block, than these knees bow to any save to the God of heaven." — *Shakespeare.*

"Profaneness is an awful vice. Once more I ask, whose name is it you so lightly use? The name of God! have you ever pondered its meaning? Have you ever thought what it is that you mingle thus with your passion and your wit? It is the name of Him whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain." — *Chapin.*

David dances before the ark

α 1 Chr. xv.

"Worldly hearts can see nothing in actions of zeal but folly and madness. Piety hath no grateful relish to their palate." — *Bp. Hall.*

"True joy is a serene and sober motion; and they are miserably out that take laughing for rejoicing; the seat of it is within, and there is no cheerfulness like the resolutions of a brave mind, that has fortune under its feet." — *Seneca.*

the ark placed in David's tabernacle

δ Gen. xxvii. 27 29, xlviii.; Da. xxxiii
"Like new liquor,

fearful and bowed apprehension of His majesty, and that sacred dread of all offense to Him, which is called the fear of God, yet of real and essential fear there is not any, but clinging of confidence to Him as their Rock, Fortress and Deliverer, and perfect love, and casting out of fear; so that it is not possible that while the mind is rightly bent on Him there should be any dread of anything either earthly or supernatural; and the more dreadful seems the height of His majesty, the less fear they feel that dwell in the shadow of it. — *Ruskin.* *Discouragement in Christian work.* — It may happen to you that some Christian undertaking on which you have entered with great zeal and ardor, and without any surmise that you are not doing right, is not blessed, but meets with some rough shock, that places you in a very painful position. In the most disinterested spirit, you have tried perhaps to set up in some neglected district a school or a mission, and you expect all encouragement and approbation from those who are most interested in the welfare of the district. Instead of receiving approval, you find that you are regarded as an enemy and an intruder. You are attacked with unexampled rudeness, sinister aims are laid to your charge, and the purpose of your undertaking is declared to be to hurt and discourage those whom you were bound to aid. The shock is so violent and so rude that for a time you cannot understand it. On the part of man it admits of no reasonable justification whatever. But when you go into your closet, and think of the matter as permitted by God, you wonder still more why God should thwart you in your endeavor to do good. Rebellious feelings hover about your heart that if God is to treat you in this way, it were better to abandon His service altogether. But surely no such feeling is ever to find a settled place in your heart. You may be sure that the rebuff which God has permitted you to encounter is meant as a trial of your faith and humility; and if you wait on God for further light and humbly ask a true view of God's will; if, above all, you beware of retiring in sullen silence from God's active service, good may come out of the apparent evil, and you may yet find cause to bless God even for the shock that made you so uncomfortable at the time. — *Blaikie.*

12-16. (12) gladness,* music and song. In this removal the law was carefully observed. (13) bare the ark, on shoulders, by help of staves. six paces, *i. e.* as soon as they had begun to move: far enough to show that this removal had the divine favor. (14) danced, rhythmical movements accompanying the music. before the Lord, "the Ark, as the symbol of Jehovah's presence." linen ephod, he laid aside his royal robes and dressed like the priests. (15) shouting, of the people. (16) Prob. on reaching the city of Jerus. David's excitement and joy were extreme. despised . . heart, Michal had an irreligious spirit like her father and could not appreciate Dav.'s humility. *Religious zeal despised.* — I. Why fervent religious zeal is despised. 1. Alleged reasons. It is (1) Fanatical; (2) Unintellectual; (3) Hypocritical; (4) Not respectable. 2. Secret causes. It may be (1) Ignorance; (2) Irreligion; (3) Formalism; (4) Pride of intellect, taste or station; (5) Secret uneasiness. II. Why such zeal ought not to be despised. 1. It is in harmony with right reason. 2. It is required by Holy Scripture. 3. It is productive of the highest good. 4. It secures the approbation of God, and final acceptance and reward." — *G. Wood.*

Religious enthusiasm. — Without enthusiasm, what is religion? Until we feel the passion of love we do not enter really into the spirit of Christ. We cannot hold down our emotions, and keep back our heart like a prisoner, in some high seasons of spiritual delight. Why should not congregations exclaim when they are moved by the spirit with great emotions of gratitude and delight? Is there anything undignified in the grand amen of a thousand hearts uttered in one solemn exclamation? We must not kill enthusiasm nor discourage enthusiasm, but cultivate it, direct it, and turn it into a great motive power, by which we shall do more work. — *People's Bible.*

17-19. (17) his place, within the Holy of Holies. pitched, *lit. stretched*: a new tent or tabernacle, specially prepared by Dav. In spirit it was bringing God into the very midst of the nation, and on the choicest and most prominent pedestal the country now supplied, setting up a constant memento of the presence of the Holy One. — *Exp. B.* peace offerings, portions of wh. could be eaten by the people. (18) blessed the people,^b comp. 1 Ki. viii. 14. (19) flagon, *lit.* "cake of grapes or raisins."

Guests dismissed with presents (vs. 19). — The entertainer at a feast occasionally dismissed his guests with costly presents. Lysimachus of Babylon, having entertained Hemerus, the tyrant of the Babylonians and Seleucians, with three hundred other guests, gave every man a silver cup, of four pounds weight. When Alexander made his marriage feast at Susa in Persia, he paid the debts of all his soldiers out of his own exchequer, and presented every one of his guests, who were not fewer than nine thousand, with golden cups. The master of the house, among the Romans, used also to give the guests certain presents at their departure, or to send them, after they were gone, to their respective habitations. It is probable that this custom, like many others which prevailed in Greece and Rome, was derived from the nations of Asia; for the sacred writers allude repeatedly to a similar custom, which closed the religious festivals or public entertainments among the chosen people of God. — *Paxton*.

20-23. (20) *how glorious!* the tone taunting and scornful. David's offence in the eyes of Michal was, not his dancing, but his divesting himself of his royal robes, and appearing before his subjects clad in the dress of an inferior class. The Levites were to occupy a humble social position (see Deut. xiv. 29; xxvi. 12), and Michal's words are a proof that such was in David's time the case. — *Pulp. Com.* *uncovered*, not literally; Dav. had only removed his outer robe. (21) *before the Lord*, as an act of homage and devotion. (22) *vile, etc.*, self-abasement before God is true nobility. It may take diff. forms of expression in diff. ages. (23) *Therefore, R. V.*, "and," not necessarily a punishment; but the statement of a long antecedent condition. *no child*, after this. If identical with *Eglah* (ch. iii. 5), she had a child previously.

Domestic religion. — I. How a man may bless his household. 1. By maintaining family worship. 2. By the religious instruction of his family. 3. By family discipline. 4. By leading his family to the house of God. 5. By setting a good example. II. Why he should do so. It is required by — 1. The relation of the family to God. 2. The relation to God of the head of a household. 3. The promptings of parental affection. 4. The injunctions of Holy Writ. — *G. Wood*.

Blessing his household. — Sir Thomas Abney kept up regular prayer in his family during all the time he was Lord Mayor of London; and on the evening of the day he entered on his office, he, without any notice, withdrew from the public assembly at Guildhall after supper, went to his house, there performed private worship, and then returned to the company. — *Whitecross*.

Humility. — A nobleman, who died some years ago, was in the habit of attending a prayer-meeting in the country village where he lived, and where a few poor people were accustomed to assemble to seek the presence of the Divine Majesty. It was at first customary for these humble persons to make way for him if he came in a little after the appointed time; but he expressed his unwillingness to receive this mark of respect, saying he should be satisfied to occupy the lowest station. In other places he thought he had a right to claim the distinctions of his rank; but there he felt himself in the same situation as themselves. Such conduct displayed the genuine feelings of piety, which, rising superior to the artificial distinctions of society, rejoices in the fellowship of the body of Christians.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1-3. (1) *rest, etc.*, some years after his coming to the throne. The condition of the country had involved long and serious wars; these delayed his purpose to build house for God; or perhaps the reference is to Saul and the Philistines; if so, Dav.'s desire to build the temple followed closely upon the events of the last chapter. (2) *Nathan*, first mentioned here. *curtains, i. e.*, the tent, Ex. xxvi. 2. (3) *said*, at once, no doubt fully sympathizing with Dav.'s wish, but without the approval of Jehovah. Not every word of the prophet was inspired.

Security and prosperity. — O my God, vouchsafe to me Thy grace, that I may learn to rejoice as though I rejoice not, and as though I possessed not, and use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away (1 Cor. vii. 30, 31). In the midst of pleasures and enjoyments let me

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which works over in foam and froth when thick and troubled, the joy of the sinner runs over in empty laughter and effervescent spirits when the heart is fruitful of the wrath of God." — *Bp. Hopkins*.

David's reply to Michal's taunt

vs. 20. This uncovering is already satisfactorily explained. David took off his robes, and girt his undergarments with a linen ephod, for a description of which see Ex. xxxix. 5. Now the great men of the East will not let even their feet be seen whilst they are sitting with their legs under them. King David had assumed the costume of a working man, having only put the priest's girdle over it, but without the sacerdotal coats. It was this, and the act of dancing that offended Saul's daughter, who had been brought up in all the regal pride which prevailed in the court of her father.

David tells Nathan he will build a house for God

a 1 Ki. i. 10, 22, 34; 1 Chr. xxix. 29; 2 Chr. ix. 29.

"It is not the church we want, but the sacrifice; not the gift, but the giving." — *Ruskin*.

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Nathan is instructed of the Lord

a 1 Chr. xxii. 8; xxviii. 3.

"It must grieve an ingenious mind, and be a reproach to any people, to have their own houses wainscoted with cedar, and painted with vermilion, while the temple of the Lord of hosts is destitute of every decent ornament."—*Hervey*.

God's message to David by Nathan

"Religion is a heaven-born thing, the seed of God in the spirits of men, whereby they are formed to a similitude and likeness of Himself."

God's promise to David's son

b 1 K. viii. 20; Ps. cxxii. 11.

c 1 Ch. xxii. 10; xxviii. 6.

d Ps. lxxix. 26, 27; He. i. 5.

e 1 Sa. xv. 23, 28; xvi. 14; 1 Ki. xi. 13.

"Out of the common stones of your daily work you may build yourself a temple which shall shelter your head from all harm, and bring down on you the inspiration of God"—*Theodore Parker*.

David's gratitude to God

still feel, like the Psalmist, that the best of all is to draw near unto Thee; and I never forget Thy fear. Break also the snares with which Satan endeavors to make a prey of my soul, but which, in my misery, I cannot see; and for this I shall laud and praise Thee in eternity.—*Gotthold*.

4-7. (4) **came**, by dream, or vision. (5) **thou**, not a fit work for thee, a fighting man.^a The connection of thought in *vss.* 5-13 is as follows: "Thou shalt not build a house for *Me* (5-7), but *I*, who have chosen thee to be the ruler of my people, will build a house for *thee* (8-11), and thy son shall erect a house for *ME*" (12, 13).—*Cam. B.* (6) **walked**, *i. e.* been a sojourner. **tent**, referring more esp. to the curtains. **tabernacle**, to the boards, or frame-work. (7) **tribes**, as repres. by their rulers. Complaint had not come from God. "He dwelleth not in temples made with hands." **to feed**, *i. e.* to govern, lead. **house of cedar**, a permanent and beautiful sanctuary.

A man's calling.—Each man has his own vocation. The talent is the call. There is one direction in which all space is open to him. He has faculties silently inviting him thither to endless exertion. He inclines to do something which is easy to him, and good when it is done, but which no other man can do. He has no rival. For the more truly he consults his own powers, the more difference will his work exhibit from the work of any other. When he is true and faithful, his ambition is exactly proportioned to his powers. The height of the pinnacle is determined by the breadth of the base. Every man has this call of the power to do somewhat unique, and no man has any other call.—*Emerson*.

8-11. (8) **sheepcote**, fold made for protection of flock by night. (9) **all thine enemies**, prob. Saul and his associates are meant. At this time all were subdued (*vs.* 1). (10) **appoint**, *better*, "I have appointed . . . and have planted, and they dwell . . . and shall not be disturbed any more." (11) **telleth**, or "hath told thee," *i. e.* through the prophet Samuel. **thee an house**, of thy family, reaching on to Messiah.

Rest.—None but the fully occupied can appreciate the delight of suspended, or rather of varied, labor. It is toil that creates holidays; there is no royal road—yes, that is the royal road—to them. Life cannot be made up of recreations; they must be garden-spots in well farmed lands.—*Mrs. Gilbert Ann Taylor*.

12-17. (12) **thy seed**,^b refer to Solomon. A direct prophecy regarding the future of Dav.'s house, wh. finally culminates in Christ. (13) **build a house**,^c 1 Ki. viii. 16-20. (14) **chasten**,^d for correction; not as with Saul,^e remove him from his place. David's natural posterity was to be exempt neither from human depravity, nor from punishment, nor from the changes and chances of mortal life. With them, as with men generally, there would be a tangled skein, of virtue and sin, of folly and wisdom, of terrible fall and penitent recovery. But there was to be no blotting out of David's lineage.—*Pulp. Com.* (15) Gracious aid and favor, Is. lv. 3. **before thee**, *i. e.* before thy face, no ref. to time. (16) **established**, sure; confirmed. **before thee**, better LXX. "before me." (17) **vision**, *vs.* 4, *i. e.* "the fixed gaze with wh. the prophet looked into the far off world."

Constant mercy.—All the year round, every hour of every day, God is richly blessing us; both when we sleep and when we wake, His mercy waits upon us. The sun may leave off shining, but our God will never cease to cheer His children with His love. Like a river, His loving-kindness is always flowing, with a fulness inexhaustible as His own nature, which is its source. Like the atmosphere which always surrounds the earth, and is always ready to support the life of man, the benevolence of God surrounds all His creatures; in it, as in their element, they live, and move, and have their being. Yet as the sun, on summer days, appears to gladden us with beams more warm and bright than at other times; and as rivers are, at certain seasons, swollen with the rain; and as the atmosphere itself, on occasions, is fraught with more fresh, more bracing, or more balmy influences than heretofore; so it is with the mercy of God. It hath its golden hours, its days of overflow, when the Lord magnifieth His grace and lifteth high His love before the sons of men.—*C. H. Spurgeon*.

18-23. (18) **sat**, *etc.*, he went into the tabernacle, and sat on the ground before the curtains of the holy of holies, where the ark was. No doubt he sat

for meditation, and stood or knelt for prayer.^a **O Lord God**, whenever GOD is thus printed in small capitals, it represents the sacred name JEHOVAH. (19) **manner of man**, comp. 1 Chr. xvii. 17; word *manner* should be *law*. This continuance of David's house into the distant future has now become a human law, that is, a divinely constituted ordinance, which must now take its place among the laws which govern human affairs. — *Pulp. Com.* David is surprised that God should give to him the honor of founding a dynasty.^b (20) **knowest**,^c with kind and gracious knowledge. (21) **word's sake**, *etc.*, *i. e.* bec. thou hast now said it. Comp. Eze. xxxvi. 22. (22) **God**, idol, false god; one claiming to be God. (23) The involved construction of this *vs.* indicates that it is partly a quotation fr. De. iv. 7, 32-34.^d

The grateful monarch (*vss.* 18-20). — We shall notice—I. The posture he assumed: "sat before the Lord." II. The fervent gratitude he expressed. It was called forth by—1. Looking at the past; 2. Thinking of the future. III. The touching appeal he presented: "Thou, Lord God, knowest Thy servant." Knowest—1. His sinfulness; 2. His weakness; 3. His integrity; 4. His desires; 5. His obligations.

The largeness of God's gifts. — It is just like God to give great things. His gifts partake of his own nature. A woman who worked in the cotton factory in one of the large manufacturing towns in Lancashire, went for the first time to the coast. When she caught the earliest glimpse of the Irish Sea, the expanse lying out before her eyes, looking like the limitlessness of the ocean in its rush and billows, she exclaimed as she drew one boundless breath of freshness and glory: "At last, here comes something there is enough of." — *Peloubet.*

24-29. (24) **become their God**, not merely didst promise to be their God, but their history proves the promise fulfilled.^e (25) **for ever**, permanently: make it sure. In O. T. the words *for ever* often mean *for a long time*. (26) **magnified**, for the graciousness and faithfulness of Thy doings. **let . . . established**, *R. V.*, "the house of thy servant Dav. shall be est." (27) **revealed**,^f fig. of opening, or uncovering the ear; moving the hair aside in order to whisper. **found . . . thee**, God's promises are the foundations of men's prayers. (28, 29) That wh. God purposes concerning Dav., David desires and prays for. Fitting his wishes to God's will. **thou art that God**, *R. V.*, thou art God, *i. e.* the one real, true God. **let the house**, *etc.*, shall the house, *etc.* Dav. is confident that God will keep his promise.

David's faith. — He took the miserable country of his fathers into his hands, not as a prize which he had won, but as a heavy and awful trust committed to him. This was the man after God's own heart; the man who thoroughly believed in God as a living and righteous being; who in all changes clung to that conviction; who could act upon it, live upon it; who could give himself up to be used as he pleased; who could walk on in darkness, secure of nothing but this, that truth must prevail at last, and that he was sent into the world to live and die that it might prevail. — *F. D. Maurice.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

1, 2. (1) **after this**, quite poss. that the wars described in this ch. took place before the events recorded in ch. vii. **Metheg-ammah**, comp. 1 Chr. xviii. 1; *Gath and her towns*. Perhaps we should read with the *R. V.*, "took the bride of the mother city out of the hands of the Phil;" referring to Gath, the metropolis or mother city.^g A single verse is all that is given to most of the campaigns. This brevity shows very clearly that another spirit than that which molded ordinary histories guided the composition of this book. It would be beyond human nature to resist the temptation to describe great battles. — *Exp. B.* (2) **casting . . . ground**, making them lie down. Comp. putting to death one in ten. The severity of sparing only one-third is supposed to have been due to the cruel treatment, by the Moabites, of David's family. Another suggestion is, that they had taken treacherous advantage of a temporary defeat in Dav.'s Syrian wars.^h **gifts**, tribute.

Retribution (*vs.* 2). — I. In the past these Moabites were the bitter foes of Israel (Nu. xxii. 3). II. Will not God avenge His own elect? III. This retribution was wrought out through the natural affection of David, who now avenged the death of his father and mother; said by the Rabbins to have been

B. C. cir. 1004.

^a For David's feelings see Ps. cxxviii.

^b "David expresses his astonishment that he, of such humble birth, and one so little in his own eyes, should not only be raised to the throne, but be assured of the perpetuity of the succession in his descendants, as if he were a man of high degree." — *Spk. Com.*

^c Ps. cxxxix. 1.

^d Comp. De. xxxiii. 29; Ps. cxlvii. 30; Ne. i. 10.

David implores the Divine blessing

^e Ge. xvii. 7, 8; Ex. vi. 7.

^f Ru. iv. 4; 1 S. ix. 15.

"As parents take more pleasure in their children's stammering than in the eloquence of others, even so the Lord takes pleasure in the prayers of His children."

B. C. cir. 1002.

David smites Moab

^g "To take the bride of a mother city out of the hands of its rulers, is to dispossess them of its government, as a man who takes the reins into his own hands out of those of the driver of a chariot, or rider of a horse, deprives them of control over it." — *Wordsworth.*

^h Ps. lx.; 1 Chr. xviii. 2.

B. C. cir. 1002.

treacherously slain by the Moabites. IV. Men, by their sin, often entail disaster upon succeeding generations.

True greatness.—“To be truly great is to see what God is doing and to do it with Him. The current of human history flows in a river bed that God has marked out for it. He that runs counter to the current makes only an eddy, and his life comes to naught. William of Orange is a great man, because he sees that God means religious liberty for Europe, and he means it, too, and works for it; while the Iron Duke of Alva achieves nothing by his fruitless resistance to the divine decree.”—*Farrar*.

David
conquers
Hadadezer

a 1 Sa. xiv. 47.

b Ge. xv. 18.

c Hough, to cut the hamstrings or back sinews of cattle, so as to disable them, fr. A. S. *hoh*, the heel.

d 1 K. xi. 23-25.

e vs. 14.

f 1 K. x. 16.

3-8. (3) **Hadadezer**, Hadad (the sun-god of the Syrians) is our help. The name is incorrectly spelt *Hadarezer*, 1 Chr. xviii. 3. **Zobah**,^a a chief among the petty kingdoms of Syria; between Damascus and Euphrates. **recover**,^b etc., to renew his attack, or *R. V.*, “to recover his dominion at the river.” The word Euphrates is not in the Heb. (4) **chariots**, not in the orig. The text as it stands is correctly trans. in the *R. V.*, “a thousand and seven hundred horsemen”—but it seems best to follow the LXX. in reading “one thousand chariots and seven thousand horsemen,” cf. 1 Chr. xviii. 4. **houghed**,^c Jos. xi. 6, 9. (5) of **Damascus**,^d important city, imperiled by Dav.’s success against Hadadezer. (6) **garrisons**,^e to preserve his conquest, and collect tribute. (7) of **gold**,^f plated with gold. (8) **Betah and Berothai**, comp. Tibhath and Chun of 1 Chr. xviii. 8: not identified.

Preservation by God (vs. 6).—Samuel Proctor, a class-leader in the Methodist Society, was formerly a grenadier in the First Regiment of Foot Guards, and took part in the struggle on the plains of Waterloo. He always carried a small Bible in one pocket and a hymn-book in the other. On the evening of June 26, his regiment was ordered to dislodge the French from a wood, of which they had taken possession, and from which they annoyed the allied army. While thus engaged, he was thrown a distance of four or five yards, by a force on his thigh, for which he could not account at the time; but when he came to examine his Bible, he saw, with lively gratitude to the Preserver of his life, what it was that had thus driven him. A musket ball had struck him where his Bible rested, and penetrated nearly half through the volume. All who saw the ball said that it would undoubtedly have killed him, had it not been for the Bible which served as a shield. The Bible is kept as a sacred deposit, and laid up in his house, like the sword of Goliath in the tabernacle.—*Whitecross*.

Toi sends
his son
to David

g Comp. Is. xxxvii. 13; Jer. xlix. 23.

h “This is the first instance of a practice uniformly followed by David of reserving after defraying expenses and bestowing suitable rewards upon his soldiers, the remainder of the spoil taken in war to accumulate for the grand project of his life,—the erection of a national temple at Jerusalem.”—*Jamieson*.

i Sept. has *Idumea*.

j 2 Ki. xiv. 7.

9-13. (9) **Hamath**,^g principal city of Upper Syria, in the valley of the Orontes, “upon the northernmost boundary of Palestine.” David’s victories relieved this king of a dangerous neighbor. Its interest in the present day lies in its having been the capital of the Hittites—a race whose very existence was doubted a few years ago, in spite of the testimony of Holy Scripture; but whose marvelous empire has been lately proved to be historical by Egyptian records on the one side, and cuneiform on the other.—*Pulp. Com.* (10) **Joram**, called Hadoram, 1 Chr. xviii. 10. (11) **which also**,^h in addition to the treasures mentioned as seized in vs. 6, 7, 8. (12) **Syria**, should be *Edom*, as 1 Chr. xviii. 11. (13) **gat a name**, poss. meaning he erected a monument. The *Syrians*, in this vs. should be *Edomites*.ⁱ **valley of salt**,^j south of Dead Sea, called *El Ghor*, separated the territories of Edom and Judah. Ps. lx. is referred to this occasion by its title.

Giving to God.—The taxes of Heaven are never *per capita*, but always *pro rata*. Not the formal observance of each and all alike, but every heart’s best love, every hand’s readiest service. Not the number of acres you till, but the quality of your tilling determines the profit of the harvest in spiritual as well as material farming. This standard exacts no promises, but it accepts no apologies; for there is no occasion for an apology when you have done all you can.—*J. L. Jones*.

David’s
officers

k “A kind of chancellor, corresponding in some degree to the magister memorix in the

14-18. (14) **preserved**, with further idea of prospered. (15) **judgment**, may be regarded as decisions in *civil* cases; justice, as apportionment of guilt and punishment in *criminal* cases. (16) **recorder**,^k remembrancer; historiographer; daily annalist. (17) **Zadok**, was of the house of Eleazer; he joined Dav. at Hebron after the death of Saul. Zadok officiated in the Tabernacle at Gibeon, Abiathar before the Ark in Jerus. **Ahimelech**, etc., should prob. be Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech; we know that Abiathar was priest

thro' David's reign,^a scribe, secretary of state; comp. Ju. v. 14. (18) Cherethites, etc., the king's body-guard. Names of two Phil. tribes; hence Dav.'s body-guard was composed of foreign mercenaries. chief rulers, cohanim, principal officers of the court, the king's confidential advisers, cabinet.

David's preserver (vs. 14).—I. David's goings were often in the midst of great perils. II. David's goings were governed by respect to the will of God. III. David's goings were under the constant care of God. Learn—1. Obedience the way to honor and safety; 2. God the best preserver of our life from destruction.

Piety of George III.—It has been stated, by those who had opportunities of acquiring correct information, that of the few books which the king read, the Bible was constantly on the table in his closet, and the commentary which he selected for his private reading was Matthew Henry's *Exposition*. A pious female servant, whose office it was to arrange the library room, has been often heard to say, "I love to follow my master in his reading of the Scriptures, and to observe the passages he turns down. I wish everybody made the Bible as much their daily study as my good master does."

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1-4. (1) Leisure from war permitted Dav.'s attention to internal organization, and fulfilment of promises made to his friend^b fifteen or twenty years before. (2) Ziba, statue; see 2 Sa. xvi. 1-4; xix. 17, 24-30. (3) kindness of God, any great or lasting thing was called by the Hebrews, a thing of God; e. g. a tree of God; a mountain of God; a covenant of God. lame, ch. iv. 4. (4) Machir, etc.,^c the Ammiel, or Eliam, here seems to have been father or brother of Bathsheba.^d Lo-debar, east of Jordan; not identified, but near Mahanaim.^e

Life's changes and lessons (vs. 3).—We have here an illustration of—I. The mutability of worldly greatness: Saul's house nearly destroyed. II. The efficiency of the favor and blessing of God in the way of well-doing: David exalted. III. A truly magnanimous spirit exhibited by David towards the house of Saul, his bitterest enemy. IV. Genuine and disinterested friendship. V. The remarkable interposition of Providence in behalf of the fatherless and afflicted. VI. The advantage attending a pious ancestry.—T. S. Clarke.

Boys with no chance.—The difficulty with this prince was not in his outward misfortunes, but in the weakness of his spirit. History is full of examples of men who have overcome greater obstacles than any that stood in the path of Mephibosheth. In the Cologne Museum there is a picture of Galileo in prison where one ray of light was shining into his cell; and on the floor where that ray fell he is working out his astronomical problem proving that the world moved around the sun. Kitto, who made a new departure in Bible study, was the son of a poor drunkard. He fell from a scaffold in his boyhood, and became totally deaf. He was so "pinched with hunger, shivering in rags, crawling about with exposed and bleeding feet," that he was sent to the parish workhouse, where his first book was written. Milton, the poet, was blind; Beethoven, the musician, was deaf. Yet,

"To blind old Milton's rayless orbs
A light divine is given;
And deaf Beethoven hears the hymns
And harmonies of heaven."

One of the most useful men in England was Sir Henry Fawcett, who, when a young man, was made blind by his father's accidentally shooting him behind a hedge. He was so anxious to comfort his father that he made great efforts to accomplish more than he would have done with sight. He became a college professor, member of parliament, and postmaster-general of England. So it has ever been; the adverse winds have filled the sails. The school of adversity has more noble graduates than any university in the world.—*Peloubet's Notes*.

B. C. cir 1002.

court of the Roman emperors, and the Vaka Nuviseh, in the court of the ancient and modern kings of Persia. The Cheta (or Hittites) in the time of Rameses II. had also a recorder."—*Spk. Com.*

Est. vi. 1, 2; Is. xxxvi. 22; 2 Chr. xxxiv. 8.

a 1 Ki. ii. 26, 27.

David's kindness to Mephibosheth

b 1 Sa. xx. 41, 42. xxiii. 18.

c 2 Sa. xvii. 27-29.

d 1 Chr. iii. 5.

e Comp. *Lodebir*, Jos. xiii. 26.

"And what think-est thou," said Socrates to Aristodemus, "of this continual love of life, this dread of dissolution, which takes possession of us the moment we are conscious of existence?" "I think of it," was the reply, "as the means employed by the same great and wise Artist, deliberately determined to preserve what He has made."

Youth and the lark have their song for the morning, while age and the nightingale have theirs for the evening.

B.C. cir. 1000.

Mephibosheth does homage to David

a 1 Chr. viii. 34.

b 1 Sa. xxiv. 14.

"Charity commands us, where we know no ill, to think well of all; but friendship, that always goes a step higher, gives a man a peculiar right and claim to the good opinion of his friend."—*South.*

Mephibosheth dwells in the king's palace

c Through this son Saul's posterity was preserved; 1 Chr. viii. 34-40; ix. 40-44.

d 2 Sa. xvi. 1-4; xix. 24-30.

David's messengers to Hanun

e 1 Sa. xi. 1.

f 1 Ki. xii. 10, 11, 14; 1 Chr. xix. 1-4.

g "To shave off one side of the beard was even more ignominious than to remove it altogether, although that, among the ancient and modern Eastern nations was an offense not to be named without horror. It is very difficult for us to realize the intense appreciation of beards which is entertained among the Persians, Arabians, and other bearded nations."—*Kitto.*

5-8. (6) **Mephibosheth**,^a ch. iv. 4. **did reverence**, made obeisance. Poss. he was in fear of his life. (7) **all the land**, the private estate at Gibeah wh. passed to Dav. with the kingdom. **eat, etc.**, as a recognized royal prince. So Dav. preserved both his **wealth** and his **title**. (8) **dead dog**, through-out Scrip. the dog is the symbol of worthlessness, the object of contempt and dislike.^b

David and Mephibosheth (on the whole chapter). — This fragment of history may be looked upon — 1. As supplying a fine illustration of human friendship; 2. As a faint image of Divine love to the world. Let us consider the latter. I. The disinterestedness of David's kindness is illustrative of the Divine. This kindness was — 1. Unmerited; 2. Unsought. The world did not seek the gift of Christ, because — (1) It did not feel the need of a Saviour; (2) Had it felt this, it could never have supposed that such a gift was possible. II. The occasion on which this kindness was displayed is illustrative of the Divine. This kindness was shown — 1. Because of some one else: "for Jonathan's sake;" 2. On account of some one else who was very near to the heart of the king. III. The results which it realized illustrative of the Divine. 1. It found out Mephibosheth; 2. It restored him to his patrimonial inheritance; 3. It exalted him to distinguished honors; 4. It secured him the command of suitable attendants. — *Thomas.*

9-13. (9) **servant**, Josephus says *freedman*. **son**, i. e. grandson; words of relationship not used strictly in Heb. (10) **till the land**, so act as steward of the estate. He gave to Mephib. all that was left after paying expenses of working the estate. (11) **he shall eat**, it is better to follow the LXX. in reading "at David's table" for "at my table," and to take the clause along with the next two verses as the narrator's conclusion of the story, thus: "So Mephibosheth did eat at David's table, as one of the king's sons." — *Cam. B.* (12) **young son**, word means a little child.^c **Micha**, or Micah, 1 Chr. viii. 34 ff. He had a numerous posterity. (13) **lame, etc.**, see how this affected his future conduct.^d

Mephibosheth a type of the Lord's people (vs. 13). — I. The Lord's people are dear for another's sake: for Christ's sake, God raises us from poverty and banishment to courtly companionship, noble rank, and royal provision. II. Their deformity shall not rob them of their privileges. Lameness is no bar to sonship. Our right does not limp, though our might may. III. Yet grievous disability may mar the persons of the best-loved saints. Here is one feasted by David, and yet so lame in both his feet that he could not go up with the king when he fled from the city, and was therefore maligned and injured by his servant, Ziba. — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1-5. (1) **the king**, named *Nahash*.^e Prob. a name assumed by many kings, like Henry in Eng. or Louis in France. (2) **comfort him**, by a friendly message of condolence and sympathy. (3) **princes, etc.**, prob. young advisers, such as misguided Rehoboam.^f Dav.'s treatment of neighboring countries made their fears excusable, but not their insults. (4) **shaved, etc.**, no grosser insult could be devised; the beard was the mark of a freeman, shaving it was an act of enslavement. The cutting of the robe was also a vile affront to the dignity of an eastern prince. Hanun intended this to be a challenge to war. (5) **Jericho**, chosen as the first town after crossing the Jordan. Dav. had pity on their sad plight.

David's gratitude (vs. 2). — I. It is a characteristic of noble minds that they are not unwilling to acknowledge past favors. II. If the good done by a man is not repaid to him, the fruit may be reaped by his children. Those who sow goods deeds may die, but their posterity will reap the harvest.

Shaving (vs. 4). — Arabs and Turks are said by eminent travelers to value their beards almost more than life. "One of the buffoons of the bashaw took it into his head one day, for a frolic, to shave his beard, which is no trifle among the Turks; for some of them, I really believe, would sooner have their head cut off than their beard. In this state he went home to his women, who actually thrust him out of the door; and such was the disgrace of cutting off his beard, that even his fellow buffoons would not eat with him until it was grown again." — *Belzoni.*

6-10. (6) stank,^a *R. V.*, "were become odious." hired, bec. they felt unable to cope with David by themselves. Beth-rehob, capital of Syrian kingdom, prob. Ruhaibeh, 25 miles N. E. of Damascus, or the Rehoboth of Gen. xxxvi. 37. Zoba, ch. viii. 3. Maachah, *R. V.*, "the king of Maachah," a small kingdom near Geshur. De. iii. 14. Ish-tob, *R. V.*, "the men of Tob." Ju. xi. 3, 5. (7) all . . men, indic. the serious preparations judged necessary. All the Israelites were now practiced in war; they were tried warriors. This expression does not apply to Dav.'s "mighty men," xv. 18. (8) gate, of Rabbah,^b chief city of Ammon. (9) before and behind, so disposed that whichever he attacked, the other would fall upon his rear. (10) This required a twofold attack by him. that he might, *R. V.*, "and he put."

Military harangues before battle.—Immediately before the signal was given, and sometimes in the heat of battle, the general of a Grecian army made an oration to his troops, in which he briefly stated the motives that ought to animate their bosoms, and exhorted them to use their utmost force and vigor against the enemy. The success which sometimes attended these harangues was wonderful; the soldiers, animated with fresh life and courage, returned to the charge, retrieved in an instant their affairs, which were in a declining and almost desperate condition, and repulsed those very enemies by whom they had been often defeated.—*Paxton.*

11-14. (11, 12) play the men, the part of valiant men. cities,^c which were imperiled. (13) fled, Joab's onslaught was well-nigh irresistible; and the mercenaries would not expect this double attack. (14) into the city, within shelter of their fortific. Prob. not the time of year for commencing a siege, nor was Joab prepared to undertake it.

Joab's exhortation (vs. 12).—As we review Joab's life, we feel he was a bad man with a few good qualities, rather than a good man with many failings. Despite his character let us give heed to his counsels. There are three commendable things in the words he spake. I. Unflinching bravery: "be of good courage," etc. We need courage to—1. Be faithful; 2. Do valiantly; 3. Suffer patiently. This courage or manliness is opposed to childish weakness, effeminacy, brutishness, lethargy, and obstinacy. It includes skill, prudence, stability, activity, hopefulness. II. Strong patriotism: "for our people," etc. The most potent argument he could use. III. Determined submission: "the Lord do." Belief in the sovereignty of God is not inconsistent with the greatest courage and the most resolute activity. The Christian labors because of God's decrees.—*R. A. Griffin.*

15-19. (15) gathered, etc., wh. they could do when Joab had left the district. (16) Hadarezer, ch. viii. 3. Some suppose this is the second account of the war mentioned in ch. viii. 3-13. the river, Euphrates. Helam, poss. Kelam, a border town of Eastern Manasseh, or Almatha, on the W. of Euphrates, or the word may be translated, *their host*. (17) This danger was serious enough to demand the presence and personal magnetism of Dav. (19) servants, subjects, tributaries.

Genuine heroism.—The characteristic of a genuine heroism is its persistency. All men have wandering impulses, fits and starts of generosity. But when you have resolved to be great, abide by yourself, and do not weakly try to reconcile yourself with the world. If you would serve your brother, because it is fit for you to serve him, do not take back your words when you find that prudent people do not commend you. Be true to your own act.—*Emerson.*

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

1-5. (1) after . . expired, *R. V.*, "at the return of the year." when kings go forth, only at certain times would the state of the country permit the march of armies; and campaigns were not usually prolonged. destroyed, ravaged the Ammonite territory. Rabbah, i.e. "the great city," tarried, "exposing himself to the temptation of idleness," ch. x. 8. (2) evening-tide, the time after his midday sleep.^d Evening began at 3 o'clock in the

B. C. cir. 1000.

David sends Joab to meet Ammon

^a Ge. xxxiv. 30; Ex. v. 21.

^b De. iii. 11; Jos. xiii. 25.

"Now Ammāu, 22 miles fr. the Jordan. There are now extensive ruins in an elevated valley on the banks of the stream Moiet. Ammāu after a short course flowing into the Jab-bok, or Zurka, wh. divided the Heb. territory fr. that of the Ammonites."—*Ayre.*

Joab's exhortation to the army

^c "Relief of Medaba, an Israelite town, was one of the immediate objects in view."—*Sph. Com.*

Strike—for your altars and your fires;

Strike—for the green graves of your sires;

God, and your native land.
—*Halleck.*

David defeats the Syrians

"What better breastplate than a heart untainted!"

Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just;

And he but naked, though lock'd up in steel,

Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted."

—*Shakespeare.*

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David's adultery with Bathsheba

^d "The Heb. like other Orientals, rose at daybreak, and always took

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a nap during the heat of the day, and afterwards they lounged in the cool of the evening on their flat-roofed terraces."—*Jamieson*.

a "Fr. the roof of his palace the king looked down on the cisterns which were constructed on the top of the lower houses of Jerusalem, and then conceived for Bathsheba the uncontrollable passion to which she offered no resistance."—*Stanley*.

David sends for Uriah

b Ge. xliii. 34.

"David cast about how to color and cover his sin with fair pretenses, as Alcibiades embroidered a curtain with lions and eagles, to cover his picture of owls and asses, but all would not do, God so disposing that David's sin should come to light."—*Trapp*.

Uriah the guest of David

c David not permit Dav.'s base schemes to succeed, that he might realize all the wickedness of sin which he could not cloak.

Sin nowhere appears greater or more terrible than in the Bible; yet how blessed to find there, that even if we have broken the whole law, and every precept of it, there is still, to the true penitent, an offer of pardoning and complete mercy, so full and immediate that his sins are blotted out and forgotten.

David informed of Uriah's death

afternoon. **washing,**^a or bathing in the fountain in her courtyard. (3) **sent,** etc., no doubt Dav. hoped she was an unmarried woman, such as he had a right to claim at his will. **Eliam**, ch. xxiii. 34. (4) **took her**, in his passion disregarded the fact that she was a wife. From that day his own house was the scene of horrible crimes, feuds, scandals, and miseries of every kind; and the long interval after his repentance, between the birth of Solomon and David's death, is passed over in gloomy silence. No act of the penitent king after his restoration to the throne is deemed worthy of record.—*Pulp. Com.* (5) Men often are willing to sin, but are sorely troubled at the consequences, when the sin is discovered.

Persian baths (vs. 2).—Describing a bath in the woman's court, an eminent traveler writes: The royal master of this Hortus Adonidis frequently takes his noonday repose in one of the upper chambers which encircle the saloons of the bath; and, if he be inclined, he has only to turn his eyes to the scene below, to see the loveliest objects of his tenderness, sporting like Naiads amidst the crystal streams, and glowing with all the bloom and brilliancy which belongs to Asiatic youth. In such a bath court it is probable that Bathsheba was seen by the enamored king of Israel.—*Sir R. K. Porter*.

6—9. (6) **Uriah**, one of the "thirty," 2 Sa. xxiii. 39. (7) To hide his sin Dav. tried to deceive Uriah, so met him with every conciliation. (8) **go down, etc.**, Dav. wanted him to rest at home, and "partake of the indulgences of family life." **mess**,^b present fr. the royal table to enjoy himself with at home. (9) **at the door**, in the guard's quarter at the gate of the palace.

Meats from the king's table (vs. 8).—Any present immediately communicated from a royal personage was considered particularly valuable. "Arrangements were now made for our introduction to the monarch immediately on his return, which he had fixed, as the viziers declared, for the thirteenth day of this month. Meanwhile he sent to the ambassador a very flattering *khush-amedy*, or welcome, with some of the royal *shikar*, or game, three antelopes, and fifty *kabks*, or partridges, killed by his own hand; a circumstance which considerably enhanced the value of this present, and entitled the bearer to a recompense, not less than the wages of a half a year."—*Sir W. Ouseley*.

10—13. (10) **from . . journey**, when every one is glad to get rest at home. Perhaps Uriah had a suspicion of his wife's unfaithfulness. (11) **The ark**, one is rather surprised to hear of the ark accompanying the army to the war with Ammon (1 Sam. iv. 3, sqq.). Perhaps there was a double purpose in taking the ark; one, to excite to the utmost the enthusiasm of the people for its defence and against the Ammonites; the other, to have the means at hand of *enquiring of the Lord*, which David had found so serviceable.—*Spk. Com.* **tents, R. V.**, "booth," extemporized huts. "The austere, soldier-like conduct of the sturdy Canaanite" thwarted David's deceptive scheme. So David sunk deeper into sin, and tried to excite Uriah's passion by making him drunk. (12) **to day**, over another night. (13) **drunk**, evidently with fermented wine: yet even then Uriah kept his oath.^c

Uriah the patriot (vs. 11).—I. There are times in national history when private individuals must deny themselves the pleasures of domestic life for the public good. II. The patriotic sentiments of the self-denying man unintentionally convey the sharpest reproof to the self-indulgent. III. Men sometimes speak the plain truth in ignorance of facts; who would not dare so to speak if they knew more.

Watching against temptation.—"Stand in awe and sin not," "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation," are warnings which no good man should disregard. Is this to be a coward? Anything else were the height of rashness. Who sleeps by a magazine of gunpowder, needs to take care even of sparks; who walks on slippery ice, let him not go star-gazing, but look to his feet and take care of falling. Whatever provokes sin, though beautiful as Bathsheba, what is in its nature calculated, and by the cunning fiend intended, to draw us into transgression, is a danger against which we cannot be too much upon our guard. Though in themselves innocent, pleasures are sought at too great hazard that grow on dizzy crag, or among the grass where adders creep, or in the lofty crevice of some tottering wall, or on the brink of a swollen flood."—*Guthrie*.

14—17. (14) **a letter**, a despatch. The only fair side of the picture is that it shows the high state of morality among the people. The crimes of kings

and great men, are usually lightly pardoned, and especially that of adultery. Even in England and other Christian countries this is the case; but David has to resort to extreme measures rather than face the indignation of his subjects. Unfortunately, the shedding of blood was not looked upon with equal horror. *Pulp. Com.* (15) **retire ye, etc.**, leave him exposed. If Joab had been a noble man, he would have refused obedience. (16) **observed, R. V.**, "kept watch upon," *i. e.* besieged. Ju. i. 24. (17) This was a sham attempt at carrying the city by assault.

A parallel case.—The following history is, in some points, an accurate counterpart to that of David. "Nour Jehan signifies the light of the world; she was also called Nour Mahl, or the light of the seraglio: she was wife to one Sher Afkan Khan, of a Turcoman family, who came from Persia to Hindostan in very indifferent circumstances. As she was exquisitely beautiful, of great wit, and an elegant poetess, Jehanguire, the sultan, was resolved to take her to himself. He sent her husband, who was esteemed the bravest man in his service, with some troops to command in Bengal, and afterwards sent another with a greater force to cut him off. When he was killed, Nour Jehan was soon prevailed upon to become an empress.—*Fraser.*

18-21. (18) **sent, etc.**, regular information was supplied to the king. (19) **matters**, a general sketch of its progress. (20) **so nigh**, Joab knew Dav. well, and felt sure of what he would say. In the military science of the day it was considered wholly wrong to expose troops under the wall of a besieged city without shelter. The shelter was some form of continuous shield held over them. (21) **Abimelech, Ju. ix. 35.** Jerubbesheth, Jerubbaal or Gideon.

The progress of sin.—Admit sin within the precincts of the imagination, and there is the utmost danger of its ultimately mastering the soul. The outposts of the spiritual garrison should be so placed as to protect even the thoughts, and the moment the enemy is discovered there the alarm should be given and the fight begun. It is a serious moment when the young man admits a polluted thought to his heart, and pursues it even in reverie. The door is opened to a dangerous brood.—*Blaikie.*

22-27. (23) **came out**, making a sally; then retreating, so as to draw the Israelites after them under the walls, from wh. stones and arrows were cast on them. (24) The messenger did not wait for what Joab expected the king would say. (25) This message is full of sanctimonious hypocrisy. **encourage thou, i. e.** assure him of my continued confidence. (26) **mourned**, prob. only the customary seven days.^b (27) **displeased**, play on word used in vs. 25.

God displeased with David (vs. 27).—I. Let those consider these words who tauntingly refer to David as a man after God's own heart. II. Let good men remember that Divine grace is not a royal license to sin. III. Let all remember that sin is followed by Divine displeasure; and if not by repentance, certainly by punishment.

Sin and repentance.—Unbelievers sneer and ask, "Is this your man according to God's heart?" The sneer, I must say, seems to me but a shallow one. What are faults? what are the outward details of a life, if the inner secret of it—the remorse, temptations, true, often-baffled, never-ending struggle of it—be forgotten? "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Of all acts, is not, for a man, repentance the most divine? The deadliest sin, I say, were that same supercilious consciousness of no sin. That is death. The heart so conscious is divorced from sincerity, humility, and fact—is dead. It is pure, as dead, dry sand is pure. David's life and history, as written for us in those Psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblem ever given of a man's moral progress and warfare here below. All earnest souls will ever discern in it the faithful struggle of an earnest human soul toward what is good and best. Struggle often baffled sore, baffled down into entire wreck, yet a struggle never ended; ever with tears, repentance, true, unconquerable purpose begun anew. Poor human nature! Is not a man's walking in truth always that—"a succession of falls?" Man can do no other. In this wild element of a life he has to struggle upward: now fallen, now abased; and ever with tears, repentance, and bleeding heart, he has to rise again, struggle again, still onward. That his struggle be a faithful, unconquerable one, that is the question of questions.—*Carlyle.*

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"With every exertion, the best of men can do but a moderate amount of good, but it seems in the power of the most contemptible individual to do incalculable mischief."—*Irving.*

a "The Bk. of Ju. was evidently known at this time. Joab quoted God's Word, but was not careful to keep it."—*Wordsworth.*

David takes Bethsheba to wife

b "If we feel how bad Dav.'s conduct was, we should not miss observing how readily Bathsheba yielded to him, and became a full partner in his crime. She was a woman of superior talents and address in obtaining the object of her ambition."—*Taylor's Calmet.* Nothing in the visible creation of God has sunk so low as a lost sinner; and yet nothing may through infinite mercy, be raised so high.

An unknown writer thus quaintly puts the teachings of Watt's old couplet: "God calls men when they are busy; Satan when he finds them idle. If Satan catch any one idle, he is sure to find him work."

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CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

Nathan
reproves
David

a 2 Sa xii. 14.

b Comp. 2 Sa. xiv. 2-11; 1 Ki. xx. 35-41.

c "This apologue fastens on the essential guilt of David's sin—not its sensuality, or its impurity, so much as its meanness and selfishness."—*Stanley*.

"Sin alone is that Which doth disfranchise him, and make unlike

To the chief good; for that its light in him Is darken'd."

Dante.

thou art
the man

d 1 Sa. xv. 22-23.

e "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

"Henceforward for about 20 years Dav. had no respite fr. domestic affliction."—*Wordsworth*.

The longer I live, the more deeply am I convinced that that which makes the difference between one man and another, between the weak and powerful, the great and insignificant, is energy, invincible determination, a purpose once formed, and then death or victory. — *Fowell Buxton*.

The golden light of conscience should shine in every chamber of the soul.

1-6. (1) **Nathan**, ch. vii. 2. This occurred at least one year after.^a and said, prob. asking the judgment of the king on the point presented.^b (2, 3) little ewe lamb, pastoral people have pet lambs, brought up with the children, and addressed in terms of endearment. **his own meat**, R. V., "his own morsel." (4) **spared to**, was unwilling to give of his own.^c (5) Dav. not seeing at first the application of the parable, let out his righteous feeling. Not connecting it with himself, he soon made a judgment. R. V., "is worthy to die," but all the judge can do is to inflict the legal sentence, Ex. xxii. 1; a fourfold restitution. (6) **no pity**, this the essence of his sin.

A personal application.—While Mr. Whitefield was one day preaching at Plymouth, in America, Mr. Tanner, who was at work as a shipbuilder, at a distance, heard his voice, and resolved, with five or six of his companions, to go and drive him from the place where he stood; and for this purpose they filled their pockets with stones. When, however, Mr. T. drew near, and heard Mr. Whitefield earnestly inviting sinners to Christ, he was filled with astonishment; his resolution failed him, and he went home with his mind deeply impressed. On the following evening he again attended and heard Mr. Whitefield, on the sin of those who crucified the Redeemer. After he had expiated on their guilt, he appeared to look intently on Mr. Tanner, as he exclaimed with energy, "Thou art the man!" These words powerfully affected Mr. T.; he felt his iniquities to be awfully great, and in the agony of his soul, he cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" The preacher then proceeded to proclaim the free and abundant grace of Jesus, which he commanded to be preached among the very people who had murdered Him; on hearing which Mr. T. was encouraged to hope for mercy, and he surrendered himself to Christ. This sermon was made eminently useful to many other persons.

7-10. (7) **thou art the man**, note the fearlessness of the prophet before the king.^d I anointed thee, Dav.'s sin degraded his kingly office and Jehovah himself who anointed him. Such ingratitude and folly rendered Dav.'s sin all the baser. (8) **master's wives**, "no wife of a king of the Heb. nation could ever be married to any one but his successor; see 1 Ki. ii. 22." (9) Without any equivocation Dav.'s sins are brought home to him as against God himself and they were no less than murder and adultery. (10) **from thy house**, or family. This sentence was fulfilled in Amnon's murder (ch. xiii. 28), who had been encouraged in his crime by his father's example. Upon this followed Absalom's rebellion and death (ch. xviii. 14); and finally, when in his last hours David made Solomon his successor, he knew that he was virtually passing sentence on Adonijah, the eldest of his surviving sons. — *Pulp. Com.* His sin had been a family sin; his punishment should come also in the family.^e **despised me**, by not acting according to Divine laws.

Thou art the man (vs. 7). — Consider—I. The fidelity of the prophet: zeal, prudent, and circumspect, courageous and intrepid. II. The directness of the accusation. 1. Conscience is to be aroused from its long repose; 2. Promises are to be individually applied, and warnings personal; 3. We preach, in the midst of members, to individuals; 4. Self-love, and besetting sins, seclude men from the truth, till it comes with Divine power. III. The submission of the penitent. 1. His confession is open; 2. It is contrite; 3. It has regard to God; 4. It terminates in practical, sincere resolutions. Conclusion: We are all sinners, like David. We are all reproved, as he was, by Word of God; ministers of God; conscience. Are we penitent, like him?

A bold preacher (vs. 7). — M. Bourdaloue was called "the king of preachers, and the preacher to kings;" and Louis himself said that he would rather hear the repetitions of Bourdaloue than the novelties of another. With a collected air, Bourdaloue had little action; he generally kept his eyes half closed, and penetrated the hearts of the people by the sound of a voice uniform and solemn. On one occasion, he turned the peculiarity of his external aspect to a very memorable advantage. After depicting, in soul-awakening terms a sinner of the first magnitude, he suddenly opened his eyes, and casting them full on the king, who sat opposite to him, he added, in a voice of thunder, "Thou art the man." The effect was confounding. When he had finished his discourse, he went and threw himself at the feet of his sovereign, and

said, "Sire, behold at your feet one who is the most devoted of your servants; but punish him not, that in the pulpit he can own no master but the King of kings."

11-14. (11) Part of this threatening was fulfilled in Absalom, ch. xvi. 22. (12) **secretly**, such was Dav.'s purpose, but they in the palace must have known about it. (13) **I have sinned**, the language of a sincerely stricken and humbled man.^a As the steam hammer may be so adjusted as either to break a nutshell without injuring the kernel, or crush a block of quartz to powder, so the Spirit of God can range, in His effects on the conscience, between the mildest feeling of uneasiness and the bitterest agony of remorse. — *Exp. B.* (13) **put away**, etc., as God promises to do for the truly penitent, **not die**, according to his own judgment, vs. 5. (14) **the child**, who was the fruit of his sin. Yet if he was not punished men might answer yes to the question. "May one be pardoned and retain the offense?" And therefore a long series of chastisements, beginning with the death of the child, must unequivocally declare the divine judgment on such sin. — *Cam. B.*

The testimony of a Christian life. — "Now, lads," said the late Duncan Mathieson, the Scottish evangelist, to a lot of boys who had been converted at his meetings, "the people here are not in the habit of reading their Bible to learn what God says to them, but I'll tell you what they'll read. They'll read your lives and ways very carefully to see if you are really what you profess to be. And mind you this, if they find your lives to be inconsistent with your profession, the devil will give them this for an excuse in rejecting Christ."

15-18. (15) **struck**, with a fatal disease. (16) **besought God**, not only bec. he was a man of warm family affections, but also bec. the suffering child was actually bearing the punishment of his sin. **went in**, to his private chamber; the verb implies that Dav. did this repeatedly. (17) **elders, etc.**, the custom in the East is to leave a bereaved person to his grief for two or three days, then go and persuade him to eat, bathe, and change his garments. (18) **vex himself**, with still greater grief.

The fear of bereavement a call to extraordinary prayer (vs. 16). — I. The occasion of a sudden alarm in the case before us: David's sin and God's sentence against him. II. The feelings proper to such a crisis of our lives. 1. Search for sin; 2. Humiliation before God after sin's discovery; 3. Prayer for deliverance. III. The manner in which we should draw nigh unto God. Note David's solitary prayer; his fasting; his prostration of person on the ground; his long continuance in all these expressions of fear, sorrow and shame. — *C. Herbert.*

Mourning without ostentation. — A poor fisherman was chided one day because he kept on working, although that very day he buried his child. They came to him and said, "It is indecent for you to be mending that boat, when this afternoon you buried your child." And the fisherman looked up and said, "Sir, it is very easy for you gentle folks to stay in the house with your handkerchief to your eyes in grief; but, sir, ought I to let the other five children starve because one of them is drowned? No, sir; we maun work, we maun work, though our hearts beat like this hammer."

19-23. (19) **whispered**, persuading one another to undertake to tell him. (20) **arose**, of his own accord; without needing persuasions. Now he would acknowledge the just judgment of God. **anointed himself**, "anointing the head and body with oil was and still is the regular practice in E'n countries. It was believed to contribute to health and cleanliness. Its discontinuance was a mark of mourning." — *Cam. B.* (21) David, by his act, showed how much more sad *sin* is than *death*. (22, 23) While there was life, there was hope of recovery; when he was dead, there was the higher hope of reunion. *Prayer* was the duty while he lingered; *submission*, the duty when he was dead. The words indicate a belief in the continued existence of the child, and even that David would recognize and know him in the future world. Less than this would have given no comfort to the father for his loss. — *Pulp. Com.*

I shall go to him (vs. 23). — Here are four doctrines in five words. I. Infant salvation: "I shall go to him." II. Personal recognition in the future state: "to him." III. Personal assurance: "I." IV. Final perseverance of saints: "shall." — *J. Gray.*

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David's repentance

a Ps. xxxii. and li.

b "The death of the soul is certainly meant, as in Eze. xviii." — *Spk. Com.*

"Having become the man of blood, of blood he was to drink deep; and having become the man of lust, by that same baneful passion in others was he himself to be scourged forever." — *Blunt's Coincidences.*

death of Bathsheba's child

"It will help bereaved parents, however, to dry up their tears to consider that their little ones do not cease to be, though they cease to breathe. They are taken away, but God took them. They are better where they are than where they were. Though they be not in their bosoms, they are in Christ." — *Flavel.*

It is an attribute of Deity to hate sin and love the sinner.

David's grief

c "His expression, vs. 23, indicates that through all his lapses into savage cruelty, and reckless self-indulgence, there still remained a fountain of feeling within, as fresh and pure as when he fed his father's flocks, and won the love of Jonathan." — *Stanley.*

"As fate is inexorable and not to be moved either

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with tears or reproaches, an excess of sorrow is as foolish as profuse laughter, while, on the other hand, not to mourn at all is insensibility."—*Seneca*.

"When God afflicts thee, think He hews a rugged stone, Which must be shaped, or else aside as useless thrown."—*R. C. Trench*.

"We can hardly learn humility except by suffering."—*Geo. Eliot*.

Godly sorrow is better than worldly joy.

birth of Solomon

"Look! how he laughs and stretches out his arms, and opens wide his blue eyes upon thine, to hail his father; while his little form flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain! the childless cherubs well might envy thee the pleasures of a parent!"—*Byron*.

David takes Rabbah

a "Crowns" are only used in the E. on great state occasions, and they are generally of such weight that they cannot be borne without great inconvenience. Sometimes these ponderous crowns were suspended over the head, or attached to the top of the throne."—*Kitto*.

Love does not mean one thing in man and another in

Influence of the dead (vs. 23).—In the deepening twilight of a summer evening, a pastor called at the residence of one of his parishioners, and found, seated in the doorway, a little boy with both hands extended upwards, holding a line. "What are you doing here, my little friend?" inquired the minister. "Flying my kite, sir," was the prompt reply. "Flying your kite!" exclaimed the pastor; "I can see no kite; you can see none?" "I know it, sir," responded the lad; "I cannot see it, but I know it is there, for I feel it pull." A few years back, the angels came and bore far above us, out of our sight, one that was very dear to us. The attachment of our hearts was not broken—the connecting ties were lengthened, not broken. We loved her while here; we love her still. She loved us while in the flesh; we are sure that she loves us none the less in her new condition. Rising higher and still higher in the heaven of heavens, we feel her influence. She is with Christ; and, attracted by gentle influences, we are tending towards her peaceful home, with the prospect of the same glorious companionship.—*Evang. Mag.*

Lament of a father.—

Child, by God's sweet mercy given
To thy mother and to me,
Entering this world of sorrows
By His grace, so fair to see:
Fair as some sweet flower in summer,
Till death's hand on thee was laid,
Scorched the beauty from my flower,
Made the tender petals fade.
Yet I dare not weep nor murmur,
For I know the King of Kings
Leads thee to His marriage-chamber,
To the glorious bridal brings.

24, 25. (24) Solomon, Heb. Shelomoh, *peaceable*; given at the time of circumcision; a symbol of peace bet. David and Jehovah, and of peace in Dav.'s own conscience. (25) Jedidiah, *beloved of the Lord*. A name not intended to supersede that of Solomon, but signifying that he would be the object of special Divine favors.

Description of a child.—

O thou bright thing, fresh from the hand of God,
The motions of thy dancing limbs are swayed
By the unceasing music of thy being!
Nearer I seem to God when looking on thee.
'Tis ages since He made His youngest star,
His hand was on thee as 'twere yesterday.
Thou later revelation! Silver stream,
Breaking with laughter from the lake Divine,
Whence all things flow! O bright and singing babe,
What wilt thou be hereafter!

26-31. (26) This resumes the narrative from ch. xi. The siege may have taken two years; but very possibly all was over before Bathsheba's child was born. (27) *city of waters*, the lower city, situate on a small river, the Moiet, or upper Jabbok. (28) *after my name*, as its conqueror. Another effort of Joab's to secure influence over David. (29) *all the people*, a new and unwearied force. (30) *king's crown*, poss. the idol *Malcam* is meant. *weight*, as no person could wear such a crown, it is suggested that this means *value*. (31) This is usually supposed to mean to put to death by torture. The conduct of the Ammonites, and the stubborn resistance they offered, may, if that be the meaning, partly explain such cruelty. *put . . . saws, etc.*, *R. V.*, *margin* says, with a slight change in the Hebrew text this would read, "Make them labour at saws . . . harrows . . . axes . . . brick-kiln."

The evils resulting from a bad conscience.—In the whole transaction at Rabbah, David shows poorly. It is not like him to be roused to an enterprise by an appeal to his love of fame; he might have left Joab to complete the conquest and enjoy the honor which his sword had substantially won. It is not like him to go through the ceremony of being crowned with the crown of the king of Ammon, as if it were a great thing to have so precious a diadem on his head. Above all, it is not like him to show so terrible a spirit in dis-

posing of his prisoners of war. But all this is quite likely to have happened if he had not yet come to repentance for his sin. When a man's conscience is ill at ease, his temper is commonly irritable. Unhappy in his inmost soul, he is in the temper that most easily becomes savage when provoked. No one can imagine that David's conscience was at rest. He must have had that restless feeling which every good man experiences after doing a wrong act, before coming to a clear apprehension of it; he must have been eager to escape from himself, and Joab's request to him to come to Rabbah and end the war must have been very opportune. In the excitement of war he would escape for a time the pursuit of his conscience; but he would be restless and irritable, and disposed to drive out of his way, in the most unceremonious manner, whoever or whatever should cross his path. — *Blakie*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-5. (1) **after this**, this chapter relates the first step of the sentence pronounced upon Dav.'s house. Dav. must have ruled at this time fr. 10 to 15 yrs. over all Israel, and had reached the pinnacle of his glory. Absalom and Tamar were children of Dav.'s most nobly born wife, Maachah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. *Amnon*,^a was Dav.'s eldest son by Ahinoam of Jezreel. (2) **a virgin**, so dwelt secluded in a separate house, or part of the palace, to wh. Amnon had no means of access. **thought it hard**, he had no feeling for his sister's disgrace, but felt that his undertaking was difficult. (3) **Shimeah**, or Shamma, Jesse's third son. **subtil**, wise, with idea of crafty, almost unscrupulous. (4) **lean**, thin, pining, evidently fretting thyself ill. (5) **make thyself sick**, *R. V.*, "feign thyself sick." **father cometh**, wh. they knew he would do in his paternal affection.

Feigning sickness (vs. 5). — The Asiatics are certainly the most expert creatures I have seen at feigning themselves sick. Thus those who wish to get off work, or any duty, complain they have a pain here and another there: they affect to pant for breath, roll their eyes as if in agony; and, should you touch them, they shriek out as if you were killing them. The sepoys, and those who are servants in the government offices, give great trouble to their superiors by ever and anon complaining they are sick; and it requires great discernment to find out whether they are so, or merely affecting it. — *Roberts*.

6-10. (6) **made**. *R. V.*, "feigned himself sick." **couple of cakes**,^b for baking such Tamar was noted. The wretch made out that he had no appetite, but thought he could eat some of his sister's cakes, if they were cooked in his presence. (7) **sent home to Tamar**, *i. e.*, into the inner part of the palace. The picture is a very interesting one: the palace parceled out into separate dwellings; the king kindly visiting all; the girls on friendly terms with their brothers, yet not allowed to go to their rooms without special permission; and finally Tamar's skill in cookery — an accomplishment by no means despised in an Oriental *ménage*, or thought unworthy of a king's daughter. — *Pulp. Com.* **meat**, food. (8) **bake**, or boil, over kind of charcoal stove in the room. (9) **refused to eat**, prob. bec. brought to him by a servant. (10) He wanted Tamar to bring them herself.

Deceiving parents. — To practice deceit on a father is counted not only a suitable, but a smart and laughable device, in stage plays without number, and by the class of persons whose morality is reflected by the popular stage. Who so suitable a person to be made a fool of as "the governor?" Who so little to be pitied when he becomes the dupe of his children's cunning? "Honor thy father and thy mother" was once proclaimed in thunder from Sinai, and not only men's hearts trembled, but the very earth shook at the voice. But these were old times and old-fashioned people. Treat your father and mother as useful and convenient tools, inasmuch as they have control of the purse, of which you are often in want. But as they are not likely to approve of the objects for which you would spend their money, exercise your ingenuity in hoodwinking them as to your doings. If this be the course that commends itself to any son or daughter, it indicates a heart so perverted that it would be most difficult to bring it to any sense of sin. All we would say is, see what kind of comrades you have in this policy of deceiving parents. See this royal blackguard, Amnon, and his villainous adviser Jonadab, resorting to the very same method for hoodwinking King David; see them making

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God. The divine heart is human in its sympathies. — *Robertson*.

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Amnon and Tamar

^a "He was a man of very violent and insolent disposition; a character which is often found in the first-born sons of families such as David's. He was still further corrupted by the low cunning of Jonadab, who was ready to truckle to the eldest born." — *Ewald*.

Tamar makes cakes for Amnon

^b "Ge. xviii. 6.

"Amnon answered Jonadab, upon the matter, as Tiberius did Justinus, 'I am only thy clay and wax.' Oh that we could find men so docile and ductile to that which is good!" — *Trapp*.

"Chaste as the icicle that's curdled by the frost from purest snow, and hangs on Diana's temple." — *Shakespeare*.

"She's chaste as the fanned snow twice bolted o'er by the black northern blasts." — *Lee*.

"It is no sin not to understand a dark text, but it is a

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great sin not to believe a clear one."—*Horseley.*

Tamar of the rape

a Ge. xxxix. 12.

b Ge. xxxiv. 7; Jud. xix. 23, and xx. 6.

c Lev. xviii. 9-11.

d De. xxii. 25; 1 S. xii. 11.

"Make my breast transparent as pure crystal, that the world, jealous of me, may see the foulest thought my heart does hold."—*Buckingham.*

"Chaster than the crystal of the Scythian cliffs, the more the proud winds court it, still the purer."—*Beaumont.*

Tamar scorned by Amnon

e "The rending the robe wh. was the particular distinction of the king's virgin daughters, had a meaning beyond the mere ordinary significance of mourning."—*Kitto.*

vs. 18. "The native cloth in Samoa particularly that which is worn by young women of rank, is colored after a fashion in spots, stripes, circles, triangles, and other figures, laid on with the thumb, or some other rude substitute for a brush. Red, black, brown, white, and yellow, are the prevailing colors."—*Turner.*

Amnon hated by Absalom

f Jos. vii. 6; Job ii. 12.

g Jer. ii. 37.

h Ge. xxiv. 60; xxxi. 24.

use of this piece of machinery to compass an act of the grossest villainy that ever was heard of; and say whether you hold the device to be commended by their example, and whether you feel honored in treading a course that has been marked before you by such footprints.—*Blaikie.*

11-14. (11, 12) **force,**^a or humble me. Her relationship should have preserved her from his insults.^b (13) **as . . . Israel,** not merely one who is stupid, but one who has become indecent and immoral through lack of fear toward God. **speak unto the king,**^c urging this as a last plea. He might gain honorably what he tried to force. (14) In no way did she consent to his wicked deed.^d

Fools in Israel (vs. 13).—I. Wicked men are fools. 1. Their life is opposed to right reason. 2. They act contrary to their own well-being. 3. They are in many cases the subjects of strange and fatal delusions. II. Such fools are to be found even "in Israel." III. Fools "in Israel" are the worst fools, because of: 1. The light which shines there. 2. The influences enjoyed there. 3. The privileges accessible there. 4. The convictions produced there. 5. The heavier doom incurred there.—*G. Wood.*

Habits becoming masters.—An English soldier in India asked an intoxicated creature why he did not cease from such evil habits. He gave him a fable: "A king once permitted the devil to kiss him on either shoulder. Immediately two serpents grew up from the two sides of his neck. Furious with hunger, they attacked his head, and attempted forcibly to get at his brain. The king snatched them away, and tore them to pieces with his nails. But he soon found to his indescribable horror, that they had become a part of himself, and now in wounding them, he was lacerating his own flesh." This Indian meant, by his story, to say that he could not put away the indulgence which had become part of him. Serpent as it was, it must be suffered hopelessly to sting forever.—*C. S. Robinson.*

15-18. (15) **hated her,** prob. he had been led on by his guilty passion beyond his first intention: and now, fearing the consequences, hated her who had so fascinated him. (16) The least he could now do was to acknowledge his wrong, and protect his sister; instead he refuses, and turns her out. **no cause,** R. V., "not so, because this great wrong in putting me forth is worse," etc. (17) Ammon's must have been a brutal nature. (18) **garment, etc.,** or a *tunic with sleeves.*^e

Eastern servants (vs. 17).—Eastern masters do not keep their servants at the distance usual in England. The affairs of the family, the news of the day, and the little incidents of life, are mutually discussed, as by equals. The difference between them, in reference to property, is sometimes not great; the master has perhaps, his small family estate, or some business which produces a little profit, and the servant is content with his rice, and a scanty cloth for his loins. No native who can afford it is without his servant, and many who can scarcely procure food for themselves talk very largely about their domesticities. See my lord seated in his verandah, chewing his betel, and cogitating on his plans: hear him at every interval say to his attendant, "What think you of that?" "Shall I succeed?" "You must assist me; I know you have great sense: let this prosper, and you shall have rings for your ears, and a turban for your head. Good: pour water on me." They go to the well, and the servant bales about a hoghead of water on his master's head. They go to the house, and then the command is, "Rub my joints and limbs." "Ah! bring my rice and curry." That finished, "Bring water to wash my mouth; pour it on my hands: a sheroot and fire bring; fetch my sandals, my turban, umbrella, and betelbox. Let us depart." Then may be seen the master stepping out with a lordly air, and the domestic at his heels, giving advice, or listening to his master's tales.—*Roberts.*

19-22. (19) **ashes . . . head,**^f the ashes and torn garments (1 Sam. iv. 12; Esth. iv. 1), and hands clasped above the head^g were all marks of grief and shame. **went on crying,** "shrieking as she went." (20) **hold thy peace,** from requiring to have Amnon punished. Absalom intended to take the judgment into his own hands, provided Dav. failed to do his duty. Here again Dav.'s sin paralyzed his judgment and opened the way for the cruel murder committed by Tamar's natural defender, Absalom. (21) **very wroth,** yet he did nothing. (22) **good nor bad,**^h seemed to take no notice of the affair, in order to lead his brother into a false security.

Impunity. — That David did not punish Amnon must be considered as — I. An omission of manifest duty. To punish his son — 1. Properly belonged to his authority. 2. Was commanded by Divine law. 3. Was demanded by the sense of justice. 4. Was necessary to the protection of his subjects. II. Unwarranted by adequate reasons. It was perhaps due to — 1. The affection of a father. 2. The rank of the offender. 3. The transgression and forgiveness of the king himself. III. Productive of disastrous effects. 1. On the offender, hardening him. 2. On others, lessening respect for authority. 3. On himself, impairing his kingly energy. — *B. Dale.*

Retribution. — One cannot help observing here, how David's adultery with Bathsheba was punished by his son's incest with his sister Tamar; and as he now saw the threatenings of God by Nathan beginning to take place, he had too much reason to fear they would be all of them executed to the full. It was a circumstance also that must greatly affect him, that he had been, though unwillingly, a sort of accessory to Amnon's crime, by yielding so readily to Amnon's desire of having his sister sent to him; the very proposal he made of her dressing and receiving his food from her seeming enough to create some suspicion in David that he had some design upon Tamar, which he ought to have been peculiarly careful to guard against. But probably Amnon had never offended him, nor given any occasion to suspect him capable of so heinous a crime as he was now meditating, and therefore David more easily consented that his sister should have the liberty of attending him, — *Chandler.*

23-27. (23) *sheep-shearers*, always a time of feasting.^a *Baal-hazor*, either *Tell Asur*, 5 m. N. E. of Bethel; or *Hazor* in Benjamin.^b (24) *Invitation* to the king was given to disarm all suspicion. (25) *chargeable*, put you to a needless expense. (26) *why should he*, David suspected some secret enmity, and feared to let Amnon go.

The revenge of Absalom. — I. Its seeming justification. 1. The grievous wrong suffered. The natural instinct of retaliation. 3. The culpable failure of justice. II. Its special characteristics. 1. Implacable hatred. 2. Deceitful scheming. 3. Pitiless cruelty. III. Its exceeding sinfulness. I. Disbelief in the justice of God. 2. Insensibility to His forbearance. 3. Disobedience to the Divine law. 4. Fruitfulness in crime. — *B. Dale.*

Royal feasts in the olden times (vs. 25). — David's declining to attend Absalom's feast on account of the expense which would thus be occasioned to his son, is the first instance history offers of the ruinous cost of royal visits to those who are honored with them. A comparatively modern instance of this is given in *Notes and Queries* for October, 1850. It is stated that the decay of the Hoghton family is locally ascribed to the visit of King James I. to Hoghton Tower, near Blackburn, Lancashire; the following characteristic anecdote being cited in corroboration of the current opinion: "During one of his hunting excursions, the king is said to have left his attendants for a short time, in order to examine a numerous herd of horned cattle, then grazing in what are now termed bullock pastures, most of which had probably been provided for the occasion. A day or two afterwards, being hunting in the same locality, he made inquiry respecting the cattle, and was told in no good-humored way, by a herdsman unacquainted with his person, that they were all gone to feed the beastly king and his gluttonous company. The king exclaimed, as he left the herdsman, 'Then 'tis e'en time for me to gang too;' and accordingly, on the following morning he set out for Lathom House." — *Kitto.*

28-31. (28) *I say unto you*, appointing some signal. They would have Amnon at advantage. He would not be able to defend himself. (29) *upon his mule*,^c usual beast for riding in that age. Each son had a royal mule. (30) *tidings came*, faster than the galloping mules. Obs. usual exaggeration of reports. (31) *Signs of wild and desperate grief.*^d

Ill news flies fast (vs. 30). — From this exaggerated statement we learn — I. That bad news flies fast -- in this case it outstripped the living sons. II. That the thing reported is apt to be worse than the truth. III. That when ill news reaches us we had better wait for the next messenger. IV. It may be a comfort to us that when we have heard the first we have heard the worst. V. We deserved to hear only badness from heaven, but the message is called the Gospel — good tidings.

Mutual sympathy in sorrow. — When Henry VII. heard of the sudden

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"Frowning they went: his eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down their red and angry beams; as if his sight would, like the raging dog-star, scorch the earth, and kindle rivers in its course." — *Congreve.*
"Anger is a transient hatred; or, at least very like it." — *South.*

Anger and hate hinder good counsel.

Absalom's feast

a 1 Sa. xxv. 2.

b Ne. xi. 33.

"It is the over-curious ambition of many to be best or to be none; if they may not do so well as they would, they will not do so well as they may. I will do my best to do the best, and what I want in power supply is will. Thus, while I pay in part, I shall not be a debtor for all. He owes most that pays nothing." — *A. Warwick.*

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"When ambition can be so happy as to covert its enterprises, even to the person himself, under the appearance of principle, it is the most incurable and inflexible of all human passions." — *Hume.*

death of Amnon

c "The Syrian mules are in activity, strength, and capabilities, far superior to ours." — *Jamieson*
d 2 S. i. 11: xii. 16.

Mule — This the first mention of it in Scrip. The meaning of Ge. xxxvi. 24, is doubtful. Breeding of

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mules forbidden to Jews: but their use was looked upon as lawful. From Deut. xvii. 16, it appears that the king would not use the horse.

David told of the death of Amnon

a 2 S. xix. 19.

"Be more afraid of secret sins than of open shame; lay this foundation sure, that there is mercy with Jesus Christ." — *Greenham*.

The things that belong to men must be understood in order to be loved; the things that belong to God must be loved in order to be understood. — *Pascal*.

death of his son, Prince Arthur, at Ludlow Castle, in 1502, he said, "Send some one for the Queen; let me bear this grief with her." She came and did her best to comfort him. She then retired to her own room, was overwhelmed with sorrow, and swooned away. It was now his turn to cheer and comfort. On both sides it was, "Let me bear this grief with her," and "Let me bear this grief with him." And thus in their retreat at Greenwich the King and Queen of England mourned in silence for the loss of their first-born son. — *Barlow, in Hom. Com.*

32-36. (32) Jonadab was keen enough to understand what had really happened; we cannot think he was privy to Ab.'s intention, seeing he was friend of Amnon. (33) **all the king's sons,** as David suspected. (34) **kept the watch,** the usual sentry; or some one set specially to watch and bring tidings. (35) Jonadab truly guessed who the people were. (36) **wept very sore,** mostly in excitement of their own peril.

The man without a country. — One of the most touching stories on faithfulness to our duties as citizens, is Rev. E. E. Hale's sketch of the *Man Without a Country*. Toward the close of the exile's career he utters these burning words: "If you are ever tempted to say a word or do a thing that shall put a bar between you and your family, your home and your country, pray God in His mercy to take you that instant home to His own heaven. And for your country, boy, and for that flag, never dream a dream but of serving her as she bids you. No matter what happens to you, no matter who flatters you or who abuses you, never let a night pass but you pray God to bless that flag. Remember that behind all these men you have to do with, behind officers, and government, and people even, there is the country herself, your country, and that you belong to her as you belong to your own mother."

Banishment. —

Ha! banishment? be merciful, say — death,
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death; do not say — banishment.
Hence banished is banished from the world,
And world's exile is death; then banished
Is death mis-termed, calling death banishment,
Thou cutt'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smil'st upon the stroke that murders me. — *Shakespeare*.

flight of Absalom

b 2 S. xiv. 23, 32; xv. 8.

c Ps. lxxxiv. 2; Ge. xxxviii. 12.

Those who in the day of sorrow have owned God's presence in the cloud, will find Him also in the pillar of fire, brightening and cheering the abode as night comes on.

37-39. (37) Talmi, Absalom's grandfather; ch. xiii. 3. (38) **three years,** waiting any changes that might work for his restoration. "If the text of these last three verses of the chapter is sound, they afford a curious specimen of Hebrew narrative. In verse 34, we read *Absalom fled*; in verse 37, *Absalom fled and went to Talmi, the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur*; in verses 38, *Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there three years*. At each step of the narrative only the fact is brought out which is wanted, (1) the flight; (2) the place whither he fled; (3) the duration of the absence; but with each new fact the old ones on which it depends are repeated." — *Spk. Com.* (39) **longed to go forth, lit.** was consumed in going forth, with a sense of disappointed hope.

Present action, not regret of past. — A pale mourner stood bending over the tomb, and his tears fell fast and often. As he raised his humid eyes to heaven, he cried, "My brother! O my brother!" A sage passed that way, and said, "For whom dost thou mourn?" "One," replied he, "whom I did not sufficiently love while living, but whose inestimable worth I now feel." "What wouldst thou do if he were restored to thee?" The mourner replied that he would never offend him by an unkind word, but would take every occasion to show his friendship, if he could but come back to his fond embrace. "Then, waste not thy time in useless grief," said the sage; "but if thou hast friends, go and cherish the living, remembering that they will one day be dead also."

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

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the wise woman of Tekoah

1-4. (1) **perceived,** Joab was ever on the watch to find out how he could manage the king. "He ever appears wily, politic, and unscrupulous." (2) **Tekoah,** mod. *Tekua*; 6 miles S. of Bethlehem. The appearance of the mourner was intended to excite David's interest. (3) **put the words,** dictated

what she should say.^a (4) **spake**, "came," is found in many MSS. and versions. **king**, who personally acted as a judge. **help**, marg. *save*; give a judgment: render me aid.

Anointing with oil (vs. 2).—It is a curious fact that the Hindoos do not put on what is called mourning at the death of their friends. The relations take off their ear-rings and other ornaments, and neglect the dressing of their hair. A woman, on the death of her husband, takes off the thali (equivalent to the marriage ring) from her neck; and formerly she used to shave her head; but in all other respects she dresses as before. Those who are sick, as they suppose, under the influence of Saturn, generally wear something black, or have marks of that color on their clothes, as they believe the indisposition is in this way removed. — *Roberts*.

5-8. (5) As a widow she immediately gained notice. (6) **strove together**, in a quarrel. (7) **whole family**,^b the relatives; intended here to indicate that all the king's sons were bitter against Absalom. **my coal**, fig. of a fire which may be brightened again, if one coal is left alight. (8) **give charge**, intimating that the response to her wish would be favorable. The king could grant this pardon bec. it was a case of manslaughter rather than premeditated murder.

The widow's one coal (vs. 7).—I. Under this figure we have a picture of utter desolation: a poor widow in the winter of adversity. The warmth and light of her dwelling dependent on one coal: it might kindle more. II. A picture of the world's heartlessness; which, under the name of justice, would extinguish the last hope of the poor. III. An illustration of divine care of the poor and needy, *see vs. 8*.

A plea for reconciliation.—Miss Gratz—supposed to have been the original of Rebecca in "Ivanhoe"—was nursing her grandfather in his last illness. Calling her to him one day, he said, "What can I do for you, my dear child?" Turning upon him her beautiful eyes, filled with tears, she said in a tone of earnest entreaty, "Grandfather, forgive Aunt Shinah." This was a daughter who had been long estranged because of her marriage with a Gentile. The old man sought his grand-daughter's hand, pressed it, and after a silence, said in a broken voice, "Send for her." In due course the lady came, received her father's forgiveness and blessing, and when, a few days later, he breathed his last, the arms of his long-estranged child were about him, while Rebecca Gratz sat silently at his side. — *Hom. Com.*

9-12. (9) **be on me**,^c the cunning woman intends to get a more direct answer, so offers to bear the punishment herself that in no wise upon David should rest the guilt of neglecting to punish bloodshed. (10) A promise of direct royal protection. (11) This is another point. By the king's oath in the name of God she secures for the murderer public protection from the *goel*, or family avenger.^d She now unfolds her meaning. There is a world-wide difference between the purpose of the parable of Nathan and that of the wise woman of Tekoah. Nathan's parable was designed to rouse the king's conscience as against his feelings; the woman of Tekoah's, as prompted by Joab, to rouse his feelings as against his conscience. — *Exp. B.*

On obtaining promises (vs. 11).—I. Professing to have had one son who had murdered another: the family of the murdered sought justice. II. Out of pity for the widow, David sets justice on one side, and so spares the murderer. III. But how, then, can he punish the murderer Absalom? In laying down a rule for others, we may be applying principles from which we ourselves would gladly escape; or, on the contrary, those from which we ourselves might be comforted.

13-17. (13) The meaning of verse 13 may be paraphrased thus: "If you, O king, have done right in passing sentence of absolution in favor of my son, and condemning my relations who seek his death, how is it that you harbor such a purpose of vengeance against Absalom as to keep him, one of God's people, an outcast in a heathen country, far from the worship of the God of Israel. Surely upon your own showing you are guilty of a great fault in not allowing Absalom to return."—*Spk. Com.* A practical application, like that of Nathan; but without his prophetic force, ch. xii. 7. **faulty**, *i. e.* "your decision in favor of my son condemns your own conduct towards Absalom." (14) **neither doth God, etc.**, *R. V.*, "neither doth God take away life, but

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"Head and heart are commonly more respectable than will, but, unfortunately, will is the manager and man-of-business of the firm."

^a "The object was to make David say that, in some cases, even a murderer's life might be spared."—*Jamieson*.

David promises to protect her

^b Nu. xxxv. 19; De. xix. 12.

Joab "is the personification of worldly policy, and temporal ambition eager for its own personal aggrandizement, and especially for the maintenance of its own political ascendancy, and practicing on the weaknesses of princes; but, at last, the victim of its own Machiavelian shrewdness."—*Wordsworth*.

she continues her address

^c Ge. xxvii. 13; 1 S. xxv. 24; Ma. xxvii. 25.

^d Nu. xxxv. 19.

"When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions!"—*Shakespeare*.

"Every one can master a grief but he that has it."—*Shakespeare*.

she applies her case to David

^e Job xxxiv. 15; He. ix. 27.

vs. 14. "The Jews throw out of the window all the water that is found in the

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house in which a person has died, believing that the soul has cleansed itself therein,"—*J. Gadsby*. But if the Jews do this they have probably another reason for it; as (1) to typify a life gone beyond recall; or (2) in reference to some Levitical precept or old custom. See Nu. xix. 11-15.

"Wherever there is flattery, there is a fool in the case; if the parasite be detected, it falls to his share; if not, to his whom he deludes."—*Laconics*.

David perceives she is from Joab

a vs. 17. Ch. xiv. 27.

"Every loving word that God speaks to us acts back again, and makes music in His heart. He never says with a scowl, 'Here comes that poor, limping sinner again.'"—*Beecher*.

David sends Joab for Absalom

b "Or Bathsheba's influence may have been exerted to keep Absalom in disgrace for the sake of Solomon."—*Spk. Com.*

"How much more compassionate is our heavenly Father than the most tender-hearted of earthly parents."—*Am-brose*.

"Anger is like the waves of a troubled sea; when it is corrected with a

deviseth means, th. he th. is banished be not an outcast from him." Her argument is, that as God has spared Absalom, the king may surely show restoring kindness to him. (15) **people . . . afraid**, her relatives, as vs. 7; she still keeps up her deceptive story. (16) She is urging, by showing the confidence she had in his kindness. (17) **angel of God**, praising Dav.'s wisdom.

The exile's return (vs. 14). — I. Our heavenly Father's banished ones. 1. They are voluntary exiles—(a) none are driven from God, (b) all are invited to return, (c) many refuse to do so; 2. They are guilty exiles—(a) in sinning against the Lord, (b) in departing from Him, (c) in refusing to return; 3. They are unhappy exiles—(a) alienated from their Father, (b) deceived by Satan. II. The means He hath devised for their return. 1. To satisfy the demands of justice—(a) that their crimes may be atoned for, (b) that their lost service be made up; 2. To overcome their own opposition—(a) their pride humbled by conviction, (b) hearts broken by love, (c) affections awakened by visions of home; 3. To insure their safe return, He prevents their being—(a) enticed back, (b) driven back, (c) falling back. He provides—(a) a sure guide—the Holy Spirit, (b) a safe convoy—the holy angels, (c) a certain supply—the covenant. Learn:—1. Admire our Father's goodness; 2. Return to Him with full purpose of heart. — *The Study*.

As water spilt on the ground (vs. 14).—The Rev. Mr. Jowett, when describing the funeral services of the Greeks, says: "The corpse was now carried out into the church-yard. A slab lifted up, discovered that the whole church-yard is hollow under ground. The body was put into a meaner wooden coffin and lowered into the grave. I did not observe that they sprinkled earth upon it as we do; but instead of this a priest concluded the ceremony by pouring a glass of water on the head of the corpse. I did not learn what this meant, but it brought to my mind that touching passage in 2 Samuel xiv. 14, "For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again."—*O. T. Anec.*

18-20. (18) **answered**, he saw thro' the plot now. (19) **none can turn**, i. e. the king discerns the acted parable exactly; his words have gone straight to the mark. (20) **fetch . . . speech**, *R. V.*, "to change the face of the mother," to win this judgment in favor of the fratricide. **wise**,^a thus she praises David's wisdom, and so prevails over him.

The power of the tongue.—The heathen philosopher, Xanthus, expecting some friends to dine with him, ordered his servant Esop to provide the best things the market could supply. Tongues only were provided, served up with different sauces. Course after course was supplied, each consisting of tongue. "Did I not order you to buy the best the market afforded?" cried Xanthus. "And did I not obey you?" replied Esop. "Is there anything better than the organ of truth, and the instrument of praise and worship?" On the next day Xanthus ordered him to provide the worst thing in the market. And lo, there was another dinner of tongue. "For," said Esop, "surely the tongue is the worst thing in the world, the instrument of strife, the organ of lies and blasphemy."—*Foster's Cyc. III.*

21-24. (21) **done this thing**, given this judgment; and, in consistency, must act according to it. (22) Joab intended to ingratiate himself with Absalom, who was looked upon as heir to the throne. (23) **and brought**, so showing his personal interest. (24) **not see my face**, perhaps Dav. could not trust himself to see his favorite son.^b This was one of those half measures full of danger, and working badly. In all this conduct of King David we can trace only the infatuation of one left to the guidance of his own mind. It is blunder after blunder. Like many good but mistaken men, he erred both in inflicting punishment and in bestowing favors. Much that ought to be punished such persons pass over; what they do select for punishment is probably something trivial; and when they punish it is in a way so injudicious as to defeat its ends. — *Exp. B.*

Half reconciled (vs. 24). "Let him not see my face."—I. Absalom an exile from his father for five years (three in Geshur, xiii. 38; and two in Jerusalem, vs. 28). II. The tenderness of David to Absalom exceeded by that of God to David; for God (a) sent a message to David; (b) assured him pardon on his first sign of repentance. III. God is more kind to us than we are to each other.

Refusing to be seen (vs. 24). — Few things are more offensive, in the East, than to refuse to show yourself to those who come to see you. Send your servants to say you are engaged, or that the individual may go, and he will be distressed, or enraged, and not hesitate to express his feelings. Should there, however, be any reason to hope, he will wait for hours at your door; nay, he will come day after day, till he shall have seen your face. They have an opinion, that if they once gain admission into your presence a great point is attained, and so it is; for what with their eloquence, and tears, and abject submissions, they seldom fail to make an impression. — *Roberts*.

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soft reply, as with a little strand, it retires, and leaves nothing behind but froth and shells—no permanent mischief." — *Bp. Taylor*.

25-27. (25) *beauty*, grace of form as well as of face. All David's children seem to have been remarkable for physical beauty. (26) *polled his head*,^a *i. e.*, cut his hair: pride of his hair led to this being done very seldom: only when the excessive length and weight became wearisome. **two hundred shekels**, about 3 lbs. 2 ozs. If they had been shekels of sanctuary the weight would have been six pounds. (27) *Tamar*, after his sister. Her daughter Maachab married Reboboam and was the mother of Ahijah.

Absalom's beauty

^a Poll, a head. (Du. *bol*, whence *bolster*. G. *polster*, Sc. *pow*.) The word survives in *poll-tax*, or head money, and the poll at elections, in which the voters are counted by their polls or head. To poll is to cut the hair of the head.

Handsome is that handsome does (vs. 25). — I. The beauty of Absalom. Bodily, evanescent, only skin-deep. II. The praise his beauty won — 1. Shows people are charmed by things of small value, appearances; 2. Suggests how Absalom may have been injured by adulation; 3. The beautiful have need to guard their hearts against the effects of thoughtless admiration: as the ill-favored against envy. III. Seek the praise of God for beauty of heart and life.

Beauty hiding the Creator. —

For, O my God, Thy creatures are so frail,
Thy bountiful creation is so fair,
That drawn before us like the temple-vail,
It hides the Holy Place from thought and care,
Giving man's eyes instead its sweeping fold,
Rich as with cherub-wings, and apples wrought of gold.

— *Jean Ingelow*.

Physical beauty. —

"Of all God's works, which do this world adorn,
There is no one more fair and excellent
Than is man's body, both for power and form,
Whilst it is kept in sober government;
But none than it more foul and indecent,
Distempered through misrule and passions base;
It grows a monster, and incontinent
Doth lose its dignity and native grace."

— *Spenser, Faerie Queene*.

28-33. (28) *saw not*, *etc.*, a great error on Dav.'s part, for Absalom could not but compare the weight of his punishment with the leniency of his father's attitude towards Amnon. Hence his brooding and meditating over revenge. (29) *would not come*, perhaps Joab began to fear the manifest wilfulness and ambition of Absalom. (30) *near mine*, *lit. at my hand*. on fire, comp. Samson's trick.^b (31) This made it possible without any fear of Dav.'s displeasure for Joab to go to Absalom. (32) *let . . face*, he knew well what influence Joab had. *any iniquity*, *R. V.* omits "any." Absalom still insists on his innocence, as the king had failed to punish Amnon (33) *kissed*, in token of reconciliation and restoration to the privileges of the first-born son.

Absalom and David reconciled

^b Ju. xv. 8-5.

"It is notable that nearly all the poisonous fungi are scarlet or speckled, and the wholesome ones brown or gray, as if to show us that things rising out of darkness and decay are always most deadly when they are well dressed." — *Ruskin*.

Absalom. — His — I. Personal appearance: most beautiful person in Israel: tall, strong, agile — his hair; II. Character — (1) Vain; (2) Cruel; (3) Deceitful: kissed his father and plotted against him; (4) Crafty: stole the hearts of the people; (5) Unnatural: conspired against his father. III. End (xviii. 9): caught in an oak. Shot with arrows, cast into a pit. Learn — 1. Handsome is that handsome does; 2. Virtue is true beauty; 3. Seek adornment of true piety. — *The Hive*.

The Moravian and German officer (vs. 30). — In one of the wars in Germany, a captain of cavalry was ordered out on a foraging party. He put himself at the head of his troop, and marched to the quarter assigned him. It was a

"The purest talent appears at one time great, at another time small, but character is of

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a stellar and undiminishable greatness." — Emerson

"How goodness heightens beauty!" — Hannah More.

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Absalom steals the hearts of the people

a 1 Sa. vii. 11: 1 Ki. i. 5; xviii. 46.

b De. xvii. 16, 26.

"There is, at first sight, a want of adequate motive for Absalom's design of depriving Dav. of his crown, seeing that he was now the eldest son, and so the heir. But it was not necessary that the eldest son should succeed. God would indicate to the father which of his sons He had chosen." — Kitto.

c "To flatter each litigant to excite discontent against existing government, and to suggest a remedy by making him king, was Absalom's policy." — *Spl. Com.*

d Ps. x. 10; Ro. xvi. 18.

Absalom feigns a vow

e Syr. and Arab. vers. and Josephus have four years. This time may be reckoned fr. his return fr. Geshur.

"Some think the 40 years is correct, and gives the time in David's reign, dating from his unction by Samuel." — Wordsworth.

f "That the insurrection sprung into being at Hebron, the ancient capital

solitary valley, in which hardly anything but woods could be seen. In the midst of it stood a little cottage: on perceiving it he went up and knocked at the door; an ancient Hernhutter, with a beard silvered with age, came out. "Father," said the officer, "show me a field where I can set my troops a-foraging." "Presently," replied the Hernhutter. The good old man walked before, and conducted them out of the valley. After a quarter of an hour's march they found a fine field of barley. "This is the very thing we want," said the captain. "Have patience for a few minutes," replied the guide; "you shall be satisfied." They went on, and at the distance of about a quarter of a league further they arrived at another field of barley. The troops immediately dismounted, cut down the grain, trussed it up, and remounted. The officer then said to his conductor, "Father, you have given to yourself and us unnecessary trouble; the first field was much better than this." "Very true, sir," replied the good old man, "but it was not mine."

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

1-6. (1) And . . . this, this ch. records the natural consequences of Dav.'s ill-judged treatment of Ab. prepared, etc., assuming the state and equipage of a prince. chariots, R. V., "a chariot," for state occasions. horses, this was a new and striking luxury: a sign of pride and vainglory, intended to set Ab. in the thought of the people. to run, a kind of guard; avant-couriers; we call them outriders.^b (2) way of the gate, road leading to the gate, so as to talk to the people coming in for judgments. controversy, R. V., "suit," dispute over rights with a neighbor, etc. of one . . . Israel, i. e. belongs to such or such a tribe or city. (3) good, he took care always to give favorable decisions.^c no man . . . thee, one of the most vexatious features of oriental courts is the delay. Ab. uses this postponement of justice to gain favor with the litigants. Dav. needed assessors to help him weigh and investigate evidence prior to his final decision. (4) judge, he does not say king. (5) kissed him, in unusual condescension. (6) stole, by deceptive arts,^d he robbed Dav. of the people's affection.

Absalom's treachery (vss. 1-12). — Absalom was — I. An unfilial son. And not only unfilial, but ungrateful: David had but just now pardoned him. II. A mean-spirited hypocrite (vss. 4, 5, 7-9): cringing to the people, lying to the king. III. A disloyal subject. As a mere subject his crime was extremely great. IV. A cunning traitor.

The arts of a usurper. —

And then I stole all courtesy from heaven,
And dressed myself in such humility,
That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths,
Even in the presence of the crowned king.
Thus I did keep my person fresh and new,
My presence, like a robe pontifical,
Ne'er seen but wondered at; and so my state,
Seldom, but sumptuous, showed like a feast;
And won by rareness, such solemnity. — Shakespeare.

7-12. (7) forty, probably be four.^e in Hebron,^f where he was born (ch. iii. 3). (8) serve the Lord, with a great sacrifice. He took the 200 persons as guests for the sacrificial feast. (9) go in peace, the pious king suspected no evil in so simply religious an act. (10) spies, lit. runners on foot. trumpet, the signal for revolt wh. would be sounded from place to place, at appointed stations. in Hebron, Ab. expected Judah to support his rebellion. This tribe was discontented by the removal of the court fr. Hebron to Jerusalem, and its absorption into the nation at large. (11) two hundred men, prob. principal people of Jerus. By this device Absalom secures them fr. opposing his schemes. (12) Gilonite, of Giloh (Jos. xv. 51). Poss. he was alienated fr. Dav. on account of Bathsheba.

Guileless first, guilty afterwards (vs. 11). — I. An illustration of the arts of the demagogue. He makes, like Absalom, great professions of fidelity to his word, and to religion. II. An illustration of the ease with which the unreflecting mob may be led. Doubtless these all thought they had some little right on their side. They knew not anything — (a) Of Absalom's purpose; (b) Of the disastrous consequences of rebellion.

Punishment of ingratitude (vs. 10-12).—A petted soldier of the Macedonian army was shipwrecked, and cast upon the shore apparently lifeless. A hospitable Macedonian discovered him, revived him, took him to his home, and treated him in a princely manner, and, when he departed, gave him money for his journey. The rescued soldier expressed warm thanks and promised royal bounty to his benefactor. Instead, when he came before Philip, he related his own misfortunes, and asked to be rewarded by the gift of the house and lands of his rescuer. His request was granted; and he returned and drove out his former host. The latter hastened to lay the true state of the case before the king; when he restored the lands, and caused the soldier to be branded in the forehead, "The Ungrateful Guest," as the reward of his baseness.

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of Judah, makes it certain that some discontent in Dav.'s own tribe here came into play."—*Ewald*.

13-18. (13) **hearts**, as *vs.* 6. (14) **flee**,^a Dav. knew the quickness and energy of Absalom's action. Nothing but flight would secure safety. He also would avoid the horrors of a siege. David had no standing army, only his body-guard. It secured time; the loyal subjects recovered from their panic and rallied around God's anointed. (16) **household**, including wives. "There is no single day in the Jewish history of which so elaborate an account remains as that which describes this memorable flight. There is none, we may add, that combines so many of David's characteristics—his patience, his high-spirited religion, his generosity, his calculation; we miss only his daring courage."—*Stanley*. **concubines**, secondary wives. Often foreign persons who could not be legal wives. (17) **far off**. *lit.* the *Far House*, a place so named.^b (18) **Cherethites, etc.**, ch. viii. 18. six hundred, including the Gittites.^c These were Israelites whose desperate fortunes led them to join themselves to Dav. at Adullam and Ziklag. These were Dav.'s "mighty men." "Some critics think that without altering the reading, we should identify the Gittites with the Gibbōrim, and suppose that they were called Gittites either because they had followed David ever since his residence in Gath; or because the corps had at this time been largely recruited from the natives of Gath."—*Cam. B.*

David flees from Jerusalem

^a "Recog. in this a punishment for his personal sin, according to Nathan's words; he felt he only, not his people, should be the sufferer."

^b "Prob. last house in the suburbs; or a fort guarding the passage of the Kidron."—*Spk. Com.*

^c 1 Sa. xxiii. 13; xxvii. 2.

Sunshine withdrawn.—It is said that gardeners, sometimes, when they would bring a rose to richer flowering, deprive it for a season of light and moisture. Silent and dark it stands, dropping one faded leaf after another, and seeming to go patiently down to death. But when every leaf is dropped, and the plant stands stripped to the uttermost, a new life is even then working in the buds, from which shall spring a tenderer foliage and a brighter wealth of flowers. So, often, in celestial gardening, every leaf of earthly joy must drop before a new and divine bloom visits the soul.—*Harriet Beecher Stowe*. *Cherethites and Pelethites* (vs. 18).—These Cherethites and Pelethites were the life-guards of King David (2 Sa. viii. 18; xx. 7, 23; 1 Ki. i. 38, 44; 1 Ch. xviii. 17). In the latter part of David's reign the Cherethites and Pelethites were commanded by Benaiah (2 Sa. viii. 18; xx. 23; xxiii. 23). But it has been conjectured that the royal bodyguards may have been foreign mercenaries, like the Pope's Swiss guards. They are connected with the Gittites, a foreign tribe; and the Cherethites are mentioned as a nation (1 Sa. xxx. 14) dwelling apparently on the coast, and therefore probably Philistines, of which name Pelethites may be only another form.—*Smith's Dict. of the Bible*.

19-23. (19) **Ittai**, who had but recently joined him (*vs.* 20). **return to thy place**, *i. e.* his new home in Jerus. This is the trans. of the Heb. text, wh. is unusual; the LXX. and Vulgate trans. "for thou art a stranger and also an exile from thy place." **exile**, poss. a banished man, so it was too bad for him to leave trouble only to fall into trouble. (20) **whither I may**, uncertain where to find shelter. (21) "A noble answer of genuine loyalty." (22) **pass over**, the Kidron.^a (23) **the country**, the people who watched the departure. Crossing the ravine of Kidron was the signal of the king's intention to flee. **all the people**, Dav.'s army and retinue. They went by the way of Jericho and the Arabich to the east of Jordan.

The brook Kidron (vs. 23).—I. David passed over the brook when flying with his mourning company from his traitor son. II. The King of kings Himself was not favored with a more cheerful or royal road. III. Notwithstanding the abasement of David, he yet returned in triumph to his city, and David's Lord arose victorious out of the grave. Let us then be of good courage, for we also shall win the day.—*Spurgeon*.

David's popularity.—The best part of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were

Ittai the Gittite

"Ittai declared his resolution with a fervor wh. almost inevitably recalls a like profession made almost on the same spot to the great descendant of Dav. centuries afterwards. Matt xxvi. 35."—*Stanley*.

^d "Kidron, dark: prob so-called fr. Kadar, to be dark; perhaps fr. the color of its water; or of its bed in the

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rocky gorge of the valley of Jehoshaphat." — *Wordsworth*.

"Great lords, by reason of their flatterers, are the first to know their own virtues, and the last to know their own vices; some are made ashamed by comparison, because their ancestors were so great; and others are ashamed of their ancestors, because they were so little." — *Selden*.

Zadok the priest

a "There is a difference in the conduct of the rival priests wh. seems to indicate the different shades of their loyalty. Zadok remained by the ark; Abiathar went apart on the mountain side, apparently waiting to watch the stream of followers as it flowed past." — *Stanley*.

"This barren verbiage current among men, light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment." — *Tennyson*.

Hushai the Archite

b 2 Sa. xix. 4; Est. vi. 12; Je. xiv. 3, 4; Eze. xxiv. 17.

c Foll. Pss. seem to refer to this

firmly attached to him, and followed him in his retreat from the capital, and all the country through which he went, showed their affection to him by loud acclamations. The Cherethites and Pelethites, the Gittites, and the ablest of his officers, continued steadfast in their attachment to him, and followed his fortune. The tribes on the other side of Jordan gladly received him, and the richest persons of that country supplied him and his forces with all necessary provisions, and he soon collected among them an army sufficient to check the rebels, and at one blow to crush the rebellion. And this was no sooner known than the tribes in general were all in motion to show their loyalty to the king, and restore him to his throne and government. The truth is, that David was surprised unawares and unprovided, by a wicked and impious faction. — *Chandler*.

True nobleness. —

"For this true nobleness I seek in vain,
In woman and in man I find it not,
I almost weary of my earthly lot,
My life-springs are dried up with burning pain." —
Thou find'st it not? I pray thee look again,
Look inward through the depths of thine own soul;
How is it with thee? Art thou sound and whole?
Doth narrow search show thee no earthly stain?
Be noble! and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping, but never dead;
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own;
Then will thou see it gleam in many eyes,
Then will pure light around thy path be shed,
And thou wilt nevermore be sad and lone. — *Lowell*.

24-29. (24) Zadok, 2 Sa. viii. 17; 1 Chr. xii. 28. Abiathar, 1 Sa. xxii. 11-23.^a went up, *i. e.*, continued to ascend the Mount of Olives. The expression *They set down the ark*, is rather obscure, but the sense seems to be that Abiathar preceded the ark up the side of Olivet, and did not stop till the whole procession had come out of the gate. He then stopped, and on his stopping the Levites set down the ark, probably at David's bidding. — *Spk. Com.* (25) carry back, Dav. was in the mood of entire submission to Div. judgment, and wished to bear it all alone. Moreover, he would not put the ark or the priests in peril. (26) Dav. truly humble and contrite, felt that he deserved this chastisement for his sins; Comp. Job i. 21, ii. 10. (27) seer, with some play on the word. "You can help me by watching events for me." (28) certify, inform me, assure me safety to return. (29) It is singular that Zadok's name should be put first.

The trial-bearing force of spiritual religion (vss. 25, 26). — I. Spiritual religion engages the supreme attention of the soul under trial. 1. Whatever subject has the most power to draw away the mind from itself will always be effective in supporting it under trials; 2. Of all subjects, religion has the most power to draw away the mind from itself. II. Spiritual religion recognizes God's superintendence under trial. David regarded the superintendence of God, as being — 1. Personal; 2. Sovereign; 3. Adequate. III. Spiritual religion identifies man's will with God's under trial. — *Thomas*.

Old Betty (vs. 26). — Old Betty was converted late in life, and though very poor was very active. She visited the sick; out of her own poverty she gave to those who were still poorer; collected a little money from others when she could give none of her own, and told many a one of the love of the Saviour. At last she caught cold and rheumatism, and lay in bed month after month, pain-worn and helpless. A good minister went to see her, and asked if after her active habits she did not find the change very hard to bear. "No, sir, not at all. When I was well, I used to hear the Lord say day by day, 'Betty, go here; Betty, go there; Betty, do this; Betty, do that;' and I used to do it as well as I could; and now I hear Him say every day, 'Betty, lie still and cough.'" — *J. Hamilton*.

30-37. (30) head covered, drew his cloak over. barefoot, unsandaled; these both were signs of great grief.^b (31) Ahithophel, his own trusted counselor.^c (32) where he worshipped, *R. V.*, "where God was worshipped." *i. e.* it was one of the "high places" where Jehovah was worshipped. Archite,

Jos. xvi. 2. His official title was *King's Friend*.^a On him too were signs of grief. He meant to accompany David. (33) **a burden**, bec. no warrior, prob. infirm with age. (34) Dav. had the Heb. love of stratagem. The *cunning* of Hushai he now set against the wisdom of Ahithophel. (35) **with thee**, you will not be alone in appearing to have turned against the king. (36) **two sons**, noted as swift runners. (37) Absalom and the man who would ruin him entered the city nearly together.

The trials of God's children. — The saints of God, the prophets of God, have died in exile and in prison, have been tortured on the rack and broken on the wheel, and burnt to ashes at innumerable stakes; they have been destitute, afflicted, tormented, in their lives — stoned, beheaded, sawn asunder, in every form of hideous death; they have rotted in miry dungeons, have starved on desolate shores, have sighed out their souls into the agonizing flame. The Cross of Christ stands as the emblem and the explanation of their lives, which fools count to be madness, and their end without honor. On earth they have, far more often than not, been crushed by the hatred and been delivered over to the will of their enemies. Where, then, have been those horses and chariots of fire? They have been there no less than around Elisha at Dothan. The eyes spiritually opened have seen them, even when the sword flashed, or the flames wrapped them in indescribable torment. The sense of God's protection has least deserted His saints when to the world's eyes they seem to have been most utterly abandoned. There has been a joy in prisons and at stakes, it has been said, far exceeding the joy of harvest. — *Blakie*.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1-4. (1) Ziba, ch. ix. He was currying favor. **bunches of raisins**, messes of raisins pressed together like cheese. **summer fruits**, dried figs or dates.^b **bottle**, or skin. (2) **king's household**, not for the king. Ziba put his answer in this form according to Oriental politeness. (3) **thy master**, i. e. Saul. **son**, evidently grandson. **abideth**, Ziba more than hints that he was unloyal. (4) **a foolish gift** made in heat of temper, *unjust* also. **I humbly . . . king**, R. V., "I do obeisance; let me find favor," etc.

Ziba's falsehood (vss. 2-4). — I. An unscrupulous man lying for his own advantage. II. An unsuspicious man deceived by a plausible story. III. A liar obtaining a momentary advantage. IV. Liars should bear in mind that at the end of all temporary successes gained by falsehood they have to reckon with God.

A reproach against a neighbor. — Taking up a reproach against a neighbor is a dangerous business. Persons have been killed recently by handling old shells that had been dropped twenty-five years ago, during the war. If you should happen to plough up one, you had better bury it again. If people bring to you reproaches against their neighbor, carry them no further. If they lay them down at your door, leave them there till they die. Positively refuse to have anything to do with them. You take them up at your peril. They are an unclean thing, which we are not permitted to touch. Scandal-mongers should find no market for their wares at the house of a Christian. They may offer to give them to you; but you should spurn all such offers, as you would an offer to give you the small-pox or the yellow fever. — *The Free Methodist*.

5-8. (5) Bahurim, ch. iii. 16. **came forth**, fr. his house.^c (6) **east stones**, as for adulterer's punishment. (7) **come out**, R. V., "begone, begone," or as we say to some animal, "get out!" **bloody man**, thou murderer, to banishment. (8) **all the blood**, etc., Shimei laid to Dav.'s charge the extinction of Saul's house. Perhaps events narrated ch. xxi. had occurred before this. **in thy mischief**, "in thy calamity."

David's patience and forbearance (vss. 5-12). — To place David's conduct in its true light, consider — I. His heavy trial. (a) His condition independent of Shimei's conduct was exceedingly afflictive; (b) but the conduct of Shimei greatly aggravated his misfortunes at this time. II. His meek submission to it. 1. He saw the hand of God in his trial; 2. He looked to God to overrule it for his good. **Learn** — (1) What spirit you are to manifest under any injuries you sustain; (2) How you are to obtain it. — *C. Simeon*.

A modern Shimei. — We met a boy driving a couple of mules, which were instantly seized by one of the followers of the camp, without any pretext

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treachery, — iv., lix., cix.

^a "Hushai's conduct is certainly not the model of Christian uprightness." — *Stanley*.

"When men take sinful means to avoid a calamity, that way very often brings it." — *Wall*.

Ziba's fraud

^b "Cakes made of dates pressed together are still used as provisions for caravans." — *Wordsworth*.

"It does not depend upon me, said the Grecian, to prevent being spoken ill of; it is only in my power that it be not done deservedly." — *Laconics*.

"He who tells a lie is not sensible how great a task he undertakes; for he must be forced to invent twenty more to maintain one." — *Alexander Pope*.

Shimei

^c "It seems to have lain off the road, on a ridge separated fr. it by a narrow ravine running parallel to the road, so that Shimei was not of easy reach, though within hearing, and within a stone's throw." — *Spk. Com.*

"All the fury of the rival dynasties

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with all the foul names that long feuds had engendered, burst forth as the two parties here came into collision."—*Stanley*.

David's magnanimity

a 1 S. xxiv. 14.

"Curses, like chickens, come home to roost."

"There are none more abusive than they that lie most open to accusation themselves; but the humor goes round, and e that laughs at me to-day will have somebody to laugh at him to-morrow."—*Seneca*.

Absalom with Ahithophel and Hushai

"Aim high and you will shoot high,"—if you have some powder behind the ball.—*Pounds*.

Ahithophel's counsel

b *Blunt* suggests the desire of Ahit. to make Dav. taste the bitterness of that cup which he had caused others (i. e. Uriah and all Bathsheba's family) to drink."

The wives of the conquered king were always the property of the conqueror; and, in possessing these, he appeared to possess the right to the kingdom.

"Falsar than malice in the mouth of envy."—*N. Pic.*

whatever, except the old border one of having the strongest hand. The boy struggled stoutly against the thief, and was not disposed to submit quietly to being spoiled. At last, when overcome, and his mules were driven away from him, he ran along the hillside above the path we were taking, and wept aloud, calling down the curses of Heaven upon the man who had robbed him. Like Shimei the poor lad "went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust." The whole scene was Biblical, and but for the French uniforms ahead one could have fancied a vision to have risen up of "the Benjamite of Bahurim."—*The Times*.

9-14. (9) dead dog,^a a term of contempt; ch. ix. 8. go over, the ravine. (10) Another indication of the submissive mood David was in. so let him curse, etc., R. V., "Because he curseth, and bec. the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David; who then," etc. (11) my son, the heavier affliction took away the trouble of the lesser. (12) mine affliction, R. V., "the wrong done unto me." (13) went along, the ridge above them. cast dust, scattering it over the royal party to annoy them. (14) refreshed themselves, with Ziba's present.

The absorbing influence of great trouble (vs. 11).—I. This history reminds us that mean men, like Shimei, take a cowardly advantage of those they dislike. II. That great trials tend to make us insensible to lesser ones. What were the curses of this man now to David while his heart was wrung by the rebellion of Absalom and the revolt of his subjects? III. One great trouble which we bravely meet may make us forget a multitude of petty cares.

Cursing in the East (vs. 13).—Who, in the East, has not often witnessed a similar scene? Listen to the maledictions: they are of such a nature that evil spirits only could have suggested them. Look at the enraged miscreant: he dare not come near for fear of punishment, but he stands at a distance, vociferates his imprecations, violently throws about his hands; then stoops to the ground, and takes up handfuls of dust, throws it in the air, and exclaims, "Soon shalt thou be as that—thy mouth shall soon be full of it—look, look, thou cursed one, as this dust, so shalt thou be."—*Roberts*.

15-19. (15) all, who formed his company. (16) Hushai, ch. xv. 32. (17) is this, etc., Ab. suspected him. (18) A very equivocal, though in Ab.'s conceited state an apparently loyal, answer. (19) again, Heb. "a second time," i. e. for a second reason, as a further reason. As if it was quite certain that the son would succeed.

Is this thy kindness to thy friend? (vs. 17).—I. Review the mercies of our heavenly Friend. II. Consider how men, even professed friends, sometimes act towards Him. III. Apply the question.

20-23. (20) give counsel, "the first cabinet council on record." (21) This advice supports the idea that Ahithophel was grieved bec. of Dav.'s conduct to Bathsheba.^b What he advised would be a public declaration by Ab. that he claimed his father's throne. (22) top, etc., the fact that the very roof (ch. xi. 2) on which David was walking when he secretly conceived his great sin was the public scene of its punishment, and the nature of the punishment, corresponding to the nature of the sin, as Nathan had foretold, make this retribution signally striking. See ch. xii. 11, 12; and cp. 2 Kings ix. 25, 26.—*Cam. B.* (23) oracle, word, response by Urim. Highest praise for Ahit.'s wisdom.

The counsel of Ahithophel.—I. The counsel of Ahithophel was designed to make the breach between the king and his son impassable. II. This advice is imitated by the wicked and followed by the foolish at this day. Men would have those who have gone astray go so far that they cannot return. III. But God can turn such counsel in foolishness (xv. 31), and take the wise in their own craftiness.

Wives of deceased or dethroned kings.—The choosing or confirming of a new king in Guinea seldom continues long in dispute; for the eldest son no sooner hears of the king's death, than he immediately makes his interest among his friends, to take possession of the late king's court and wives; and succeeding happily in these particulars, he need not doubt the remainder, for the commonality will not easily consent that after that he shall be driven from the throne: this somewhat like Absalom's design on his father David.—*Bosman's Guinea*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-4. (1) **this night**, prompt action alone could secure success. Delay was wholly to the advantage of David. A small body of men would suffice for Abit.'s scheme. (2) **king only**, they felt no fear of uniting the people under Ab. if the king were gone. Abit. carefully judged the effect of a sudden surprise. (3) **in peace**, the revolution being managed without bloodshed, provided David could be put to death. (4) **pleased**, seemed wise and efficient.

Pitilessness.—

"He pours no cordial in the wounds of pain;
Unlocks no prison, and unclasps no chain.
His heart is like the rock, where sun nor dew
Can rear one plant, or flower of heavenly hue.
No thought of mercy there may have its birth,
For helpless misery or suffering worth.
The end of all his life is paltry pelf,
And all his thoughts are centered on himself."

— *From Hom. Com.*

5-10. (5) **call, etc.**, this would grieve Ahithophel; but it indicates the self-willed character of Absalom. (6) **was come**, he does not appear to have been present at the council. (7) **at this time**, may be good in itself, but does not duly weigh the circumstances. (8) He urges that special care would be given to securing the person of the king. **mighty men**, well knowing stratagem of war. **chafed**, exasperated and ferocious. (9) **some pit . . place**, natural hiding place, fortified position. **some of them**, of the attacking party.^a (10) Even the valiant of Ab.'s army would be afraid.

A caution for the careless (vs. 10). — I. Revolt against government may be plausible and seem to promise success, but consequences of possible failure have to be considered. II. The great king against whom men rebel is a "Man of war," and His followers are inspired with the courage of their leader. III. All Israel know this, and will calmly await the issue of the conflict.

Napoleon's beginnings of failure. — The man was "given up to strong delusion, that he should believe a lie;" a fearful but most sure thing. He did not know false from true now when he looked at them, — the fearfulest penalty a man pays for yielding to untruth of heart. Self and false ambition had now become his god; self-deception once yielded to, all other deceptions follow naturally more and more. He believed too much in the dupeability of men; saw no fact deeper in men than hunger and this. He was mistaken. Like a man that should build upon cloud, his house and he fall down in confused wreck, and depart out of the world. — *Carlyle*.

11-14. (11) **battle . . person**, Heb. *that thy face go to the battle*.^b (12) **as the dew**, irresistible.^c (13) **ropes**, to which hooks were fixed, and these were thrown to catch the walls of besieged towns. Hushai evidently appeals to the self-conceit of Absalom, and pleases him by his boasting speech. **river, i. e. ravine**. (14) **better**, not wiser, but better suited to the mood they were in. **the Lord**, in O. T. style the overruling of God is recognized. Satan had outwitted himself. He had nursed in Absalom an overweening vanity, intending by its means to overturn the throne of David: and now that very vanity becomes the means of defeating the scheme, and laying the foundation of Absalom's ruin. — *Exp. B.*

The counsel of Ahithophel defeated (vs. 14). — I. In what respect was the counsel of Ahithophel "good?" (a) Not that it was virtuous and right, (b) but that it was adapted to the occasion, and most likely to succeed. II. How was it defeated? (a) By the overruling of Providence; (b) By the substituting of advice that seemed more plausible. III. Practical lessons — (a) Men may, as they think, be following their own plans, and yet be working out Divine purposes; (b) The hearts of all are in God's hands. (c) Men's best measures — those of sound policy and prudence — may prove to be the worst.

Oriental hyperbole (vs. 13). — On advancing, the choppers or heralds proclaimed the titles of this princely cowkeeper, Futty Sihng, in the usual hyperbolic style. One of the most insignificant-looking men I ever saw then became the destroyer of nations, the leveler of mountains, the exhauster of the ocean. After commanding every inferior mortal to make way for this

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Ahithophel adds further advice

"We must distinguish between felicity and prosperity; for prosperity leads often to ambition, and ambition to disappointment; the course is then over, the wheel turns round but once, while the reaction of goodness and happiness is perpetual." — *Landon*.

Hushai counsels otherwise

a "If he were hidden in any defile, or other refuge, and at the first onset turned upon his pursuers with even but partial success, the report would spread of a great defeat of David's enemies, and terror would seize even the most lion-hearted warrior." — *Ewald*.

Hushai's advice approved

b "Hushai insinuates that Ahithophel, by his counsel, had been desirous of robbing Absalom of the glory of the victory over David, and of assuming it to himself. So he practices on Ab.'s vainglory and self-love, and excites him against Ahithophel." — *Wordsworth*.

c "No image could have symbolized the sudden onset of an enemy so graphically to an Oriental mind, as the silent irresistible and rapid descent of this nat-

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ral moisture on every field and blade of grass." — *Jamieson*.

Hushai tells David

a "Knowing Ab.'s weak and fickle character, Hushai would not depend upon the resolution." — *Spk. Com*

b 1 Ki. i. 9.

"But all was false and hollow; though his tongue dropped manna, and could make the worse appear the better reason." — *Milton*.

"Though fear see nothing but extremity, yet danger is no deep sea, but a ford, where they that yield can only drowned be." — *Greville*.

David being warned crosses Jordan

c "A cloth with a heap of corn." — *Stanley*.

d See Ps. iii. iv.

"In morals, what begins in fear usually ends in wickedness; in religion, what begins in fear usually ends in fanaticism. Fear, either as a principle or a motive, is the beginning of all evils." — *Mrs. Jameson*.

the suicide of Ahithophel

e "Bp. Hall quaintly remarks of him, that though mad enough to hang himself, he was wise enough to set his house in order before he did it." — *Kitto*.

f 2 Sa. ii. 8, 12, 29.

g 1 Chr. ii. 16, 17.

exalted prince, the heralds called aloud to the animal creation, "Retire, ye serpents; fly, ye locusts; approach not, guanas, lizards, and reptiles, while your lord and master condescends to set his foot on the earth!" "Arrogant as this language may appear, it is less so than the Oriental pageantry in general. The sacred writings afford many instances of such hyperbole. None more so than Hushai's speech to Absalom." — *Forbes*.

15-18. (15) Hushai did not feel sure that his counsel would be followed, but it had secured the necessary delay; and now it was necessary to put David on his guard.^a (16) **plains, etc.**, ch. xv. 28. *R. V.*, "at the fords." (17) **En-rogel**, just outside the city. *Jos. xv. 7; xvii. 16.^b **wench**, maid-servant, who went to the well as if for water. (18) **saw them**, the two young priests conversing with the maiden. *Bahurim*, ch. xvi. 5. **well**, prob. *cistern*; this might readily be covered over.*

The small pivots of great events (vs. 17, 18). — I. We find this illustrated by the history before us. "A wench went and told." "A lad saw." How much depended on the girl's tongue, and the lad's eyes. II. It finds many illustrations in all history. III. Many examples may be found in human life and experience. Little things often turn the course, and decide the character of great events and lives.

Washing linen in the East (vs. 17). — In the East, the washing of linen is performed by women by the sides of rivers and fountains. Dr. Chandler, *Travels in Asia Minor*, p. 21, says, that "the women resort to the fountains by the houses, each with a two-handled earthen jar on her back, or thrown over her shoulder for water. They assemble at one without the village or town, if no river be near, to wash their linen, which is afterward spread on the ground or bushes to dry." May not this circumstance, says Mr. Harmer, serve to confirm the conjecture that the young woman that was sent to En-rogel, went out of the city with a bundle of linen, as if she were going to wash it? Nothing was more natural, or better calculated to elude jealousy.

19-22. (19) **covering**,^c poss. "the hanging or awning of the door of the house," or the regular cover for the cistern. **ground corn**, meal, as if she desired to dry it in the sun. (20) **gone over, etc.**, an equivocal reply, not denying that they had been with her, because this may have led to a search. (21) **water**, of Jordan, this movement secured Dav. against surprise. This must have occurred late at night, or very early in the morning.^d (22) **morning light**, of day following the flight.

The escape over Jordan (vs. 22). — I. The true servant of God will find this life full of difficulty and dangers. II. God is always on his side to warn him of danger and provide for his safety. III. The morning light of an eternal day will reveal the great king's host and show that there lacked not one of them that is not gone over Jordan.

Deliverance. —

O weary ones, ye may not see
Your helpers in their downward flight,
Nor hear the sound of silver wings
Slow beating through the hush of night!
There are who, like the Seer of old,
Can see the helpers God has sent,
And how Life's rugged mountain side
Is white with many an angel tent. — *Whittier*.

23-26. (23) his city, Giloh, ch. xv. 12. **hanged himself**,^e in excessive mortification at the rejection of his counsel, wh. he knew was the death-knell of the rebellion. Many resemblances bet. Ahit. and Judas. (24) **Mahanaim**,^f *Ge. xxxii. 2*, a fortified city, in a well-provisioned country, a good rallying point. (25) **Amasa**,^g nephew to David. Amasa was probably the Amasai mentioned in 1 Chron. xii. 18, as bringing a powerful reinforcement to David while at Ziklag; but the ambition of supplanting Joab made him now forget David's long friendship. — *Pulp. Com.* **Ithra**, or *Jether*. **Nahash**, either Jesse's wife, or the name of first husband of Zeruah and Abigail's mother. (26) **pitched**, to decide the kingdom by a battle.

The godless man's refuge from disappointed pride (vs. 23). — I. In Ahithophel we have a proud man writhing with mortification. In his overweening estimate of his own intellectual superiority he deems it impossible that another can be counted wiser than himself. II. We have further a man so proud that

he cannot endure the slights of his fellow-men, and yet so blind that he will hurry to the sentence of a higher tribunal. III. He who is wrong with man cannot, by self-destruction, put himself right with God. IV. Let any who may be tempted to put an end to their life consider Matt. x. 28.

The suicide of a godless man.—An avowed infidel, whose language and conduct had been most profane, and who had boldly argued for man's right to kill himself when he found it expedient, swallowed a quantity of opium which put an end to his life. Among his papers was found one, on which was written, "I have this moment swallowed a phial of tincture of opium, consequently my life will be but short. Whether there will be a heaven or a hell, I leave parsons to divine." The part of the manuscript which followed was blotted, and concluded thus: "My hand trembles, my eyes grow dim, I can see to write no more, but he that would be happy should be religious."—*Whitecross.*

27—29. (27) *Shobi*, poss. appointed governor of Ammon after the taking of Rabbah. *Machir*, ch. ix. 4. *Barzillai*,^a ch. xix. 31—40. *Rogelim*, the fullers, situated in the highlands of Gilead. (28) *beds*, rugs for the women and children. *basons*, cups. (29) *cheese of kine*, from buttermilk.^b

Sympathy in the day of adversity (vs. 27—29).—I. The characteristics of true sympathy; it is—1. Spontaneous. 2. Practical. 3. Timely. 4. Discriminating. 5. Courageous. II. Its place in the working out of God's purposes. All true sympathy is a revelation, bringing hope and courage and strengthening faith. III. Its recognition by God; the benefactors being mentioned by name in His Word.—*Chapman.*

Speaking-trumpet assistance.—An Italian coast-guard reported to the government in regard to a wreck: We attempted to give every assistance possible through the speaking-trumpet; notwithstanding which next morning twenty corpses were washed ashore.—*Drummond.* *Relief.*—It is through the God in man, in the throbbing heart of humanity, the warm, loving, sympathetic soul that realizes its kinship to the lowly and suffering that relief and solace must come, if at all. It is only when prayers are crystallized into deeds that they become true prayers.—*R. T. Watson.* *The best part of possession.*—We are not at all sure that we shall have any possessions, anything of our own, in the future life—anything, consequently, to give away. Perhaps it will all belong to all. So let us have enough of giving while we can, and enjoy the best part of possession.—*Jean Ingelow.*

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"O that this too, too solid flesh would melt, thaw, and resolve itself into a dew; or that the everlasting had not fixed His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. O God! O God! how weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world."—*Shakespeare.*

provisions sent to David

a Ezer. ii. 61-63.

b Some suggest potted meat, as now prepared in E., as food for journeys.

"We lose what on ourselves we spend; We have as treasure without end, Whatever, Lord, to Thee we lend, Who givest all!"—*Wordsworth.*

"Say thy say, and I will do my deed."—*Tennyson.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1—5. (1) *the people*, many Gileadites having joined Dav. he had now quite an army. *captains, etc.*, 1 Sa. viii. 12.^c (2) *Ittai*, a recognition of his devotion.^d (3) *thou . . . us*, as the revolution sought to change the king, everything depended on Dav.'s life.^e *succour . . . city*, wh. would be done by covering their retreat, if necessary. (4) *gate side*, to give his charge about Ab., and his blessing on the enterprise. (5) *gently*, they might take prisoner but not kill.

Deal gently with Absalom (vs. 5).—Absalom, the arch-conspirator, was in imminent peril from the zeal and love of David's adherents. Our love for our King may lead us to deal harshly with His foes. II. Amid the multifarious concerns of the situation David cares for his prodigal son. God's tenderness and clemency are still greater. III. David urges the strongest plea in his son's behalf, "For my sake." This is Christ's plea—for my sake—be kind to the sinner, I died for him. It shows a truer appreciation of the work and mind of Jesus to be kind to those who are rebels against the great King, than to treat them with the severity of godly zeal.

Value depends on place (vs. 3).—King James IV. commanded in person at the battle of Flodden Field. Both parties did wonders, but none on either side did more than the king himself. He was told that by coming to handy blows he could do no more than another man, whereas by keeping the post due to his station, he might be worth many thousands. Yet he could not only fight in person, but also on foot. It was said by one of the generals who fought with Wellington that the presence of the Iron Duke in any part of the field was equal to a reinforcement by a division of three or four thousand men.

David's charge concerning Absalom

c Ewald thinks Mahanaim had been besieged, but from some unknown cause Ab. had been compelled to raise the siege.

d 2 Sa. xv. 19-21.

e Comp. 1 Ki. xxii. 31.

"Y' had best, quoth Ralpho, as the ancients say wisely,—Have a care 'o the main chance, and look before you ere you leap; for as you sow you are like to reap."—*Butler.*

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battle in the wood of Ephraim

a "The name may be explained fr. the connection of blood with the Trans-Jordanic Manasseh, or from the massacre of the Ephraimites in that neighborhood by Jephthah. (Ju. xii. 6)." — *Stanley*.

Absalom caught in the oak

b 1 Ki. 1. 33, 38, 44.

c "It is needless to be continually on one's guard against the branches of the trees, and any thick bough interposing in the path might easily dislodge a rider fr. his seat." — *Hartley*.

d "A girdle, curiously and richly wrought, was among the ancient Heb. a mark of honor, and sometimes bestowed as a reward of military merit." — *Jamieson*.

Joab slays Absalom

e "Though an act of disobedience, from the statesman's point of view, Joab's act was one of good policy." — *Kittó*.

f "Mod. Jews, as they pass the monument in the valley of the Kidron, to wh. they have given his name, have buried its sides deep in the stones wh. they throw against it in execration." — *Stanley*.

Absalom's pillar

Ahimaaz,
Cushi

g "His real monument was a solitary

6-8. (6) **wood of Ephraim**, certainly somewhere E. of Jordan.^a (7) **slaughter**, in mod. language, so many were put *hors de combat*, not actually killed. (8) **scattered**, through skilful generalship of Joab, acting in three divisions. **wood devoured**, "thick oaks, tangled bushes, and thorny creepers growing over rugged rocks and ruinous precipices, down which the rebel army plunged in wild dismay." — *Thomson*.

Advance to the battle (vss. 2, 3). — It is said when the footsore and wearied regiments of the Union Army neared Gettysburg, and the sounds of the battle reached their ears, worn-out and sick officers and men, inspired with a new strength, grasped their arms, moved forward to the scene of strife. A poor fellow, who looked the image of death, hobbled out of an ambulance, and, shouldering his musket, was just starting forward, when the surgeon stopped him with, "Where are you going, sir?" The brave fellow tried hard to stand firm and speak boldly, "To the front, doctor." "What! a man in your condition! You can't march half a mile. You haven't strength to carry yourself, let alone your musket and equipments. You have every symptom of the typhoid fever: a little over-exertion will certainly kill you?" "Well, doctor," said he, "if I must die, I would rather die in the field than in an ambulance." — *E. B. Tuthill*.

9-13. (9) **mule**, *lit. the mule, i. e., the king's own*.^b **great oak, terebinth**, **head caught**, wedged into a fork of the branches.^c — *Josephus*. (10) **hanged**, not in sense of dead. (11) **a girdle**, girdles were costly things, often given as presents.^d (12) **charged**, vs. 5. (13) *R. V.*, "otherwise if I had dealt falsely ag. his life (and there is no matter hid fr. the king), then thou thyself," etc.

The snarer ensnared (vs. 9). — I. The sword had so far spared Absalom, now the wood devoured him. II. He who would not have spared his father is now unspared by God. III. Those captivating tresses by which — as an element of his personal beauty — the people were fascinated prove his ruin. IV. Lifted up between earth and heaven, of which place was he worthy?

Sin its own avenger (vs. 9). — The city of Luna was sacked and destroyed by a Norse robber, Hastings, who feigned repentance, was baptized, and afterwards, apparently dead, was brought into the city to the cathedral in his coffin; but during the funeral services he arose from his coffin a full-armed soldier, smote bishops and priests, let in his comrades, and set fire to the city. So the avenger of sin is often concealed within the form of the sin itself. — *Peloubet*.

14-17. (14) **tarry**, "lose time in such discourse." **three darts**, the word is not elsewhere used for the lance or javelin; but trans. *spear* is well supported. (15) **slew him**, finishing the work.^e (16) **blew**, etc., ch. ii. 28. **Israel**, it is to be noted how frequently Ab.'s followers were called "Israel." Absalom's was evidently the popular cause, and, besides Uriah's murder, there must have been political reasons for discontent at work to make David's government so distasteful. — *Pulp. Com.* **held back**, bec. Ab.'s death ended the battle. (17) **heap of stones**, not as monument, but in execration of his crime.^f **tent**, *i. e.* home, the word "tent" a relic of Israel's nomad life.

Brief splendor, then death. — In the human sacrifices of the Aztecs, a beautiful young man being selected, was clothed in the best garments, feasted with the nobles, given every pleasure, and treated as if he were a god, for three months. When the time for the sacrifice came, as he ascended the steps of the altar, he threw away the jewels which adorned him, and the musical instruments with which he had solaced his hours, and at the top was made a bloody sacrifice. — *Prescott*. *The reward of ingratitude*. — Adolph, son of Arnold, Duke of Guelders, dissatisfied that his father should live so long, came upon him one night as he was going to bed, took him prisoner, obliged him to go on foot, in a cold season, barelegged as he was, and then shut him a close prisoner in a dark dungeon for six months. Such disobedience and cruelty, did not, however, go long unpunished; for, shortly after, the son was apprehended, kept for a long time in prison, and after his release slain in a battle with the French. — *O. T. Anec.*

18-23. (18) Contrasting the monument of shame he had, with the monument of pride which he planned for himself.^g **king's dale**, valley of Jehosh-

aphat; or poss. in the south, near Hebron: the vale of Shaveh.^a **no son**, ch. xiv. 27; these must have died. **Ab.'s place**,^b R. V., "monument." (19) **run**, this was his peculiar and well-known power (vs. 27). (20) **shalt not**, bec. Joab feared the instant passionate anger of the king. (21) **Cushi**, an Ethiopian, the Cushite, one of Joab's negro slaves; he was chosen bec. the news to Dav. would be evil and the runner receive no reward. (22) **thou . . ready**, R. V., "thou wilt have no reward for the tidings." (23) **plain**, though farther round, the road may have been easier.

Absalom's pillar (vs. 18). — Learn — I. That nothing can prosper without the blessing of God, and that this can never rest on the head of one who is wanting in filial duty. II. That it is a sorrowful thing when the great love of Christ is cast away; for it is stronger than the love of parents. III. That any who wish to be remembered after death should seek to establish some worthier memorial than Absalom did. — *W. Tringham* *Another outline on same verse*. — I. The monument desired; (1) It is the fate of man to die and be soon forgotten; (2) It is the wish of man to be remembered; (3) Absalom took steps to preserve the memory of his name. Hence the pillar he reared. What was the epitaph? It could not be "To the memory of a faithful friend, an affectionate brother, a loyal subject, and a dutiful son." II. The monument realized: (1) Who raised it? Those who execrated his memory; (2) What was it? A heap or cairn of stones without an inscription, just to mark the spot where he lay; (3) Where was it? In a dark wood, not among the tombs of the great and good. III. Account for the difference; (1) Absalom seemed to think that his being of royal birth was sufficient to secure a royal tomb, with a high-sounding inscription on it; (2) He forgot that a true epitaph is a summing up of the chief exploits of the life, and the leading features of the character. Learn: (1) Your epitaph will presently have to be written. What would you like it to be? (2) Are you striving to deserve the epitaph that you desire? (3) The grace of God can make you all that you wish to be, and more; (4) However lowly your monument on earth, seek to have your name written in heaven.

The tomb of Absalom (vs. 18). — On the east, we came to the reputed tomb of Absalom, resembling nearly, in the size, form, and decoration of its square base, that of Zacharias, before described: except that it is sculptured with the metopes and triglyphs of the Doric order. This is surmounted by a sharp conical dome, of the form used in our modern parasols, having large mouldings, resembling ropes running round its base, and on the summit something like an imitation of flame. The dome is of masonry, and on the eastern side there is a square aperture in it. It is probable that this monument really occupies the place of that mentioned to have been set up by him whose name it bears. Josephus, in relating the same circumstance, calls the pillar a marble one; he fixes its distance at two furlongs from Jerusalem, and says it was named Absalom's Hand. — *Buckingham*.

24-28. (24) **two gates**, inner and outer. **roof**, or tower above the gates. (25) **apace**, swiftly. (26) Coming thus singly showed the army was not defeated. (27) **running**, so peculiar as to be noticed at a distance. **good man**, Dav. thought that Joab would not have selected such a man as Ahimaaz as the bearer of evil tidings. (28) **called**, shouting out before actual arrival. His message equivocal.

Running footmen. — Philippides, being sent by the Athenians to Sparta, to implore their aid in the Persian war, in the space of two days ran one thousand two hundred and sixty furlongs — that is, one hundred and seventy Roman miles and a half. Eucidas was sent by the same Athenians to Delphos, to desire some of the holy fire from thence. He went and returned in the same day, having walked a thousand furlongs, or one hundred and twenty-five Roman miles. When Fonteius and Vipsanus were consuls, there was a boy called Addas, who, in one day, ran seventy-five miles. — *Percy Anec.*

29-33. (29) He had not courage enough to tell all he knew. **the king's servant**, the Vulgate prob. gives the right sense of this passage: "When Joab the King's servant sent me thy servant." (30) **turn aside**, Dav. wanted news from the second runner. (31) **tidings**, as a foreigner, and a servant only, the Cushite would not feel the hesitation of Ahimaaz. (32) **enemies, etc.**, even he seems to be afraid to tell the truth plainly. (33) **chamber**, seeking privacy, but his cry of grief was heard. **would . . thee**, and it was conscience which smote him; for his own "sin had found him out." In Ps.

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cairn in the wild forest, instead of a lordly pillar in the 'King's dale,' near the capital city." — *Wordsworth*.

a Ge. xiv. 17.

b "The tomb said to be Ab.'s is 24 ft. sq., dometopped, and reaches 40 ft. in height, but the architecture is not of the period." — *Jamieson*.

"We also, careless of a monument by the grave, should build it in the world — a monument by which men may be taught to remember, not where we died, but where we lived." — *Ruskin*.

"How many are so entombed by the riches, the honors, the pleasures, and the sins of the world, as only to be taken out of them to be buried in the earth." — *Marsh*.

"If we would perpetuate our fame or reputation, we must do things worth writing, or write things worth reading." — *Pliny*.

David waiting for news

"Is a man seen to run fast, it is said, 'Ah! there is news in his mouth.'" — *Roberts*.

"Sorrow turns the stars into mourners, and every wind of heaven into a dirge." — *Hannay*.

David mourns for Absalom

c "He rushed into the watchman's chamber over the gateway and eight times over re-

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peated the wail
of grief for Abi-
his son."—*Stanley*.

"A master passion
is the love of news;
not music so com-
mands, nor so the
Muse: give poets
claret, they grow
idle soon; feed the
musician, and he's
out of tune."—*G
Crabbe*.

In the depths of
the sea the waters
are still; the heav-
iest sorrow is that
borne in silence;
the deepest love
flows through the
eye and touch,
the purest joy is
unspeakable; the
most impressive
prayer is silent;
and the most
solemn preacher at
a funeral is whose
lips are cold.

"Tears are the
safety-valves of the
heart, when too
much pressure is
laid on."—*Albert
Smith*.

Joab hears
of David's
grief

a "Not through
the gate where
David was."—
Wordsworth.

"A pound of en-
ergy with an ounce
of talent will
achieve greater
results than a
pound of talent
with an ounce of
energy."—*William
Mathews*.

"God made both
tears and laughter,
and both for kind
purposes; for as
laughter enables
mirth and surprise
to breathe freely,
so tears enable
sorrow to vent
itself patiently.

xxxviii. and xl. he has made the confession that it was his own iniquity which was now surging over his head.—*Pulp. Com.*

A father's question.—I. This was an affectionate father's inquiry concerning a very dear son of his who was away from home. II. It was his inquiry concerning a son whom he knew to be surrounded by wicked advisers. III. It was his inquiry concerning a son whom he knew to be engaged in a wicked and dangerous enterprise. IV. It was his inquiry, although he knew that if his son were safe he himself would be in peril. 7. It was an inquiry that was doomed to meet with a very sad reply. Learn: (1) The young man away from home is not forgotten; (2) The hearts at home are much affected by knowledge of previous history and character; (3) There is no real safety for the young till they are "safe in the arms of Jesus," and are "kept by the power of God unto salvation;" (4) So decide, pray, and live, that in reply to the question, "Is the young man safe?" it may be said—to the great joy of those who hear the news—"Yes, he is safe in the society of the good, and in the service of Christ."—*Hive*.

Is the young man safe?—That is a question every parent and every friend of young men should ask. Is the young man safe from intemperance, from bad companions, from bad books, from dishonest conduct, from bad habits? Is he safe in Jesus Christ? Is he safe in a good home and among good influences? Is he safe for this world? Is he safe for eternity? Ask yourself, also, what you are doing to make him and keep him safe? Is the young man safe? No. Why not? 1. Because he has begun to taste intoxicating drinks. 2. Because he has given up his life to regular money-making. 3. Because he is reckless in his way of handling money. 4. Because his thoughts are not pure. 5. Because he has a lot of opinions that are false. 6. Because his parents do not set him a good example.—*A. F. Schauffler*.

The chamber over the gate.—

"Is it so far from thee
Thou canst no longer see
In the chamber over the gate
The old man desolate,
Weeping and wailing sore
For his son who is no more?
'O Absalom, my son!'

"Somewhere at every hour,
The watchman on the tower
Looks forth, and sees the fleet
Approach of the hurrying feet
Of messengers that bear
The tidings of despair,
'O Absalom, my son!'

"He goes forth from the door
Who shall return no more.
With him our joy departs;
The light goeth out in our hearts;
In the chamber over the gate
We sit disconsolate.
'O Absalom, my son!'

"That 'tis a common grief
Bringeth but slight relief;
Ours is the bitterest loss,
Ours is the heaviest cross;
And forever the cry will be,
'Would God I had died for thee,
O Absalom, my son!'

—*Longfellow*.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1-4. (1) **king weepeth**, in a way to depress the people. Joab knew it was time for action, not for mourning, if the king was to be restored. (2) **victory**, Heb. *deliverance or salvation*. (3) **by stealth**,^a not entering as a triumphant army should with flags and songs. (4) **covered his face**, one of the attitudes of grief, ch. xv. 30.

A disastrous victory (vs. 2).—Wellington said that the next worst thing to a terrible defeat was a glorious victory. I. Here a victory won, but a noble lost. II. Here a victory won, but a father bereft of his child. III. Other victories than those won on the tented field are similarly expensive.

Between the gates (see xviii. 24).—Now, in looking at the account given us in 2 Sa. xviii. and xix. we see the tower of entrance into Mahanaim furnished, like the castle at Tunbridge, with two pairs of gates, the one at a distance from the other, the king sitting between them, not, we may justly believe, in the passage itself, so as to block up the way, or at all incommode those who might be passing, but in a room by the side of the way. We find a watchman on the top of the tower, made, without doubt, commodious for that purpose by the staircases communicating with each other from the bottom to the top, as the English castle was flat, and covered with lead, for the purpose of

desecrating at a distance those who were coming, as well as wounding assailants. We find the observations made by the watchman were not communicated by him immediately to the king, but by the warder at the outer gate: and that there was communication between this lower room in which David first sat, and the upper room over the gateway, for by that means he retired to give vent to his sorrow. *The real cause of gloom.*—The moon, in an eclipse, complained to the sun, "Why, O my dearest friend, dost thou not shine upon me as usual?" "Do I not?" said the sun; "I am sure I am shining as I always do. Why do you not enjoy my light as usual?" "Oh, I see!" said the moon, "the earth has got between us."—*Peloubet.*

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Tears hinder sorrow from becoming despair and madness; and laughter is one of the very privileges of reason, being confined to the human species."—*Leigh Hunt.*

5-8. (5) **Joab . . said**, this want of appreciation for a great victory annoyed Joab. He felt injured. His loyalty and practical sagacity, together with his hard, unsympathetic nature, appear in this speech, wh. saved to Dav. the fruits of the victory. **shamed . . faces**, Ps. lxxix. 7. **sons, etc.**, Ju. ix. 5. (6) **regardest**, with pleasure, none of those who have imperiled their lives for you. Dav. needed such an arousing. (7) **go forth, fr. the chamber** to meet the returning soldiers. **comfortably**, encouragingly, thankfully. **I swear, etc.**, a strong statement that the army would not remain loyal to a king who allowed private grief to outweigh gratitude. (8) **sat in the gate**, cheered the people with his presence. **Israel, Ab.'s followers**.

It must be overcome.—1. Through the word of earnest admonition. 2. By energetically rising up to new life and faithful discharge of the duties of our calling. 3. By accepting the consolation and strength which come from above.—*Lange's Com.*

Reproof.—Philip of Macedon said he was beholden to the Athenian orators for reproving him; for he would endeavor both by words and actions to make them liars. And Plato, hearing it was asserted by some persons that he was a very bad man, said, "I shall take care to live so that nobody will believe them."—*Laconics.*

9-15. (9) **at strife**, uncertain and divided as to the course to adopt.^d (10) **whom . . us**, this anointing not mentioned elsewhere. But it led Dav. to withhold his return until summoned by the elders of the nation. **speak ye not**, the rebellion has failed, can we do better than recall Dav. to the throne? (11) **ye the last**, Jud. being Dav.'s own tribe, and active in helping Ab. needed to receive fr. Dav. assurances of forgiveness and favor; but there are many traces of its jealous feeling. (12) **bones, etc.**, ch. v. 1. (13) **Amasa**, now leader of the tribe. **of my bone**, here actual relationship. **room of Joab**, a dangerous promise, instigated by Dav.'s infatuation for Ab., and strong dislike for Joab, ch. iii. 39; xvi. 10; xix. 22. (14) **bowed**, with this appeal and persuasion. (15) **Gilgal**, Jos. v. 9, convenient, as being near the fords.

The influence of superior minds.—I. The natural basis. David was a born king of men. II. Acquired increment. The development of natural gifts by an educational process. III. Spiritual endowment. A consecrated heart and intellect gains influence by its consecration. IV. Circumstantial aids. Seasons of public interest are favorable to the putting forth of the influence that superior minds can exercise.—*Chapman, in Pulpit Com.*

Amasa (vs. 13).—As to the promise to Amasa, of constituting him general in Joab's room, the prudence of this may be also easily vindicated. For Amasa stood in the same degree of consanguinity to David as Joab did, and the offer to him of making him captain-general must, as it has been well observed, have been influenced by the personal qualities of the man—the importance of gaining him over—he being a person of great power and authority, and having a resentment against Joab for the murder of Abner and Absalom. Besides, I doubt not but that David thought he should now be able to break Joab's power, and bring him to an account for his repeated assassinations and treasons, as well as fix Amasa forever in his interest, by placing so high a degree of confidence in him as to give him the command of all the forces in his kingdom. This hath been frequently the method by which great men have endeavored to gain over their enemies, and it argues a real generosity of soul, of which little minds are utterly incapable, to win an adversary to his duty by such unexpected instances of confidence and friendship. When Cinna, the grandson of Pompey, and

Joab reproves David

a1 K. xv. 29; xvi. 11; 2 Ki. x. 7, 11, 17.

b "This threat, grounded on the general's unbounded popularity with the army, showed him to be a dangerous person."—*Jamieson.*

c2 Sa. xv. 2; Je. xxxviii. 7; xxxix. 8.

Judah goes to welcome David

d "The sentiments of three different parties are represented in vs. 9, 10. The royalists, the adherents of Ab., and those indifferent to the Davidic dynasty."—*Jamieson.*

Daily ought we to renew our purposes, and stir up ourselves to greater fervor, and to say, Help me, my God! in this my good purpose and in thy holy service, and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

"Memory is Adam sitting outside the gates of Paradise, weeping over pleasures gone forever."

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Hope is Adam, in the strength of God's promises, going about to engage in the activities of a holy life, looking for the everlasting joys of the world to come."—*Deems*.

Shimei joins in the welcome

a 1 Ki. ii. 8, 9.

b Stanley "Prob. a raft, such as have been used from time immemorial on the Euphrates and Tigris; and the word rendered 'household' may mean merely goods."

c "Joseph comprehends all Israel (Jos. xvi. 1)." —*Keil*.

"A curse is like a cloud, it passes." —*Byron*.

David spares Shimei

"This nor hurts him, nor profits you a jot; forbear it, therefore; give your cause to heaven." —*Shakespeare*.

Mephibosheth meets David

d "The facts related in this vs. tend to clear Mephibosheth from the suspicion of

other great men, conspired against Augustus, he not only pardoned them, but nominated Cinna consul for the ensuing year; and Cæsar not only spared Brutus, after he had appeared in arms against him, but took him into favor as his intimate friend, and intrusted him with the government of Gaul.—*Chandler*. *How to resent an injury*.—A gentleman who had filled many high stations in public life, with the greatest honor to himself and advantage to the nation, once went to Sir Eardley Wilmot in great anger at a real injury that he had received from a person high in the political world, which he was considering how to resent in the most effectual manner. After relating the particulars to Sir Eardley, he asked if he did not think it would be manly to resent it. "Yes," said Sir Eardley, "it would doubtless be manly to resent it, but it would be godlike to forget it." This, the gentleman declared, had such an instantaneous effect upon him that he came away quite another man, and in a temper entirely altered from that in which he went.—*Laconics*.

16—20. (16) Shimei,^a ch. xvi. 5-13. (17) thousand men, to show how valuable his help might be. Ziba, ch. xvi. 1-4. went . . king, R. V., "went through Jordan in the presence of the king." Ziba and his retinue dashed into the river and crossed it—the word for *went over* is a peculiar one, expressing impetuous movement—to show their zeal by meeting the king on the eastern bank.—*Cam. B.* (18) ferry boat, or bridge of boats.^b as he was come over Jordan, i. e. at some time during the passage. (19) perversely, indic. his penitence. (20) house of Joseph,^c expression for all the 10 tribes, bec. they were led by Ephraim. Shimei avoids annoying Dav. by mention of Benj., Saul's tribe.

The worshiper of success.—I. Such craven souls always look less at the man than his circumstances. Shimei will do homage to success, not to the right. He will bow down as willingly to Absalom as to David. II. Such men are perfectly unreliable. If we succeed we may be sure of Shimei's help. Is it worth much? If we fail and need help we must not look to Shimei.

David's magnanimity (vs. 19).—

The fine and noble way to kill a foe
Is not to kill him: you with kindness may
So change him that he shall cease to be so;
And then he's slain. Sigismund used to say
His pardons put his foes to death; for when
He mortifi'd their hate, he kill'd them then.—*Aleyn*.

21—23. (21) Abishai, comp. 1 Sa. xxvi. 8; 2 Sa. xvi. 9. (22) adversaries, i. e. opposing Dav.'s best interests. any man, etc., mercy and forgiveness were becoming to such a day of joy. (23) not die, a very limited release; really no more than *not die just now*.

Royal magnanimity (vs. 23).—I. The kingly scorn with which David forgave the poor abject wretch. It must have stung him to the quick to find that David thought him and his past rebelliousness unworthy of notice. II. If you succeed, think of David, and be merciful to poor wretched Shimei. III. How many are there now in the ranks of Christ's friends who once reviled Him?

A king's forgiveness.—Louis XII, of France had been duke of Orleans before his elevation to the crown. During that time, a French nobleman had offered him several unjust and gross indignities. After his accession to the crown, some courtiers hinted to him that it was now in his power to avenge the affronts he had formerly received. His majesty's answer is truly worthy of being remembered—"God forbid that the king of France should remember the quarrels of the Duke of Orleans."—*Whitecross*.

24—30. (24) came down,^d it does not certainly appear whether he was wholly faithful: this is the favorable construction to put on his conduct. These are the actions, or neglectings, usual in time of grief. Difficult to determine whether Meph. came to the Jordan or to Jerusalem to see Dav. beard, the moustache, the beard of upper lip. (25) to Jerusalem, R. V., margin, "when Jerus. was come to meet." (26) deceived me, evidently scheming to secure favor for himself. Being lame, Mephib. was very dependent on others. (27) good, right in thy kingly judgment. (29) Impatient answer,

divide, making Ziba partner, no longer servant. (30) all, Meph. desired to show that his regard was for Dav., not for his property.

The king's favor is better than life (vs. 30). — I. In the absence of Jesus what is there can make us happy and content? II. In the presence of Jesus how much previously considered needful is no longer valued.

A court preacher (vs. 30). — Thomas Fuller, so well known as the author of the *Worthies of England*, and other works, on first coming to London, soon distinguished himself so much in the pulpits there, that he was invited by the master and brotherhood of the Savoy to be their lecturer. On the breaking out of the rebellion, and when the king left London in 1641 to raise an army, Mr. Fuller continued at the Savoy, and labored all the while, both in public and private, to promote the cause of the king. On the anniversary of his inauguration, when the king had left London with a view to commence hostilities against the rebels, March 27, 1642, Fuller preached at Westminster Abbey a sermon from this verse. The sermon, as may well be supposed, gave great offense, and the preacher was soon afterwards forced to withdraw from London; on which, he proceeded to Oxford, to share the fortunes of the king. As Charles had heard much of his abilities in the pulpit, he was now desirous of witnessing them personally; and accordingly, Fuller preached before his majesty at St. Mary's Church. The impression which this sermon made was singular enough. In London, Fuller had been censured for being too hot a royalist; and now he was thought to show lukewarmness to the royal cause. So far was this, however, from being the case that he afterwards joined the royal army, and attended it from place to place, constantly exercising the duty of a chaplain; and after the battle of Cheriton-Down, March 29, 1644, being left at Basing-house, he animated the garrison to so vigorous a defense of that place that Sir William Waller was obliged to raise the siege with considerable loss. — *Percy Anec.*

31—35. (31) Barzillai, ch. xvii. 27. (32) great, in wealth and position. (33) feed, give honor of a seat at the royal table. (34) long, etc., R. V., "How many are the days of the years of my life?" Too old to make such a change. (35) Enumeration of infirmities of great age.

The picture of a venerable and pious old age. — 1. Blessed of God, it devotes the temporal goods it has received to the service of compassionate brotherly love, far from all avarice; 2. Honored by men, it desires not the vain honor of this world, far from all ambition; 3. Near the grave, it longs only for home, far from all disposition to find blessedness in this life; 4. But as long as God grants life, even with failing powers it still serves the Lord and His kingdom, and in this service honors Him by the devotion even of its dearest — far from all self-seeking. — *Lange's Com.*

Happiness in old age (vs. 34). — Wilberforce remarked, "I can scarcely understand why my life is spared so long, except it be to show that a man can be as happy without a fortune as with one." And soon after, when his only surviving daughter died, he writes, "I have often heard that sailors on a voyage will drink, 'Friends astern!' till they are half way over; then, 'Friends ahead.' With me it has been 'Friends ahead!' this long time." *Old age of the good and blessed state.* — "To him," observes the biographer of Archbishop Leighton, "death had lost its sting; it was become a pleasant theme, and gave occasion to some of his most cheerful sayings. He would compare the heavy load of clay with which the soul is encumbered to the miry boots of which the traveler divests himself on finishing his journey; and he could not disguise his own wish to be speedily unclothed, instead of lingering below till his garments were worn out, or dropped off through old age. In general his temper was serene rather than gay; but his nephew states that, if ever he rose to an unusual pitch of vivacity, it was when some illness attacked him: when, from the shaking of the prison doors, he was led to hope that some of those brisk blasts would throw them open, and give him the release he coveted. Then he seemed to stand tiptoe on the margin of eternity, in a delightful amazement of spirit, eagerly waiting the summons, and feeding his soul with the prospect of immortal life and glory.

Beautiful old age. —

The dying

Looked up into her face, and thought indeed to behold there
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor,
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,

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unfaithfulness to David." — *Spk. Com.*

"Pity and need make all flesh kin." — *Arnold.*

"The love that will be annihilated sooner than be treacherous, has already made death impossible." — *Emerson.*

Maintain your pastoral integrity and independence, lest you sear your conscience, quench the Holy Spirit, forfeit the confidence of your people, and lose the favor of God.

Barzillai

a "Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty; for in my youth I never did apply hot and rebellious liquors in my blood; nor did not with unbashful forehead woo the means of weakness and debility; therefore my age is as a lusty winter, frosty, but kindly." — *Shakespeare.*

"His mien is lofty, his demeanor great, nonsprightly folly wants in his air; nor dull serenity becalms his eyes, such had I trusted once as soon as seen; but cautious age suspects the flattering form, and only credits what experience tells." — *Johnson.*

"Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye." — *Shakespeare.*

"When men grow virtuous in their old age, they are merely making a sacrifice to God of the devil's leavings." — *Swift.*

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Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance,
Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,
Into whose shining gates ere long their spirits would enter.
— Longfellow, "Evangeline."

Chimham

a 1 Kl. ii. 7.

b Comp Je. xli. 17.

"What is age but the holy place of life, chapel of ease for all men's wearied miseries? And to rob that of her ornament, it is accused, as from a priest to steal a holy vestment, ay, and convert it to a sinful covering."—*Massinger*.

"The leaves of memory seem to make a mournful rustling in the dark."—*Longfellow*.

strife between Israel and Judah

c "Got possession by stealthy, underground proceedings."—*Spk. Com.*

d "Here was a ferment that broke out at a future day."—*Chalmers*.

"Never do anything that can denote an angry mind; for although everybody is born with a certain degree of passion, and, from untoward circumstances, will sometimes feel its operation, and be what they call 'out of humor,' yet a sensible man or woman will never allow it to be discovered."—*Ld. Collingwood*.

Sheba and Amasa

e 2 Sa. xvi. 7; xxli. 5. "The usual term of invective cast down from between the various parties in the state."—*Stanley*.

f Ge. xli. 21; 1 Chr. vii. 6-8.

36-40. (36) such a reward, as to make him a courtier. (37) Aged people become greatly attached to their ancestral homes. **Chimham**, his son.^a (38) will do, etc., **Chimham** seems to have received an inheritance at Bethlehem.^b (39) people, meaning David's party. (40) conducted, taking the principal parts and positions. This gave great offense.

A beautiful old age. — I. Old age itself naturally awakens a tender interest. II. Old age exhibits a special beauty where it is pervaded by kindly feelings and earnest piety. III. An old age thus beautified is very helpful to others. IV. A beautiful old age is an abiding charm in the memory. — *Chapman*.

The softening influence of age. — Men, like peaches and pears, grow sweet a little while before they begin to decay. I don't know what it is — whether a spontaneous change, mental or bodily, or whether it is through the experience of the thanklessness of critical honesty, but it is a fact that most writers, except sour and unsuccessful ones, get tired of finding fault at about the time they are beginning to grow old. At thirty we are all trying to cut our names in big letters upon the wall of this tenement of life; twenty years later we have carved them or shut up our jackknives. Then we are ready to help others and care less to hinder any, because nobody's elbows are in our way. Do you know that in the gradual passage from maturity to helplessness the harshest characters have sometimes a period in which they are gentle and placid as young children? — *Holmes*.

41-43. (41) stolen thee away,^c poss. no gathering of the entire nation had been called to escort the king, so the other tribes felt slighted, and censured Judah for not calling a general assembly and allowing the whole nation a part in this solemn transaction. (42) near of kin, they stood upon their tribal rights. eaten, etc., they made out that their act was one of simple duty, and did not involve advantage over others. (43) have . . ye, they claim a right even in Dav. by reason of their representing 10 tribes. fiercer,^d harder, more bitter, in the contention following.

Rivalry (vs. 43). — I. Both these parties professed to love the king; each had his way of showing it. II. One party displeased with the other, whose way succeeded, though both aimed at the same thing. III. The successful party instead of being most rancorous should have shown the greater kindness. IV. In this way may have been sown those seeds of strife that bore such bitter fruit in Rehoboam's time.

The resentment of Israel (vs. 41). — The pretense that the men of Judah had stolen him away was unreasonable and unjust. For while he was at Mahanaim, the tribes on that side Jordan all declared for him, and accompanied him to the passage of that river, and went over with him to join the rest of their brethren, who were come down to meet him; so that when they were all united at the passage of the river, there were actually present, by large deputations, the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and five others, who waited on him in his march to Gilgal. The truth of the case seems to be that the deputations from the more distant tribes, not being able to get farther than Gilgal, before the king's arrival there, envied the other tribes, and particularly that of Judah, which had the principal share in providing everything necessary for the king's passage over Jordan, and laid hold of the first opportunity to express their resentment against them. This was heightened by the imprudent haughty answer which the men of Judah made to their expostulation, that they had a peculiar right in the king, as he was near akin to them, because he was of their own tribe. — *Chandler*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1-5. (1) there, at Gilgal, where the altercation took place. **Belial**, De. xiii. 13.^e Benjamite, fr. the mountains of Ephraim. Instead of the "son of Bichri" the trans. should be a *Bichrite*, or descendant of *Becher*, son of Benjamin.^f no part, R. V., "no portion." He took Judah at her word and raised the banner of revolt. One is astonished to see how confused and discordant were all the elements which go to unify and strengthen national life,

Saul and Dav. had done but little to allay tribal jealousy by an aroused national sentiment. to his tents, usual watchword of insurrections. (2) **went up**, fr. Gilgal and Jordan plain. (3) **had left**, ch. xv. 16. **widowhood**,^a regarding them as defiled by Ab.'s sin. They were doomed, for no fault of theirs, to the weary lot of captives, cursing the day, probably, when their beauty had brought them to the palace, and wishing that they could exchange lots with the humblest of their sisters that breathed the air of freedom. Strange that, with all his spiritual instincts, David could not see that a system which led to such miserable results must lie under the curse of God! — *Exp. B.* (4) **Amasa**, now occupying Joab's place.^b Dav.'s affection for the dead Abs. was stronger than his sense of obligation to the state. Amasa had not Joab's promptness or influence. (5) **tarried**, the fact is stated, but the reason not assigned.

The disputes of brethren an opportunity for the foe (vs. 1). — I. A soft answer from Judah would have turned away the wrath of Israel. II. The resentment of Israel was as fuel for the spark of rebellion. III. It needed only a man of Belial to apply the torch and set the kingdom in a blaze. IV. The same principle will apply to parties in politics — to churches — to families.

Envy. — The envious man is in pain upon all occasions which ought to give him pleasure. The relish of his life is inverted, and the objects which administer the highest satisfaction to those who are exempt from this passion, give the quickest pangs to persons who are subject to it. All the perfections of their fellow-creatures are odious. Youth, beauty, valor and wisdom are provocative of their displeasure. What a wretched and apostate state is this! to be offended with excellence, and to hate a man because we approve him! The condition of the envious man is the most emphatically miserable; he is not only incapable of rejoicing in another's merit or success, but lives in a world where all mankind are in a plot against his quiet, by studying their own happiness and advantage. — *Steele*.

6-10. (6) **Abishai**, putting a new slight on Joab.^c **fenced cities**, involving the perils and anxieties of siege. It was important to nip this sudden insurrection in the bud. **escape us**, a phrase of doubtful meaning: *LXX.* "overshadow our eyes," i. e. give us anxiety. *R. V.*, "escape out of our sight." (7) **Cherethites**, etc., ch. viii. 18. (8) **Gibeon**, *El Jib.* 5 or 6 m. N. N. W. of Jerus. **went before**, *R. V.*, "came to meet them." **fell out**, of its sheath, wh. was fastened to the girdle.^d (9) **art thou in health?** *R. V.*, "Is it well with thee?" **by the beard**, this action would hide the left-handed thrust. A mode of friendly salutation. (10) **fifth rib**, ch. ii. 23. **so, better and**.

Is it well with thee? — We shall isolate these words, "Art thou in health?" etc., from the context, using them in relation to spiritual health. There is abundant reason for our solicitude. A lack of spiritual health implies unhappiness. The backslider is necessarily miserable. Propound the question to some, who — I. Though in health, answer dubiously. The aged often draw mistaken conclusions from the fact that — 1. Their feelings are not so intense as they were. The question is, Are you making progress? not Are you as enthusiastic as when you started? Feeling is a sun-dial, God's Word the unalterable time-piece; 2. Their prayers seem unanswered. The woman of Canaan. At first, "not a word." Yet afterwards Christ said, "Woman, great is thy faith:" 3. Their labors are less abundant (see Nu. viii. 25). II. Though lacking health, reply in the affirmative. Because — 1. No outward marks. The deadliest form of the plague that ravaged London was that which gave the least sign. Heart disease exists while the body is hale and strong; 2. No fear of immediate danger. All departures from God are dangerous, and result in sorrow. III. Knowing their state aright answer in the negative. Let us — 1. Inquire as to your symptoms; 2. Prescribe some remedies. Don't think lightly of your case. Nor yield to despair. (1) Avoid all that disagrees with your health: carnal pleasures, evil companions. (2) Be often alone with the Good Physician. Virtue goeth out of Him. (3) Take freely of bitter herbs. Think how you grieve Christ and the Church. (4) Take the balm of Gilead. The doctrine of God's unchanging love, His encouraging promises. (5) Take plenty of exercise. Attend the means of grace; go into the vineyard. — *R. A. Griffin*.

Kissing the beard (vs. 9). — D'Arvieux was present at an Arabian entertainment, to which came all the emirs, a little while after his arrival, accompanied by their friends and attendants: and after the usual civilities, caresses, kiss-

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a "Ineligible for re-marriage." — *Ewald*.

b As having led Ab.'s force it might be supposed Judah would quickly respond to his call.

Joab slays Amasa and pursues Sheba

c "Prob. as the king was on bad terms with Joab, and wished to deprive him of his post as captain of the host, he gave his orders to Abishai, and weakly connived at the execution of them by Joab which was inevitable." — *Spk. Com.*

d "As if by accident, but in reality, this was so contrived by Joab, in order that he might use it against Amasa without putting him on his guard by drawing it fr. the scabbard." — *Wordsworth*.

"Malice is the devil's picture. Lust makes men brutish, and malice makes them devilish. Malice is mental murder; you may kill a man and never touch him; 'Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.'" — *T. Watson*.

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"Malice scorn'd
puts out itself, but
argued, gives a
kind of credit to
a false accusation."
—*Massinger*.

Joab besieges Beth-maachah

a Fr. Old. Eng.
walwe; A. S.
wealdian, to roll
oneself about, as in
mire.

b "As the army
came up every one
halted at the
ghastly sight. Its
removal broke the
spell."—*Stanley*.

c "Now called
Abel-el-Kaneh, on
east side of stream
Dedara, above the
waters of Merom."
—*Wordsworth*.

the head of Sheba sent to Joab

d 2 Sa. xiv. 2.

"Intrepidity is
an extraordinary
strength of mind,
which raises it
above the troubles
and disorders, and
the emotions,
which the sight of
great perils is cal-
culated to excite.
It is by this that
heroes maintain
themselves in a
tranquil state of
mind, and preserve
the free use of
their reason under
the most surprising
and terrible cir-
cumstances."—*La
Rochefoucauld*.

David's officers

ings of the beard, and of the hand, which every one gave and received accord-
ing to his rank and dignity, sat down upon mats. It was in this way,
perhaps, that Joab pretended to testify his respect for Amasa, his rival in the
favor of the king; he took him by the beard to kiss him, or agreeably to the
custom of these emirs, or Arabian chieftains, to kiss the beard itself; and in
this stooping posture he could much better see to direct the blow than if he
had only held his beard, and raised himself to kiss his face; while Amasa,
charmed by this high compliment, which was neither suspicious nor unusual,
and undoubtedly returning it with corresponding politeness, paid no attention
to the sword in the hand of his murderer.—*Paxton*.

11—15. (11) men, servants. by him, body of Amasa. for David, insin-
uating the disloyalty of Amasa. (12) wallowed, vs. 10.^a people, troops
raised by Amasa. stood still,^b as ch. ii. 23; this nearly spoiled Joab's expedi-
tion. (13) after Joab, the well-known leader. (14) Abel to Beth-maachah,
a town in the N. W. of Palestine,^c in tribe of Dan; it was fortified. Berites,
inhabitants of the district; or it may refer to fortresses of N. Palestine. The
sense will then be that Joab collected troops from all the fortresses in the
north of Israel.—*Spk. Com.* (15) bank, on which to plant engines. trench,
fortified space outside the wall. battered, verb implies by undermining;
R. V. margin, "undermined."

Removing hindrances to popularity (vs. 12).—I. We have the people filled
with horror at the sight of one dead man. They could not advance with that
corpse in the way. II. In the path of progress are many who are morally
dead. They block the way. III. The dead must be removed to make way for
the march of living men.

Excitement of popularity.—

Some shout him, and some hang upon his ear,
To gaze in 's eyes and bless him. Maidens wave
Their 'kerchiefs, and old women weep for joy;
While others, not so satisfied, unhorse
The gilded equipage, and, turning loose
His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve.—*Cowper*.

16—22. (16) wise woman,^d a person of some authority and influence. (17)
near, as near as was safe. (18) ask at Abel, this was a proverb based on the
traditional wisdom of the people at Abel. Joab had not asked whether they
agreed with Sheba. (19) I, she speaks in the name of the city. mother, i. e.
metropolis, chief town of the district. (20) Joab was willing to slay for
necessity or policy, but not naturally a blood-thirsty man. (21) deliver him,
the fight was only to secure a traitor. (22) in her wisdom, persuading them
to sacrifice one who was really their enemy. retired, R. V., dispersed, i. e.
the troops raised by Amasa returned to their homes. Joab led the small
standing army to Jerus.

Peaceful and faithful in Israel (vs. 19).—The excellent conduct of Mr.
Swartz, missionary in India, was such as to secure the confidence of all kinds
of people. In the time of war, when the fort of Tanjore was in a distressed
situation, a powerful enemy at hand, and not provision enough even for the
garrison, and when, to add to this distress, the neighboring inhabitants, who,
by ill-treatment, had lost all confidence in the Europeans, and the Rajah had
in vain entreated the help of the people, the only hope left was in Mr. Swartz.
"We have all lost our credit," said the Rajah to an English gentleman; "let us
try whether the inhabitants will trust Mr. Swartz." Accordingly, he was
desired to make an agreement with them. There was no time to be lost. The
Sepoys fell as dead people, being emaciated with hunger. The streets were
lined with dead bodies every morning. He sent, therefore, letters in every
direction, promising to pay, with his own hands, for every bullock that might
be taken by the enemy. In a day or two he got above a thousand bullocks.
He sent catechists and other Christians into the country, at the risk of their
lives, who returned in a short time, and brought into the fort a great quantity
of corn. Thus the fort was saved; and when all was over, he paid all the
people, made them a small present, and sent them away.—*Whitecross*.

23—26. (23) all the host, Dav. dared not remove him. Benaiah, ch. viii.
18. (24) Adoram, or Adoniram, 1 Ki. iv. 6, tribute, R. V., margin, "levy."

recorder,* or remembrancer, or historian. (25) **Sheva**, or **Seraiah**. (26) **chief ruler**, ch. viii. 18, comp. ch. xxiii. 38, perhaps *Jairite* should be *Ithrite*.

Over the tribute.—This was a new officer, and a new thing. For the Hebrew word *mas* does not mean "tribute," but "forced labor." This was one of the most oppressive exactions of old time. It was David who began this practice in Israel, exacting probably only from the descendants of the Canaanites (who, nevertheless, formed a considerable portion of the inhabitants of Palestine) forced labor employed in preparing for the building of the temple, and in the fortifications of his fenced cities.—*Pulp. Com.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-6. (1) **days of David**,^b the time of it is not fixed. **bloody house**, family on wh. rests the guilt of shedding innocent blood. **slew, etc.**, not else narrated. (2) **had sworn**, Jos. ix. 15. **zeal**, to carry out literally the enactments of the Lev. law, De. vii. 2. The plunder available for the king's friends made this warfare popular. (3) **atonement**, expiation. (4) No money payments in compensation, but blood for blood. (5) **the man**, avenging of blood must be taken of the family of the murderer. (6) **seven**, treated as a perfect number. **hang them up**, after death; not put to death by hanging.^c "This punishment was demanded by divine justice." **whom the Lord did choose**, this title is not elsewhere given to Saul: its use by the Gibeonites is so strange that many suspect the correctness of the text. A not improbable conjecture is to read, *the hill of the Lord, i. e. Gibeah*, as 1 Sam. x. 5.—*Spk. Com.*

Famine a punishment for sin (vs. 1).—The history teaches us—I. In what light we should view public calamities. II. The way in which we may get them removed. We should—1. Inquire into their sinful causes; 2. Put away whatever is displeasing to God.—*C. Simeon.*

In the days of David (vs. 1).—The burial of the bones of Saul and Jonathan as an act of respect to the slaughtered king makes it probable that the narrative belongs to the early part of David's reign, as also does the apparent fact that the seven victims were all young and unmarried. He spared the heir to Saul's throne. There is no adequate reason, therefore, for supposing that David was influenced by political motives, and the more important lesson of the narrative is the emphatic condemnation given in it of wrong and cruelty to aboriginal tribes.—*Pulp. Com.* *Spurious zeal (vs. 2).*—Let us take heed we do not sometimes call that zeal for God and His Gospel, which is nothing else but our own tempestuous and stormy passion. True zeal is a sweet, heavenly, and gentle flame, which maketh us active for God, but always within the sphere of love. It never calls for "fire from heaven" to censure those who differ a little from us in their apprehensions. It is like that kind of lightning (which the philosophers speak of) which melts the sword within, but singeth not the scabbard: it strives to save the soul, but hurteth not the body.—*Cudworth.*

7-11. (7) **Lord's oath**, 1 Sa. xviii. 3; xx. 8, 42. (8) **Rizpah**, ch. iii. 7. **Aiah**, is a foreign (Horite) name.^d **brought up**, R. V., "whom she bare to Adriel;" it was *Merab*, not *Michal*, who was married to Adriel (1 Sam. xviii. 19). Consequently we must either read *Merab* for *Michal*, or take the explanation given in the Targum; "the five sons of Merab, (whom Michal the daughter of Saul brought up), whom she bare to Adriel."—*Cam. Bib.* (9) **in the hill**, vs. 6. (10) **water dropped**,^e if the rains of October, she watched six months: these rains by breaking the drought showed that the crime was expiated. (11) **told Dav.**, her devotion exciting attention.

Rizpah and David (vss. 10-14).—I. Deep affliction often brings forth a nobility of character which would otherwise remain latent. II. Such nobility of character forms a common meeting-ground for those otherwise widely sundered.—*Hom. Com.*

Heavy rains in the East (vss. 9, 10).—Such a late spring rain would have been attended, as the rain at Sidon was, with many advantages; and coming after all hope of common rain was over, and presently following the death of these persons on the other hand, would be a much more merciful management of Providence, and a much nobler proof that the execution was the appointment of God, and not a political stratagem of David, than the passing

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a 2 Sa viii. 16-18.

"As islands stand in grand solitude in the midst of seas, so great minds dwell alone amid the little souls which fill the circles of life."—*Thomas.*

the three
years'
famine

b "This chap. appears to come from a different source."—*Spk. Com.*

c Nu. xxv. 4; De. xxi. 22.

"The pure in heart not only see God themselves, but they become a medium for transmitting his thoughts to others. It is at last as if God were thinking through every look and movement of the purified soul."—*Lucy Larcom.*

the sons
of Rizpah

d Ge. xxxvi. 24.

e "The rain came to the thirsty land as token of forgiveness."—*Wordsworth.*

"A good deed is never lost; he who sows courtesy, reaps friendship, and he who plants kindness, gathers love."—*Basil*

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David buries the remains of Saul and Jonathan

a Excited by Rizpah's example to do honor to bodies of Saul and Jonathan.

When Dr. Johnson died many began to revile him; and Dr. Parr said, "Ah, now that the old lion is dead, every ass thinks he may kick at him."

David and Ishbi-benob

b Comp. Goliath, 1 Sa. xvii.

c Ge. xiv. 5; De. ii. 19, 20; iii. 13; Jos. xii. 4, *etc.*

d Jos. x. 33; 1 Chr. xx. 4.

"As Christ was both a Lamb and a Lion, so is every Christian; a Lamb for patience in suffering and innocence of life; a lion for boldness in his innocence. I would so order my courage and mildness that I may be neither lion-like in my conversation nor sheepish in the defense of a good cause."—*Bp. Hall*.

the giants of Philistia

"Physical courage is chiefly a constitutional endowment, though it may be cultivated by judicious training. It is that unflinching steadiness of nerve which impelled Putnam to enter the wolf's den and face the greedy brute in his very lair. It is a sen-

se of six months over without any rain at all, and then its falling only in the common track of things. — *Harmer*.

12—14. (12) went, did not merely send, but went himself.^a **Jabesh**, 1 Sa. xxxi. 11—13. **street**, *i. e.*, the square inside the gate where the citizens met in public concourse. (13) **them . . . hanged**, *vs.* 9. (14) **his son**, the LXX adds, "and the bones of them that were hanged." The Old Testament (as Canon Mozley has so powerfully shown) was in some respects an imperfect economy; the rights of the individual were not so clearly acknowledged as they are under the New; the family was a sort of moral unit, and the father was the responsible agent for the whole. — *Exp. B. Zelah*, Jos. xviii. 28.

Animosity ends in the grave (*vs.* 14). — I. Considering what David had suffered at the hands of Saul this was noble on his part. Compare with the exhuming and hanging of Cromwell. II. Learn the folly of that little spite which pursues even the dead with its harmless hate.

Forgiveness. — The brave only know how to forgive; it is the most refined and generous pitch of virtue human nature can arrive at. Cowards have done good and kind actions, cowards have even fought, nay, sometimes even conquered, but a coward never forgave; it is not in his nature; the power of doing it flows only from a strength and greatness of soul, conscious of its own force and security, and above the little temptations of resenting every fruitless attempt to interrupt its happiness. — *Sterne*.

15—18. (15) **war again**, time referred to cannot be fixed. Prob. these deeds are from some book of wonderful events wh. records in glowing colors the deeds of Dav. and the Gibeonites. **waxed faint**, so was in some peril. (16) **Ishbi-benob**,^b *i. e.* whose dwelling is at Nob. the giant, *Ha-Raphah*,^c *i. e.* the sons of Ha-raphah, or Rephaim are different from the *Nephilim*, or Giants (Gen. vi. 4; Num. xiii. 33). The sons of Anak were not strictly Rephaim, but Nephilim. (Compare Deut. ii. 20, 21.) — *Spk. Com.* (17) **quench not the light of Israel**, *i. e.* extinguishing the lamp is a natural metaphor for changing the light of prosperity into the darkness of calamity; and in particular David's sovereignty was the lamp which God's favor had lighted for the well-being of His people. — *Cam. B.* (18) **at Gob**, same as Gezer, or near it^d mod. *El Kubab*, 4 m. E. of Joppa. **Sibbechai**, comp. ch. xxiii. 27, one of Dav.'s heroes.

The difficulty of establishing God's kingdom. — I. There is a wide-spread and tenacious preoccupation by evil. II. With the work we have to do we inherit many imperfections. III. Giant forms of evil are present, embarrassing directly and indirectly those who oppose them. IV. The progress of the kingdom is injured by the loss of vigor and freshness on the part of Christians. — *Chapman*.

The great duke of Argyle. — At the siege of Mons during the glorious career of Marlborough, the Duke of Argyle joined an attacking corps when it was on the point of shrinking from the contest; and pushing among them, open-breasted, he exclaimed, "You see, brothers, I have no concealed armor, I am equally exposed with you; I require none to go where I shall refuse to venture. Remember you fight for the liberties of Europe, and the glory of your nation, which shall never suffer by my behavior; and I hope the character of a Briton is as dear to every one of you." This spirit animated the soldiers; the assault was made, and the work was carried. — *Percy Anec.*

19—22. (19) Comp. 1 Chr. xx. 5, where the name is given as *Lahmi*. **Ore-gim**, means of *wearers*, poss. name added after his son's exploit. (21) **defied**, as 1 Sa. xvii. 26. **Shimeah**, ch. xiii. 3. (22) **four**, were descendants of the giant; not necessarily the sons of one man, comp. 1 Chr. xx. 8. This was in truth the healthiest period of David's spiritual life. It was amid these perilous but bracing experiences that his soul prospered most. The north wind of danger and difficulty braced him to spiritual self-denial and endurance; the south wind of prosperity and luxurious enjoyment was what nearly destroyed him.

Overcoming giants. — Most people can do more than they think they can in the service of God. The enemies of good are many and great; like giants, entrenched in the walled cities of wealth, and custom, and popular feeling, such as heathenism, intemperance, corruption, oppression, selfishness, ignorance. It seems impossible to overcome them. Man cannot overcome them

alone. But with God's help we can attack them boldly, and conquer them. Faith and courage can do wonders.

Oh, how many a glorious record
Had the angels of me kept
Had I done instead of doubted,
Had I warred instead of wept. — *Peloubet.*

Valor. — It is an everlasting duty, — the duty of being brave. Valor is still value. The first duty for a man is that of subduing fear. We must get rid of fear; we cannot act at all till then. A man's acts are slavish, not true but specious; his very thoughts are false, he thinks, too, as a slave and a coward, till he have got fear under his feet. . . . A man shall and must be valiant; he must march forward and quit himself like a man. Now and always the completeness of his victory over fear will determine how much of a man he is. — *Carlyle.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

1-4. (1) **this song**,^a identical with Ps. xviii. with a few verbal exceptions explainable by the char. of the Heb. test. and the method of transmission. (2) **rock**, Heb. *sela*, a high cliff or crag, sought for refuge. (3) **rock**, Heb. *tsur*, something solid, firm, immovable. The imagery by wh. Dav. describes the divine deliverance is derived from his experiences during his outlawry. **trust**, i. e. "take refuge." **shield**, for defense, as Ge. xv. 1; De. xxxiii. 29. **horn**,^b symbol of strength; the horn of the animal is his strength and defense. (4) **call on**, with the language of trust and thanksgiving.

Adversity. — Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes, and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needlework and embroidery it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground. Judge, therefore, of the pleasures of the heart by the pleasures of the eye. Certainly, virtue is like precious odors — most fragrant when they are crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue. — *Lord Bacon.*

5-9. (5) **waves**, in psalm, *sorrows*. **ungodly**, of Belial. (6) **sorrows**, *R. V.*, "cords," matching the word *snare*s. **hell**, *R. V.*, "sheol," the place of the departed, wh. is described as ready to devour the living. (7) **temple**, heaven as God's dwelling-place realized by man. (9) **smoke** . . **nostrils**, sign of anger, suggested by the snorting and bellowing of enraged animals. The aim of Dav. is not to clothe his thought in concrete form, but to give a vivid manifestation of the wrath of Jehovah. **coals**, "the fiery messengers of vengeance."

Out of the depths (vs. 7). — I Our God is one who may be confidently approached in great extremities. II. He ought, therefore, to be served at all times. III. The cry of distressed souls mourning their sin and weakness is heard in heaven.

Divine interposition (vs. 8-16). — Earthquake and storm are regarded as the visible manifestations of Divine Power: and therefore God's interposition for the deliverance of His servant from the perils that surrounded him is described as accompanied by terrible phenomena in nature. We have here an ideal description of a theophany, based on the description of the theophany at Sinai. — *Cam. B.*

10-13. (10) **bowed**, as in storm the clouds come down lower. **darkness**, of the black storm-cloud. A figure of the terror attending God's advent as judge. (11) **cherub**,^c fig. of the wind, as a servant of God or His chariot. Second clauses of vs. in this song often explain figures of the first clauses. **was seen**, cf. Ps. xviii. 10, for the true reading, viz., "did fly," i. e. swooped like an eagle. (12) **pavilions**, royal tents.^d This blackness was used as a veil to withhold the glorious majesty of God fr. mortal eye: the lightning flashes were symbolic of momentary glimpses permitted to a very few mortals of the Shechinah. **dark waters**, *R. V.*, "gathering of waters," i. e. the same as "thick clouds of the skies." (13) **brightness**, of lightning.

Safe amid storms. — I have seen a village nestling in the bosom of some

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tlement which renders an individual superior to a feeling of personal danger. It peculiarly befits the soldier and the seaman, and all who are called upon to exercise cool judgment in situations of peril." — *S. G. Goodrich.*

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David's
song of
praise

^a "It belongs to early part of Dav.'s reign, when he was recently established upon the throne of Israel, and his triumph over his enemies was still fresh." — *Spk. Com.*

^b 1 Sa. ii. 1, 10; Lu. i. 69. Themistocles was banished to Egypt, and from the influence of that, rose to honor. He used to say, "I had been undone unless I had been undone."

"Mediocrity is not allowed to poets, either by the gods or men." — *Horace.*

^c "A word of Egyptian origin, but difficult to explain. It has no Semitic etymology." — *Petrowne.*

^d In contrast with the temple, *rs. 7*, this indic. God's temporary abode.

The darkness of the clouds is the

B. C. cir. 10K.

tent in which God
shrouds His Ma-
jesty.—*Cam. Bib.*

Holliness is an un-
selfing of our-
selves.—*F. W. Far-
ber.*

a *Præ*, before,
and *venire*, to
come. This word
has changed its
meaning now to
hinder: in Scrip-
ture it is rather *get be-
forehand*.

The presence of
God's glory is in
heaven; the pres-
ence of His power
on earth; the pres-
ence of His justice
in hell, and the
presence of His
grace with His peo-
ple. If He deny us
His powerful pres-
ence we fall into
nothing: if He
deny us His grac-
ious presence, we
fall into sin; if He
deny us His mercif-
ul presence, we
fall into hell.

"How many Gods
are there?" was
once said to a little
boy, "One." "How
do you know there
is only one?" "Be-
cause there is no
room for more, for
the one God fills
heaven and earth."

b Ps. xv.

c Ps. xxiv. 3, 4.

God shows mercy,
not because we
have a will to re-
ceive it, but be-
cause He has a will
to bestow it.

"None can love
freedom heartily
but good men; the
rest love not free-
dom but license."
—*Milton.*

d Ma. v. 7.

e Ma. v. 8.

great mountain. Speaking one day to the villagers, I ventured to ask if they had many storms during the year. "Oh, yes," was the answer. "If there is a storm anywhere in the neighborhood it seems to find us out." "How do you account for it?" "Those who seem to know say it is due to the mountain which towers above our village." "Have you had any accidents from lightning?" "Not one. We have seen the lightning strike the mountain a hundred times, and a grand sight it was; but nobody has been killed." "What have you, then?" "We have the thunder, which shakes our win- dows and frightens our women and children, but it has not killed anybody; and we have the downpour. The fertility of our village, which you so much admire, is all due to the thunder-showers."—*Henry Simon.*

14—19. (14) Thunder was regarded by the pious as the voice of God. (15) Some of the figures may be taken from the scene of the Exodus. (16) *channels, etc.*, as Ex. xvi. 21, 22. *discovered*, R. V., "laid bare." *blast, etc.*, comp. Ex. xiv. 21. (17) *took me*, passing from historical to personal references. (18) *strong enemy*, Saul. (19) *prevented*, *vs. 6*, R. V., "came upon me." *stay, i. e. staff.*

The arrows of the Almighty (vs. 15). — I. Are numerous, many have sped, others on the string, the quiver yet well supplied. II. Far-flying. Few could use the bow of Robin Hood; but who can send an arrow so far as God? III. Well-aimed. Men may draw a bow at a venture; with them it is often hit or miss. With God there is no chance work. The statue of Apollo Belvedere represents the god with a bow in his hand from which the arrow has flown, and on his face a look of scorn for the fugitive who thought to escape him. IV. Happy are those who are wounded by the arrow of truth before they are struck by the arrow of death.

Arrows of conviction (vs. 15). — The excellent Isaac Ambrose, in his *Treatise on Angels*, gives an account of a profane persecutor, who was brought to seek the mercy of God in a remarkable manner. He was out on a journey with his pious wife, when they were overtaken with a storm of thunder and lightning. He was seized with great terror, and his wife inquired into its cause. "Why," asked he, "are not you afraid?" She replied, "No, not at all, for I know it is the voice of my heavenly Father; and shall a child be afraid of a kind father's voice?" The man began to reflect that Christians must have within them a Divine principle, of which the world is ignorant, or they could not enjoy such calmness when the rest of the world were filled with horror. He went to Mr. Bolton, an eminent minister, to whom he had been opposed, acknowledged and lamented his sins, and furnished good evidence of a change of heart.

20—25. (20) *large place*, "open ground, not full of floods and nets." (21) *righteousness, b* uprightness. *cleanness of hands, c* must have been written before Dav.'s sad fall. (22) *wickedly, wilfully*: Dav. distinguishes sins of human frailty from sins of self-will. (23) *judgments*, as found in His word. (24) *upright, R. V.*, "perfect." "It expresses the sincerity of undivided devotion." Comp. Gen. xvii. 1. *iniquity*, besetting sin, inward tendency to sin. (25) Comp. *vs. 21*.

A large place for the children of God (vs. 20). — I. In their natural state they are caged, cribbed, confined. Hedged in by doubt, fear, habit, *etc.* II. Their deliverance from this condition can come only from one quarter—God. III. When He delivers He brings into the wide place of (a) liberty, (b) grace, (c) safety, (d) joy, (e) hope.

A large place (vs. 20). —

He is the freeman whom the truth makes free
And all are slaves beside.
His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
And the resplendent rivers his to enjoy
Who, with a filial confidence inspired,
Can lift to heaven an unassuming eye,
And smiling say, — My Father made them all.

—*Cowper.*

26—30. (26) *merciful, d* as a king should be: word better rendered, *gracious*, signifying love for God and kindness toward men. (27) *pure*, sincere-hearted. *unsavoury*, Heb. *wilt wrestle*, in Ps. xviii. word is *froward*. (28)

eyes are upon, though He may delay judgment, God sees and knows. (29) lamp,^a illuminating all his life with the light of prosperity, as the lamp illuminates the house. *Dominus illuminatio mea* was David's motto. Cp. Ps. xxvii. 1; cxxxii. 17. (30) run, fleetness of foot was as important as strength in ancient warfare. Dav. pos. refers to his pursuit of the marauding Amalekites who sacked Ziklag during his absence. wall, the battlements of a besieged city,^b prob. alluding to the capture of Jebus.

The good man's lamp (vs. 29). — I. The good man is sometimes in darkness (a) through his own sins, (b) fears, (c) enemies. II. He has a lamp in his darkness, (a) not self-created, (b) not a Divinely kindled creature comfort, (c) but God Himself — the Father of Lights. III. By this lamp the darkness itself is lightened, (a) other lamps burn dimly in it, (b) serve to make the darkness visible, (c) this turns night into day, sorrow into joy, fear into hope.

31-35. (31) way, of dealing with His people. tried, refined, well tested by experience of His people. buckler, lighter kind of shield. (32) who is God? comp. Moses' song, De. xxxiii. rock, word *tsur*, as vs. 3. (33) strength and power, R. V., "strong fortress." my way, R. V. "guideth thee perfect in his way." (34) hind's feet, the gazelle is referred to. my high places, the tops of the mountains are the favorite resort of the antelope (ch. i. 18); and so with David, the possession of such rocky citadels as Bozez and Seneh (1 Sam. xiv. 4) made him master of the whole country. — *Pulp. Com.* (35) bow of steel, or bronze.^d

The bow (vs. 35). — The Asiatic warrior often used a bow of steel or brass, which, on account of its great stiffness, he bent with his foot. Those that were made of horn or wood probably required to be bent in the same way: for the Hebrew always speaks of treading his bow, when he makes ready for the battle; and to tread and bend the bow are in all the writings of the Old Testament convertible phrases. The bow of steel is distinctly mentioned by the Hebrew bard: "He teaches my hand to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms." This was a proof of great strength, and of uncommon success in war, which he ascribes with equal piety and gratitude to the infinite power and goodness of Jehovah. — *Paxton*.

36-40. (36) gentleness, gracious condescension. great, or multiplied me. (37) enlarged,^e given me room to move. Thinking of the contrast bet. his persecution time and his kingship. feet, Heb. *ankles*, the weakness of wh. causes men to be unstable. (38) turned not again, in even temporary defeat. (39) consumed, some; wounded others. (40) thou hast, directly tracing his victories to God.

Divine gentleness (vs. 36). — I. Types of the gentleness of God. The gentleness of — 1. The shepherd; 2. The philanthropist; 3. The teacher; 4. The father; 5. The husband. II. Occasions when most manifested in our experience. In — 1. Times of affliction; 2. Times of labor; 3. Times of disappointment; 4. The hour of death. III. Effects produced by this gentleness: "made me great," or "multiplied me." Multiplied — 1. My graces; 2. My gifts; 3. My hopes; 4. My labors. — *R. A. Griffin*.

41-46. (41) necks, R. V., "Thou hast also made my enemies turn their backs unto me that," etc., Jos. x. 24; Ex. xxiii. 27. (42) unto the Lord, they received no answer, bec. through Dav. they were coming under Div. judgment for their sins. (43) Comp. war of Ammon. (44) my people, the difficulties of his motley company in the hold; and the siding of northern tribes with house of Saul. head of the heathen, or the nations. (45) submit, submitted themselves at the mere rumor of Dav.'s victories, like Toi, king of Hamath. (46) shall be afraid, R. V., "shall come trembling out of," etc. close places, hiding places; or closed, fortified cities.

Necks of enemies (vs. 41). — The neck is often used for the whole body, and in threatenings it is the part mentioned. A proprietor of slaves is said to have their necks. To a person going among wicked or cruel people it is said, "Go not there, your *puddara*, i. e. neck, or nape, will be given to them." "Depend upon it, government will have it out of the necks of those smugglers." "Have you paid Chinnan the money?" "No, nor will I pay him." "Why?" "Because he has had it out of my neck." When two men have been fighting, the conqueror may be seen to seize the vanquished by the neck, and thrust him to the ground. — *Roberts*.

B. C. cir. 1017.

^a Ps. cxix. 105.^b 2 Sa. v. 7. 8.

"No man ever thought too highly of his nature or too meanly of himself." — *Young*.

^c "The sacred writers frequently mention gazelles under the various names of harts, roes, and hinds. They are celebrated for their activity (Ge. xlix. 21; 2 Sa. ii. 18). I have often stopped to admire the grace, ease and fearless security with wh. these pretty creatures bound along the high places of the mountains." — *Thomson*.

^d "Bronze highly tempered, and elastic, not steel or brass, was used for bows by the Egyptians and Israelites." — *Spk. Com.*

^e Clearing away hindrances.

We are encompassed by mercies on every side. At every time, and in every thing, God has given us instances of His goodness. Every season has returned with its proper blessing; every day with its needful supply, and every week with its hallowed day of rest,

^f 1 Sa. xii. 29-31. "In such multitudes of God's mercies as you enjoy, marvel not that you have some crosses, lest we should presume: likewise blessings with crosses, lest we should despair — and in any outward blessing which you see you cannot have, be seech God you may never be vexed for." — *Greenham*.

xi. 11.^a *Adino Eznite* is an error, and has no place in Chr. If his name was Jashobeam it was not Adino. If he was Tachmonite he was not Eznite. **captains**, *i. e.*, aides-de-camp, personal attendants on Dav. **slew at one time**, prob. with the help of some of his men. (9) **Eleazar**, 1 Chr. xi. 12, xxvii. 4. **Ahohite**, patronymic formed fr. Ahoah, 1 Chr. viii. 4. **were gone away**, *i. e.* "went up to battle." (10) **clave**, stuck with long and hard claspings. **victory**, *R. V.*, margin, "salvation." **people returned**, *i. e.* were following him in whichever way he turned; does not imply that they had fled. (11) **lentiles**, or barley, 1 Chr. xi. 13. (12) **stood**, alone.

A courageous king. — King James IV. of Scotland, who used often to amuse himself in wandering about the country in different disguises, was once overtaken by a violent storm in a dark night, and obliged to take shelter in a cavern near Wemys, which is one of the most remarkable of the antiquities of Scotland. Having advanced some way into it, the king discovered a number of men and women ready to begin to roast a sheep, by way of supper. From their appearance, he began to suspect that he had not fallen into the best company, but, as it was too late to retreat, he asked hospitality from them till the tempest was over. They granted it, and invited the king, whom they did not know, to sit down, and take part with them. They were a band of robbers and cut-throats. As soon as they had finished their supper, one of them presented a plate, upon which two daggers were laid in front of a St. Andrew's cross, telling the king, at the same time, that this was the dessert which they always served to strangers; that he must choose one of the daggers, and fight him whom the company should appoint to attack him. The king did not lose his presence of mind, but instantly seized the two daggers, one in each hand, and plunged them into the hearts of the two robbers who were next to him; and running full speed to the mouth of the cavern, he escaped from their pursuit, through the obscurity of the night. The king ordered the whole of this band of cut-throats to be seized next morning, and hanged. — *Percy Anec.*

13-17. (13) **three of the thirty chief**, *i. e.* not the first three, but prob. Abishai, Benaiah, and an unknown hero. These formed the second triad of mighties. **harvest-time**, comp. 1 Chr. xi. 15. **Adullam**,^b 1 Sa. xxii. 1. **Rephaim**, Jos. xv. 8; 2 Sa. v. 18. (14) **hold**, or fortress. "A frontier fortress on the Phil. border." (16) **poured it out**, as a libation (Ju. vi. 20), or drink-offering. (17) *R. V.*, "shall I drink," following the LXX., Vulgate and Chr. **the blood**, *bec.* procured at the hazard of these men's lives.

Alexander's cup of water (vs. 16). — There is an account very similar to this in Arrian's *Life of Alexander*. "When his army was greatly oppressed with heat and thirst, a soldier brought him a cup of water; he ordered it to be carried back, saying, 'I cannot bear to drink alone, while so many are in want; and this cup is too small to be divided among the whole. Give it to the children from whom you brought it.'" — *Burder.*

18-23. (18) **among three**, *R. V.*, "of the three," that fetched the water. (19) **first three**, that is Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah. (20) **Benaiah**,^c ch. viii. 18. **the son . . . man**, better, "a valiant man." **lion-like**, *R. V.*, "the two sons of Ariel of Moab." **pit**,^d cistern. The lion was driven by cold and hunger fr. the forest and was preying upon the citizens of some town. (21) **goodly**, or a man of stature: prodigious, 1 Chr. xi. 23. (22) **among three**, with Abishai, and poss. Amasa. (23) **first three**, as vs. 19. **guard**,^e better, "made him of his privy council."

Individual prowess. — In Eastern history, cases of a single warrior putting a large number to flight, and even killing them, are not uncommon. For though the strength of the whole number was far more than a match for his, the strength of each individual was far inferior; and if the mass of them were scarcely armed, and the few who had arms were far inferior to him, the result would be that after some had fallen the rest would take to flight; and the destruction of life in a retreat was always enormous. The incident recorded of Eleazar is very graphic and truth-like. "He smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto his sword." A Highland sergeant at Waterloo had done such execution with his basket-handled sword, and so much blood had coagulated round his hand, that it had to be released by a blacksmith, so firmly were they glued together. — *Blaikie.*

B. C. ctr. 977.

a Read thus: "The Tachmonite Jashobeam was chief among the captains; the same lifted up his spear against 300."

"True courage has so little to do with anger, that there lies always the strongest suspicion against it, where this passion is highest. True courage is cool and calm. The bravest of men have the least of a brutal, bullying insolence; and in the very time of danger are found the most serene, pleasant, and free. Rage, we know, can make a coward forget himself and fight. But what is done in fury or anger can never be placed to the account of courage." — *Shaftesbury.*

water brought to David

^b "Clermont Ganneau suggests the identifi. of Adullam with Aydel Miech." — *Fales. Explor. Reports.*

Abishai, Benaiah

^c 1 Kl. i. 8, 10, 26, 32-40; ii. 25-26, iv. 4.

^d "The pit was prob. near a house, and the lion was lying in wait for his prey." — *Wordsworth.*

^e 2 Sa. viii. 18; **xx.**

"When Homer maketh his brave captains march, he gives them silence for guide. Contrariwise, he maketh cowards to babble and chatter like cranes; a sign of not being valiant at all is to strive to seem valiant." — *N. Caussin.*

B. C. cir. 977.

Asahel and others

a Comp. 1 Chr. xi. 29.

We are not sent into this world to do anything into which we cannot put our hearts.—*John Ruskin.*

Abi-albon and others

b Jos. xv. 52.

c 1 Chr. ii. 53.

"I'll not disgrace my innocence by fear, lest I the saving of my life repent; I'll rather bear than merit punishment."—*Orrery.*

"Few minds are sunlike,—sources of light to themselves and to others. Many more are moons, that shine with a derivative and reflected light. Among the tests to distinguish them is this: the former are always full, the latter only now and then, when their suns are shining full upon them."—*Hare.*

B. C. 980.

Joab sent to number the people

d "In Chr. the word *Satan* should be translated *adversary*. It may have been one of his own counselors giving bad advice."—*Sug. Spk. Com.*

"Temptations are enemies outside the castle, seeking entrance. If there be no false retainer within who holds treacherous parley, there can scarcely be even an offer."—*Beecher.*

24-30. (24) **Asahel**, David's nephew, brother of Joab, ch. ii. 32. **Elhanan**, ch. xxi. 19. (25) **Harodite**, comp. 1 Chr. xi. 27; Ju. vii. 1. (26) **Paltite**, fr. *Beth-Pelet*, in extreme south of Judah; but Helez was an Ephraimite, consequently this location is doubtful. Jos. xv. 27. **Tekoite**, ch. xiv. 2. Ira was not Dav.'s minister of the same name, ch. xx. 26. (27) **Anethothite**, of *Anathoth*, Jos. xxi. 18. **Hushathite**, "Mebunnai is doubtless a textual error for Sibbechai, the consonants being very similar and easily confused."—*Cam. B.* 1 Chr. iv. 4. (28) **Ahohite**,^a vs. 9. **Netophathite**, *Netophah*, a village, or cluster of villages, near Bethlehem. (30) **Pirathonite**, of *Pirathon*, Ju. xii. 13. **brooks**, "word means valleys with a running stream." **Gaash**, Jos. xxiv. 30.

The muster roll of fame.—I. The earthly roll-call. Men ambitious of a place there. Deeds of valor win the place. Few find a place. II. The heavenly roll-call. Lamb's Book of Life. Peaceful heroes. Unknown to fame, known to God. The men who endured hardness. Martyrs. The heroism of patience. The heroic battle of daily life. The brave struggle for honest bread. The service of Christ in trial, persecution, etc.

31-39. (31) **Arbathite**, prob. of *Beth-Arabah*, in the wilderness of Judah, Jos. xv. 61; xviii. 18, 21. **Barhumite**, of *Bahurim*, ch. xvi. 5. (32) **Shaalbonite**, of *Shaalabin*, in Dan, about 15 miles W. N. W. of Jerus., Jos. xix. 42. (33) Jonathan should be attached to this vs. as son of Shammah, vs. 25. A very probable correction would be "Jonathan the son of Shammah, the son of Agee the Hararite." Thus both father and son would be in the number of the thirty.—*Pulp. Com.* **Sharar**, 1 Chr. xxvi. 4. (34) **Maachathite**, ch. xx. 14. **Gilonite**, ch. xv. 12, here the text of 1 Chr. xi. 35, 36, diverges widely, and in place of the names in this verse reads, "Eliphal the son of Ur, Hephher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite." (35) **Carmel**, in S. of Judah, 1 Sa. xv. 12. **Arbite**, of Arab in Judah,^b the name is however, uncertain. comp. 1 Chr. xi. 37. (36) **Zobah**, in Chr. Igal is called Joel, the bro. of Nathan; ch. viii. 3. (37) **armourbearer**, 1 Sa. xiv. 1; 2 Sa. xviii. 15. (38) **Ithrite**, of *Kirjath-Jearim*.^c (39) **Uriah**, ch. xi. 3. The number given is 31, but poss. Asahel's early death led to retention of his name, though his place was filled by another.

God's use of strength.—A man once called upon me who had been rescued from the depths of ruffianism, and who was carrying on a mission among the outcasts in the lower wards of the city. He was telling of the prayer-meetings they held there; and how they were not unfrequently disturbed by drunken rioters, who broke into the room and had to be put out by force. Said he: "When anything of that kind happens, they just strike up a hymn, and I go as quietly as I can and get them out of the room. Sometimes they are very ugly and strike at me. But you know I was a fighting man myself once, and pretty well used to taking care of myself with my hands; and it's astonishing how handy it comes now." The illustration is all the better, because it comes from so low down. God had a place for the mere brute power and training which had made a ruffian a pest of society, and could turn it to use, on occasion, for the protection of His own house and worship.—*Vincent, Gates to the Psalm Country.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

1-4. (1) **again**, narrative joins on to ch. xxi. 1-14, but it seems a fragment whose place and time in Dav.'s history cannot be fixed. **he moved**, "The subject of the verb is Jehovah;" i. e. He permitted the temptation of military glory to assail Dav., and he was not strong enough to resist it. Comp. 1 Chr. xxi.^d 1. **number**, take census of. (2) **captain**, or *and the captains*, as vs. 4. (3) **why**, etc., Joab was a clever politician, and judged this unwise fr. the *political* rather than *religious* side. He feared the introduction of the spirit of despotism. (4) **prevailed**, i. e. self-will against good counsel.

Numbering the people.—The only satisfactory explanation of the measure is, that it was intended as the foundation of an organized and vigorous government, like that of Egypt or Phoenicia, under wh. the exact number of the houses and inhabitants of every city and village would have to be obtained, so as to be able to summon the people for general taxation. — *Ewald.*

5-9. (5) pitched, in soldier fashion, a temporary camp. Aroer, prob. Aroer on the Arnon. river of Gad, or valley toward Gad. Jazer, Nu. xxxii. 3. (6) Tahtim-hodshi, *neither land newly inhabited*: some error in the word prevents identification. Some conjecture that this should read: "To the land of the Hittites to Kedesh." Dan-jaan, Jos. xix. 47. "Jaan" is used only here; prob. should be "Jaar," *i. e.* Dan in the forest. (7) Tyre, did not belong to Israel, but was prob. bound to render military service to Dav.; or, as suggested by *Cam. B.*, to take census of the Israelites dwelling there. Jos. xix. 29. Beersheba, Ge. xxi. 14. (8) all the land, on E. of Jordan fr. S. to N. W. of Jordan from N. to S. Joab omitted the Levites and Benjamites. Perhaps it is the addition of these two tribes wh. accounts for the "sum" of Chr. (9) sum, comp. 1 Chr. xxxvii. 23, 24.

The valiant men of Israel (vs. 9.). — Cromwell's Ironsides were men that had the fear of God before them, and made some conscience of what they did. They were always victorious. They went into battle praying and singing psalms. Their watch-word was, "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." Every soldier had his pocket Bible of select texts for soldiers, and fed his soul upon the Word of God.

10-14. (10) smote him, conscience testified it was act of boasting and self-will. said, in confession and prayer, as Ps. xxxii. 5. (11) up, *etc.*, the morning after Joab's return. Gad, 1 Sa. ix. 9, why not Nathan? (12) three things, as punishment of this offense; signs of Divine recognition and judgment. (13) seven years, the LXX. and Chr. have "three years," wh. is prob. correct. answer, graciously testing Dav. by this offer of choice. (14) hand of the Lord, the decision indicates Dav.'s trust in God.

David numbering the people (vs. 11-15). — Notice — I. The severity of God in punishing sin. David probably had disobeyed the law (see Ex. xxx. 12-14). Moreover in this act he was impelled by pride, and confidence in an arm of flesh. II. The goodness of God in pardoning sin. III. The effects which the sins of individuals produce on the community. — *C. Simeon.*

Our trials might have been greater (vs. 14) — A man aged fifty years lived forty-eight of that time, and never knew what sickness was; but the last two years of his life he was sickly and impatient under it; yet at last he reasoned the case thus with himself: "The Lord might have given me forty-eight years of sickness, and but two years of health, yet He hath done the contrary; I will therefore rather admire the mercy of God in giving me so long a time of health, than repine and murmur at Him for giving me so short a time of sickness." — *Spencer.*

15-17. (15) time appointed, three days, vs. 13. (16) upon Jerus., poss. indic. that pestilence was more severe in country than in the city. Lord repented him, God's repentance does not mean that He who foreknows all things regrets His action, nor is it a sign of mutability. Scripture boldly states the two apparently contradictory truths, and leaves conscience to harmonize them. — *Cam. B.* threshing-place, on a hill. Mt. Moriah, N. E. of Zion. Araunah, or Ornan, 1 Chr. xxi. 15. Jebusite, so one left of the original inhabitants; poss. the king or ruler. (17) sheep, a very tender way of regarding the people. The king was a shepherd. Ex. xxxii. 32; Jos. x. 11, 15.

Self sacrifice (vs. 17). — Two fishermen, a few years ago, were mending their nets on board their vessel on one of the lakes in the interior of Argyleshire, at a considerable distance from the shore, when a sudden squall upset their boat. One of them could not swim, and the only oar which floated was caught by him that could swim. His sinking companion cried, "Ah, my poor wife and children, they must starve now!" "Save yourself, I will risk my life for their sake!" said the other, thrusting the oar beneath the arm of the drowning man. He committed himself instantly to the deep, in danger of perishing for the safety of his companion. That moment the boat struck the bottom, and started the other oar by their side, and thus both were enabled to keep afloat till they were picked up.

18-21. (18) go up, this accounts for Dav.'s being at the threshing-floor. (19) went up, he had to descend fr. Zion and then ascend Moriah. (20) looked, some intimation seems to have been given to him, or the procession was evidently an unusual one, and for an extraordinary purpose. (21) stayed, Nu. xvi. 48, 50.

B. C. 980.

the warriors of Israel and Judah

"Power comes by prayer; the secret of power is fire, kindled from above. One man and God with him stands undismayed among a thousand foes." — *Peloubet.*

Gad offers David a choice of trials

David had sinned against God, and to God he humbly submitted himself. There would thus be nothing to come between the soul and God, and prevent the chastisement from having its due effect upon the heart." — *Pulp. Com.*

God never wounds with both hands.

the plague and David's prayer

a "Original given variously as Aranyah, Haavarnah, Haornah, Araunah, Ornan. Prob. the king of the ancient Jebus, and spared by Dav. for old friendship." — *Stanley.*

"A weak mind sinks under prosperity as well as under adversity. A strong mind has two highest tides, — when the moon is at the full, and when there is no moon. — *Hare.*

David builds an altar

"Unreflective minds possess

B. C. 980.

thoughts only as a jug does water, by containing them. In a disciplined mind knowledge exists like vital forces in the physical frame—ready to be directed to tongue, or hand, or foot, hither, thither, anywhere, and for any use desired.”—S. Coley.

David
refuses
Araunah's
offer

a “It was the meeting of two ages, Araunah, as he yields that spot, is the last of the Canaanites; the last of that stern old race that we discern in any indiv. form and character. Dav., as he raises that altar, is the close harbinger of the reign of Solomon, the founder of a new institution wh. another was to complete.”—Stanley.

b Bp. Hall.—Comp.
1 Chr. xxi. 25.

“The closing period of David's reign, after the suppression of Absalom's rebellion, must have been on the whole a time of steady growth and prosperity for the nation.”—Cam. Bib.

Veiled angels. — To him to whom life is but an episode, a short stage in the existence of eternity, who is always cognizant of the great surrounding world of mystery, grief comes as angels came to the tent of Abraham. Laughter is hushed before them. The mere frolic of life stands still, but the soul takes the grief in as a guest, meets it the door, kisses its hand, washes its travel-stained face, spreads the table with the best food, gives it the seat by the fire-side, and listens reverently for what it has to say about the God from whom it came.—*Phillips Brooks*

Veiled angels.—

But all God's angels come to us disguised;
Sorrow and sickness, poverty and death,
One after another lift their frowning masks,
And we behold the seraph's face beneath,
All radiant with the glory and the calm
Of having looked upon the front of God.—*Lowell.*

22—25. (22) Araunah said,^a with Oriental politeness. other instruments . . . oxen, *R. V.*, “the furniture of the oxen.” (23) as a king, *R. V.*, “all this, O king, doth Araunah give unto the king.” (24) buy it, “it is heartless piety to desire to serve God cheaply.”^b The threshing-floor was appointed to be the site of the temple which Solomon was to build; and the spot where David had hastily reared his altar was to be the place where, for hundreds of years, day after day, morning and evening, the blood of the burnt offering was to flow, and the fumes of incense to ascend before God.—*Exp. B.* (25) intreated, ch. xxi. 14.

Genuine service for God (vs. 24).—The principle in these words applies to (a) worship, (b) work, (c) gifts, (d) personal religion. Three questions will show why we should not offer to God that which costs nothing. I. What benefit is it to yourself? What costs something (a) calls out highest motives, (b) employs all faculties. II. How far can it influence the world? Sacrifice the needed element in all great influence. III. How far can it be acceptable to God?—*U. R. Thomas.*

The self-sacrificing minister (vs. 24).—He will not offer to God of that which costs him nothing, but takes pains beforehand with his sermons. Having brought his sermon into his head, he labors to bring it into his heart, before he preaches it to his people; and surely that preaching which comes from the soul most works on the soul. The places of Scripture he quotes are pregnant and pertinent. The similes and illustrations are always familiar, but never contemptible. In his opinion reasons are the pillars of the fabric of a sermon, but similitudes are the windows which give the best light. He provideth not only wholesome but plentiful food for his people. He makes not that wearisome which should be ever welcome; wherefore his sermons are of an ordinary length, except on an extraordinary occasion. He counts the success of his ministry the greatest preferment. Yet herein God hath humbled many painstaking pastors, in making them to be clouds to rain, not over Arabia the happy, but over Arabia the desert and the stony.—*T. Fuller.*

THE FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.

[837]

Introduction.

The "TWO BOOKS OF KINGS," as we call them, are only one book, and were so regarded not only in the days of Origen and of Jerome (A. D. 420), but by the Jews even down to Bomberg's Hebrew Bible of 1518. The History was intended to be a continuation of the Books of Samuel. It is evidently a compilation. The compiler specifies three sources from which his narrative is drawn;—(1) The Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 41). (2) The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah (referred to fifteen times). (3) The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel (referred to seventeen times). By comparing the authority referred to in 1 Kings xi. 41, with those quoted in 2 Chron. ix. 29, we see that "the Book of the Acts of Solomon" must have been to a large extent identical with the annals of that king's reign contained in "the Book (*R. V.*, *Histories*) of Nathan the Prophet," the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and "the story (*R. V.*, *commentary*) or visions of Iddo the Seer." Similarly it appears that the Acts of Rehoboam, Abijam, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, were compiled, at any rate in part, from the histories of Shemaiah, Jehu the son of Hanani (2 Chron. xx. 34, *R. V.*). Isaiah, the son of Amoz, Hozai (2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, *R. V.*), and other seers. In the narrative of a history of 400 years (from B. C. 977 to 562) the writer was of course compelled to rely for his facts upon more ancient authorities.—*Stanley*. Of the compilers nothing certain is known. Jewish tradition names Jeremiah, but the weight of evidence is against the supposition. The date of the compilation is probably not far from 540 B. C. "The Book of Kings, then, is not a history properly so called, but a selection from the historical documents of the nation made with a definite purpose. That the compiler makes his extracts most faithfully we have many indications, notably that frequently-occurring phrase, 'unto this day,' a phrase true enough when the original documents from which our compiler drew were written, but altogether inexact in B. C. 540, and only preserved because of the entire faithfulness to his copy of him who made the extracts. And the indications of such faithfulness are of the utmost importance when we come to estimate other characteristics of the Book."—*Cambridge Bible*.

Synopsis.

(According to Bähr, in Lange.)

"The history of Israelitish monarchy has three periods." [Of these periods only so much of Bähr's synopsis is here given as relates to this first Book of Kings. For the remainder, see synopsis of Second Book.]

Period I.—KINGDOM UNDER SOLOMON.

Sect. 1. Solomon's elevation.

- (a) Adonijah's plot.....i.
- (b) David's last words, etc.....ii. 1-12
- (c) Sol.'s treatment of enemies...ii.

13-46

Sect. 2. Begin. of Sol.'s reign.

- (a) His marriage, etc.....iii. 1-28
- (b) His court and characteriv. 1-34

Sect. 3. Solomon's buildings.

- (a) Treaty with Hiramv. 1-18
- (b) Building of templevi.
- (c) Building of palace, etc.....vii.
- (d) Dedic. of temple.....viii.
- (e) Sol.'s ships, etcix.

Sect. 4. Solomon's glory.

- (a) Visit of Q. of Shebax. 1-13
- (b) Splendor of kingdomx. 14-29

Sect. 5. Solomon's fall and end.

- (a) His religious unfaithfulness...xi.
- 1-13
- (b) His enemies and deathxi. 14-43

Period II.—THE KINGDOM DIVIDED.

1st EPOCH. To reign of Ahab.

Sect. 1. Disruption of kingdom.

- (a) Revolt of ten tribesxii. 1-24
- (b) Kingdom of Israel founded...xii.
- 25-33

Sect. 2. Jeroboam's reign (Israel).

- (a) Jeroboam warned.....xiii. 1-37
- (b) Jeroboam's death.....xiv. 1-20

Sect. 3. Rehoboam, etc. (Judah).

- (a) Rehoboam's reignxiv. 21-31
- (b) Abijam, Asaxv. 1-24

Sect. 4. Nadab, Ahab (Israel).

- (a) Nadab and Baasha.....xv. 25-xvi. 7
- (b) Elah, Zimri, Ahab.....xvi. 8-24

2d EPOCH. Ahab to Jehu.

Sect. 1. The Prophet Elijah.

- (a) Cherith, Zarephath.....vii.
- (b) Mount Carmel.....xviii.
- (c) Wilderness, Horeb, etc.....xix.

Sect. 2. Acts of Ahab.

- (a) Victory over Syrians.....xx.
- (b) Relations with Naboth.....xxi.
- (c) Last exped. and deathxxi. 1-40

Sect. 3. Jehoshaphat (Judah), Ahaziah, and Joram (Israel).

- (a) Jehoshaphat, Ahaziah.....xxii. 41

(According to Horne.)

The First Book of Kings may be divided into two parts.

Part I.—HIST. OF REIGN OF SOLOMON.

Sect. 1. Last days of David ...i., ii. 1-11

Sect. 2. To building of temple ...ii. 12-46 iii., iv.

Sect. 3. Prepar. for building.....v.

Sect. 4. Building of temple, etc.....vi., vii.

Sect. 5. Dedication of temple.....viii.

Sect. 6. Rest of reign of Sol.....ix.-xi.

Part II.—HISTORY OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

Sect. I. Rehoboam and div. of kingdom, xii.

Sect. 2. Rehoboam, Jeroboam . .xiii., xiv.

Sect. 3. Kings of Judah and Israel . .xv., xvi.

Sect. 4. Jehoshaphat, Ahabxvii-xxii.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

B. C. 977.

David's last illness

1-4. (1) Now, the Hebrew has only the conjunction usually rendered *And*. This sentence is not to be regarded as the commencement of a new history, but a continuation of what has been told in 2 Samuel. In Hebrew MSS. 1 and 2 Kings form but one book, as do also 1 and 2 Samuel. The LXX. treats these books as so closely connected with Samuel that the four books are called the four books of the Kings.—*Camb. B.* old, about 70 years of age^a (2 Sa. v. 4, 5.) *clothes*, bed-clothes;^b David was evidently keeping his bed. *but* . . . *heat*, hardships, sorrows and anxieties aged David prematurely. (2) *let there be, etc.*, this was the advice of the physicians.^c The damsel was regarded as a concubine, or secondary wife. (3) *coasts*, borders. *Shunammite*, of *Shunem*, now *Sulam*, village on an eminence in plain of Esdraelon, 5 m. S. of Tabor.^d (4) *fair*, the best being selected bec. for a king.

Weakness and infirmity of old age.—They are—I The universal human lot to which we must all consider ourselves appointed (Ps. xc. 10). II. They should loosen the bands which hold us to the temporal and perishable, and ripen us for eternity (2 Cor. iv. 17 sq.)—*Bähr*.

The monuments.—This period of Jewish history is peculiarly interesting because so much light is thrown upon it, and so many confirmations of the truth of the history are afforded by the various monuments discovered chiefly within the last half century. Inscriptions in Karnak, in Egypt, refer to the attack upon Rehoboam by Shishak, of Egypt. The Moabite stone, discovered in 1868, refers to the wars of Moab with Omri, king of Israel, and his son. The black obelisk discovered by Mr. Layard, in Nineveh, describes the campaigns of Shalmaneser, and mentions Jehu and his tribute to Assyria. Royal tablets from the stone libraries of Nineveh mention Uzziah, and Pekah, and Hoshea. The Taylor Cylinder found in Nineveh, in 1830, and now in the British museum, describes Sennacherib's conquest of Judah in the time of Hezekiah. The stone records of Assyrian history, called the "Eponym Canon," discovered in 1862, in Nineveh, by Sir Henry Rawlinson, help us to gain a more exact knowledge of the dates of this period.—*Peloubet*.

5-10. (5) Adonijah, David's fourth son. but prob. eldest now living.^e *fifty* . . . him, by this daily retinue imitating Absalom to win the allegiance of the populace. (6) *not displeased, etc.*, the indulgence of David's family rule was one source of his family troubles.^f *goodly man*, "Eastern peoples are always ready to concede pre-eminence to splendid men. This had helped to win the k'g'm for stately Saul and ruddy David." (7) Joab, David's nephew, captain of the host. Abiathar, prob. jealous of the superior influence of Zadok. (8) Zadok . . . priest, why two priests? Abiathar was the real high priest officiating at Mt. Zion; Zadok was second priest attending to the tabernacle in Gibeon.—*Camb. B.* Shimel, probably Dav.'s brother Shimeah, or the son of Elah, as ch. iv. 18. *Rei, Ira*, as 2 Sa. xx. 26, or Raddai. (9) *Zohelath*, (stone of serpents); for *En-rogel* see Jos. xv. 7.

Character possibilities.—Suppose there had been firm resolution instead of habitual indulgence; suppose that authority had been asserted and used in days before evil habits were formed; suppose that, instead of leaving the future to chance, counsels and prayers had molded character during molding time—might there not have been joy where now there is grief?—*A. Rowland*.

11-14. (11) Nathan, doing his duty as prophet of God, preventing any infringement of the Div. will. (12) *save . . . life*, it was the Eastern custom for a usurper to put to death all rival claimants. (13) *didst not thou*, on what occasion this was said is not known; it was after he received the promise, 2 Sa. vii. The spirit of the theocracy being retained, God designated whom He pleased as the new king. To have proclaimed David's choice of Sol. would have imperiled his life amidst the intrigue, envy and jealousy of the harem. (14) *confirm*, support by further testimony.

Nathan the type of a true prophet (vss. 11-27).—I. Through his watchfulness and fidelity (Ez. xxxiii. 7); he was not silent when it was his duty to open his mouth (Is. lvi. 10). II. Through his wisdom and gentleness (Mat. x. 16). III. Through his earnestness and courage (Mat. x. 28). IV. How grand

^a "No Jewish monarch after David, excepting Solomon and Manasseh, exceeded 60 years."—*Spk. Com.*

^b "Coverings and garments can only preserve and accumulate the heat actually existing in the body, but not supply that which is gone. Only a living body could impart living warmth."—*Keil*.

^c *Josephus, Ant. Jud. vii. 11.*

^d Jos. xix. 16; 1 Sa. xxviii. 4.

Age rots away the gold we are set in, but the adamantine soul lives on, radiant every way in the light streaming down from God.—*Th. Parker*.

Adonijah's conspiracy

^e Comp. 2 Sa. iii. 2, 4; xlii. 29; xlviii. 14. Of *Chileab*, or Daniel, we have no later mention.^f "If a parent does not punish his sons, his sons will be sure to punish him."—*Guthrie*.

"A man is just as great as he is in the sight of God; no greater."—*Farrar*.

Nathan informs Bathsheba

Cambyses, King of Persia, slew his brother Smerdis out of envy because he could draw a stronger bow than himself or any of his followers.

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"I am the most dubious man in the world about my own judgment, and will stickle for nothing, excepting to live and to trust in my Lord." — *Berridge*.

is this Nathan, how reproving to all who sleep when they should be wakeful, who are dumb when they should counsel, who flatter when they should warn. — *Lange*.

Men wanted.—

"The world wants *men*, large-hearted, manly men; Men who shall join its chorus, and prolong The psalm of labor and the psalm of love. The age wants *heroes*, heroes who shall dare To struggle in the solid ranks of truth; To clutch the monster error by the throat; To bear opinion to a loftier seat; To blot the error of oppression out And let a universal freedom in."

Bathsheba informs David

a Comp. Esth. v. 1, 2.

b "Such right of selecting one among a number of sons is in the East recognized, and even now exercised." — *Jamieson*.

"Nothing lovelier can be found in woman than to study household good, and good works in her husband to promote." — *Milton*.

Take your wife's first advice, but not her second — *English Proverb*.

Nathan confirms Bathsheba's words

c Comp. v. 7, 19; 1 Chr. xxv. 1.

If thou bearest slight provocations with patience, it shall be imputed unto thee for wisdom.

"It is time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss." — *Shakespeare*.

David promises that Solomon shall succeed him

d Ju. viii. 19; Ru. iii. 13; 1 Sa. xiv. 39; xix. 6; xxviii. 10; 2 Sa. xv. 21; Ho. iv. 15; Jer. iv. 2; v. 2. For Dav.'s addition comp. 1 Sa. xxv. 34; 2 Sa. iv. 9.

15—21. (15) chamber, inner bed-chamber, to wh. the king was confined. (16) obeisance, indicating the state ceremonial kept up in the Hebrew court.^a "The king was the representative of heaven." (18) reigneth, only true that he was making the attempt. (19) but Sol., etc., with this statement she intends to show that it was an antagonistic movement. Not a mere piece of jealousy. (20) thou shouldest tell,^b "in those early times, especially in the East, the right of hereditary succession was not thought of, the reigning monarch selecting for his successor that member of his family who was most in favor or who seemed most fit to rule." — *Camb. B.* (21) offenders, exposed to death, as guilty of a capital crime.

Bathsheba before the king (vss. 15—21). — She reminds him of his duty — I. Towards God, before whom he had sworn; vows to God, according to His will, must be kept. II. Towards the people whose well-being and whose woe were in his keeping: responsibility of kings. III. Towards the wife and child whose happiness and life were at stake: woe to the father through whose guilt wife and children, after his death, fall into contempt and wickedness.

Woman's power. — Oh that women may not forget wherein lies the hiding of their power! It is not in splendor of gifts, nor in successful competition, nor in the achievement of social or artistic or intellectual eminence; it is in the grandeur of self-sacrificing love, in the sweetness and self-forgetful tenderness of daughterhood and sisterhood and wifehood and motherhood. It is in these that men see her divineness, and yield her the homage of their praise, the devotion of their hearts. — *S. S. Harris*.

22—27. (22) came in, as arranged, vs. 14. (23) Another illus. of court manners. (24) hast thou said? Nathan assumes that Adon. must have obtained permission. (25) captains,^c indic. that some officers had joined Joab and Adon. God . . . Adonijah, *lit.* "Let the king Adon. live." (26) not called, so making his act very suspicious. (27) not shewed it, to his prophet counselor his intention ought surely to have been made known.

Nathan the prophet. — An example to the Christian minister. I. He admonished in health. 1. He boldly denounced sin. 2. He proclaimed forgiveness upon repentance. 3. He ministered comfort in sorrow. 4. He advised in all undertakings. II. He counselled in sickness. 1. He was faithful to his God and to his king. 2. He was disinterested. 3. He was discreet. — *Pulp. Com.*

28—31. (28) call me, Bathsheba had left the room on Nathan's entering. (29) sware, most solemnly renewed the oath which he had made with B. and Nathan. as the Lord liveth, the usual Heb. oath.^d Equivalent to "as surely as there is a living God, etc." redeemed . . . distress, as in the Ps. so here, Dav. always recalls gratefully the ever present help of God. (30) Lord . . . Israel, R. V., "the Lord, the God of Israel." do, take instant action. It was to this that they hoped to arouse him.

Promptitude in Christian service. — Is — I. Impelled by a conviction of the righteousness of the work to be done. II. Necessary to counteract the stratagems of the wicked. III. Demanded by the pressing needs of humanity. IV. Followed by the most satisfactory results. — *Hom. Com.*

Wisdom in age.—

"The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lies in new light through chinks that time has made:
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become,
As they draw near to their eternal home.
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
That stand upon the threshold of the new."—*E. Waller.*

32-37. (32) Observe that the three orders of the state were represented, priests, prophets and military. **Benaiah**, 2 Sa. xx. 23; xxiii. 20-23. (33) **the servants**, or body-guard, Cherethites and Pelethites, "who remained faithful mine own mule, this she mule no one but the king might mount. Sol.'s riding on it, surrounded by those mentioned *vs.* 32, would prove that his movement had David's sanction. **Gihon**,^b prob. *Siloam*. Removed sufficiently from En-rogel to avoid a premature collision with Adon.'s followers. (34) **anoint him**, "done only in the case of a new dynasty or disputed succession." **trumpet**,^c a loud proclamation. Comp. heralding of a new king now. (35) **my throne**, wh. Dav. himself would abdicate in his favor. (36) **amen**, solemn affirmation; Nu. v. 22. (37) **as the Lord**, etc., comp. Ge. xxvi. 3, 24; xxviii. 15, etc.

Greater than the father (*vs.* 37).—When the younger Professor Silliman, of Yale, was once lecturing in New York, his father was in the audience. A gentleman sitting close behind him was so interested and aroused that he exclaimed in an audible whisper, "He beats the old gent." The father, turning around to the unknown man, replied, "He ought to; he stands on my shoulders."—*Peloubet.*

38-40. (38) **Cherethites . . . Pelethites**, "Benaiah's palace regiment of 600 picked men. They formed a body of defenders, always prepared for action. They resemble the Swiss Guard of the Bourbons."—*Exp. B. went down*,^c *vs.* 33. (39) **horn of oil**, 1 Sa. xvi. 1. For the oil, see Ex. xxx. 22. **tabernacle**, the tabernacle on Mount Zion, containing the ark (2 Sam. vi. 17; 1 Chron. xv. 1) must be meant here. (40) **came up after**, indic. a general acceptance of Solomon. **pipes**, flutes. **earth rent**, better, rang again, resounded. A strong figure.

The typical in Solomon's elevation to the sovereignty.—I. He is established in spite of all machinations against him, Ps. ii. 2; He. v. 5. II. He is anointed with oil from the sanctuary, Is. lxi. 1; Lu. iv. 18. III. He makes his entry as prince of peace amid the jubilee and praise of the people, Zech. ix. 9; Matt. xxi. 1 sq.

The people (*vs.* 40).—The people are wiser than they are often thought to be. Have faith in the people. You cannot easily measure them. Taken one by one, they do not seem to amount to much; but when they touch one another, and feel the contagion of sympathy and the inspiration of common interest; when they listen as one man to the voice of the declaimer or the charmer, the reasoner and the statesman, they know who is right and who is wrong.—*Parker.*

41-45. (41) **sound of trumpet**, Joab would notice this, as his office gave him the control of the public trumpet. (42) **Jonathan**, the messenger, swift runner, as 2 Sa. xv. 36; xvii. 15-21. **valiant**,^c worthy, virtuous. (45) **city rang**, comp. form of the fig. in *vs.* 40.

Unprofitable wickedness.—A gentleman had a talk with a wicked man. "You do not look as if you had prospered by your wickedness," said the gentleman. "I haven't prospered at it," cried the man feelingly. "It is business that doesn't pay. If I had given half the time and energy to some honest calling which I have spent in trying to get a living without work, I might be now a man of property and character instead of the homeless wretch I am." He then told his history, and ended by saying, "I have been twice in State prison, and I have made acquaintance with all sorts of miseries in my life, but I tell you my worst punishment is in being what I am."—*Peloubet.*

46-49. (46) **sitteth on**, the report of Jon. seems to imply that he waited just long enough to see Sol. crowned, and then he sped to Adon. (47) **king bowed himself**, in agreement with them, and reverent response to their

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"If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly."—*Shakespeare.*

David orders Solomon to be proclaimed

aus. 38; 2 Sa. viii. 18; xv. 18; xx. 7, 23.

^b "Prob ancient name of the valley called afterwards the Tyropæum, wh. ran fr. the present Damascus gate, by Siloam, into the Kedron vale."—*Spk. Com.*

^c "A great long, prob. bent (Rabins say straight) horn, that gave a far-sounding note."—*Kell.*

Solomon is proclaimed

^d "If we go from Zion to Gihon westward, we first descend a slope, and then ascend a gradual elevation; and this slope was prob. in former times more considerable."—*Robinson.*

"Unless the people can be kept in total darkness, it is the wisest way for the advocates of truth to give them full light."—*Whately.*

Adonijah hears of it

e Prov. xii. 4; 1 Ki. i. 52.

"No doubt at this feast there was many a health drunken to Adonijah, and now, for their last dish (*vs.* 49) is served up astonishment, and fearful expectation of a just revenge."—*Bp. Hall.*

the fear of Adonijah

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"The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made themselves; the liberty of a private man in being master of his own time and actions, as far as may consist with the laws of God and his country." — *Cowley*.

"If a man is not rising up to be an angel, depend upon it he is sinking downward to be a devil. He cannot stop at the beast." — *Coleridge*.

Solomon's clemency to Adonijah

a Ps. cxviii. 27.

b Taking sanctuary is a common custom of nations, but has no support in the Mosala law.

c "Sol. looks upon Adon.'s fleeing to the altar as a sign of repentance." — *Keil*.

"To revenge a wrong is easy, usual, and natural and, as the world thinks, savors of nobleness of mind; but religion teaches the contrary, and tells us it is better to neglect than to requite it." — *J. Beaumont*.

David's death

d Comp 1 Ti. iv. 12; 2 Ti. ii. 1, 3.

e "Statutes, definite rules and usages; commandments, expressions of the Div. will; judgments, laws belonging to the civil government; testimonies, solemn declarations of the will of God against sin." — partly fr. *Keil*.

f 2 Sa. vii. 12, 13; Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4; cxxii. 12.

g "We must not expect Gospel

prayer. (48) mine eyes, etc., an unusual thing, as kings generally pass before their successors take rule. (49) afraid, bec. set in position of rebels, and so in danger of their lives. Their scheme was checkmated.

Saints and their descendants (vs. 48). — From the words of our texts we note that it is a matter of great joy to aged Christians to leave their families prosperous, peaceful, and pious. I propose to — I. Illustrate this observation. 1. It is a pleasure to an aged dying Christian to leave his family in prosperous circumstances; 2. A greater pleasure to leave his descendants in unity; 3. The greatest joy to leave them pious. II. Show why such a prospect gives so much joy. This joy arises from — 1. Their natural love to their descendants; 2. The concern which they feel for the honor of God; 3. Their prospects of meeting them again in heaven. — *J. Orton*.

Rebellion. — Unrighteous rebellion has in it no element of permanency. It clutches at a temporary advantage, while it outrages and tramples on eternal principles. It must sooner or later suffer defeat — defeat the most humiliating and disastrous. It is a bubble, inflated with pride and glittering with the many-colored tints of vanity, but melting away before the gossamer thread stretched across its pathway. It is a cloud-wreath — light, gay, pretentious, aspiring; but vanishing into space before it reaches the summit of the mountain from the spongy flank of which it sprang. — *Hom. Com.*

50-53. (50) horns, Ex. xxvii. 2; xxx. 2; xxxviii. 2, used for binding the sacrifice.^a altar, we cannot be sure wh., but prob. in the tabernacle in Mt. Zion.^b (51) not slay, Adon., by his action, acknowledges that his life is forfeited. (52) worthy,^c vs. 42. wickedness, secret rebelliousness, designs to assert his supposed right of succession. (53) bowed himself, cf. vs. 47. Adon. thus recognized the lordship of Sol. go to thine house, "be content with privacy, aspire not again. Such an act of clemency by Solomon towards his rival was a noble inauguration of his kingly rule, and must have both favorably affected the nation and conciliated the followers of Adonijah." — *Hom. Com.*

Confusion of Adonijah. — I. He fears Solomon — he who does not fear the Lord, must at last become afraid of men. II. He flies to the altar and begs for mercy: — he who said he would be king, calls himself Solomon's servant. Ostentation and boasting, as a rule, end in cowardice and cringing.

Examples of clemency (vs. 53). — Two patricians, having conspired against Titus, the Roman Emperor, were discovered, convicted, and sentenced to death by the senate: but that noble prince, having sent for them, admonished them in private of their folly in aspiring to the empire, exhorted them to be satisfied with the rank in which by Providence they had been placed, and offered them anything else which he had the power to grant. At the same time, he dispatched a messenger to the mother of one of them, who was then at a great distance, and under deep concern about the fate of her son, to assure her that her son was not only alive, but out of danger. He invited them the same night to his table; and having, the next day, placed them by him at a show of gladiators, when the weapons of the combatants were according to custom, presented to him, he desired them to survey them. — *Stretch*.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-6. (1) charged, gave final instructions. The death of Dav. did not follow immediately the event recorded in ch. 1. There may have been a partial recovery; at least Dav. called a solemn assembly of the princes, encouraged Sol. to build the temple and saw him solemnly and publicly consecrated to the kingly office. (2) go the way, Jos. xxiii. 14. a man,^d this counsel intimates that Sol. was but a youth when called to reign. (3) charge, etc.,^e as given De. xvii. 18-20. prosper, or, as marg., act wisely: see Jos. i. 7. (4) continue his word,^f keep up for a new generation his promise. Shows that Dav. understood God's promise to be conditional; cf. Ps. cvxxii. 12. fall . . man, not a complete unbroken succession, but rather the break, if any, shall not continue forever. "The royal house of Dav. became imperishable in 'great David's greater son.'" — *Hom. Com.* (5) Joab . . me,^g 2 Sa. xviii. 14, specially in Dav.'s mind. He fully mentions, however, only Joab's public offenses. Amasa, Abigail, the mother of Amasa, was the sister of David.

blood, etc., 2 Sa. xx. 10. (6) **hoar head**,^a Dav., the youngest son of Jesse, scarcely older than Joab.

Human equality (vss. 1-3).—We have here the dying charge of an old and experienced king to a young one. The lesson is that all men are equal in the sight of God: because kings even are not exempt from—I. Human mortality. II. Human frailty. III. Human responsibility. A second lesson may be learned from the same text, namely, that obedience to the will of God inevitably issues in prosperity, in the best sense of the word.—*F. Wagstaff*.

Trust in God for our successors.—When Bulstrode Whitelock was about to embark as Cromwell's envoy to Sweden, in 1655, he was much disturbed in mind as he rested in Harwich on the preceding night, which was very stormy, while he reflected on the distracted state of the nation. It happened that a confidential servant slept in an adjacent bed, who, finding that his master could not sleep, said: "Pray sir, will you give me leave to ask you a question?" "Certainly." "Pray, sir, don't you think God governed the world very well before you came into it?" "Undoubtedly." "And, pray, sir, don't you think that He can take care of it while you are in it?" To this question Whitelock had nothing to reply, but, turning about, soon fell asleep."—*Peloubet*.

7-11. (7) **sons of Barzillai**,^b 2 Sa. xix. 37-40; Je. xli. 17. **so they came, i. e. entertain them**, for they, kindly and thoughtfully, entertained me. **eat . . . table**, "a common mode in eastern countries of showing regard. Such treatment put the recipient in a position like that of the king's sons."—*Cam. B.* (8) **Shimei**, 2 Sa. xvi. 5-14. He offered gratuitous insult to the king, when he needed sympathy. **I will not**, stress on I. Temporary, not complete, immunity fr. punishment had been given. (9) **Sol. understood this** to mean, seek to gain opportunity of enacting judgment. David's motives are religious and prudential. As the executor of Divine law Dav. was not justified in sparing either Joab or Shimei; he had weakened the sanctions of law "and compromised the honor of the Most High. For the security of his throne Sol. must execute the sentence of the Mosaic law."—*Pul. Com.* (10) **in the city**,^c an exception to rule being made in his case. (11) **Comp. 2 Sa. v. 4, 5; 1 Chr. iii. 4; xxix. 26, 27.**

The sins of godly men (vss. 8, 9).—There are three ways in which David may have been influenced in giving this dying injunction to his son. I. As the agent, unconscious or otherwise, of Divine justice. II. By a conscientious desire to administer human justice, according to the will of God. III. As prompted by revenge. And this alternative we think the right one. With David as a man of God and Israel's lawgiver we must utterly disconnect this act, and attribute it entirely to a flaw in his character.—*R. Liswil*.

Toussaint l'Ouverture.—When this chief first rose into power among the negroes, he gave one very pleasing earnest of his future character. The white people, especially the planters, were so odious, both from their former tyranny, and the blood they had cruelly shed in the struggle to preserve their power, that the negroes, when they gained the ascendancy, were disposed to give them no quarter. The master of Toussaint was one of the unfortunate planters, who, not having escaped in good time, was on the point of falling into the hands of the enraged negroes; but he had been formerly kind to Toussaint, and this was not to be forgotten. The grateful and generous man, at the risk of being the vengeance of the multitude on his own head, delivered his unhappy master privately out of their hands, and sent him on board a ship bound for America, then lying in the harbor. Nor was this all. He was not sent away without the means of subsistence; for this brave and generous negro found means to put on board secretly, for his use, a great many hogsheads of sugar, in order to support him in exile, till the same grateful hands should be able to send him a larger supply.

12-18. (12) **established**, by recognition and allegiance of all the tribes. Vss. 18-16, which give the reason for the execution of Adon., etc., are omitted in Chronicles. (13) **peaceably**, with peaceful intentions. Adon.'s seeking the queen-mother looked suspicious. (14) **to say**, or ask. (15) This verse shows how his disappointment was rankling, and puts suspicion of a political design on his request. Tho' not seeking the throne, he wanted to win public influence. (16) **deny**, *lit. turn not away my face*. (17) **Abishag**,^d ch. i. 3. (18) **speak . . . king**, Bathsheba failed to fathom the design of Adon. She considered

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morality fr. the saints of the Old Testament. They were only the best men of their several ages and nations."—*Spk. Com.* a Ge. xlii. 38; Pr. xx. 26.

"The tongues of dying men enforce attention, like deep harmony."—*Shakespeare*.

David's burial

b "Four miles out of Jerus. a celebrated caravan-sarai for travelers into Egypt was founded by Chimmah, on the property granted to him by David out of the paternal patrimony at Bethlehem."—See the rest of this note, *Stanley Jew. Ch. ii. 161*.

c Ac. ii. 29.

"We make ourselves more injuries than are offered to us: they many times pass for wrongs in our own thoughts that were never meant so by the heart of him that speaketh. The apprehension of wrong hurts more than the sharpest part of the wrong done."—*Feltham*.

reign of Solomon

Adonijah's request

d The wives of a deceased sovereign were under

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the protection of his successor, but properly should remain widows.

vs. 13. "Ambitious and powerful people do not scruple to reach the ends which they cannot obtain by open force, by means that are mortifying to their pride."

Bathsheba prefers it to the king

a "The dignity of king's mother is a state office, to which certain revenues are attached. The holder has a separate palace or court, as well as possesses great influence in public affairs." — *Jamieson*.

b Mk. vi. 27.

"When visited by a superior, the Persian rises hastily, and meets his guest nearly at the door of the apartment. On the entrance of an equal, he just raises himself from his seat, and stands nearly erect; but to an inferior he makes the motion only of rising." — *Morier*.

the deposition of Abiathar

c Comp. 1 Ki. iii. 4; 1 Chr. xvi. 39.

d "The white-headed warrior of a hundred fights, with his hands still clasping the consecrated structure, was executed by the hands of his ancient comrade." — *Stanley*.

"As it is said that ferocious animals are disarmed by the eye of man, and will dare no violence if he but

this request purely as a love affair, and saw in her interposition an opportunity to win the favor of the malcontents for the new king.

An influential ambassador (vs. 18). — I. It is here implied that Solomon's love for his mother was so great that he could scarcely deny her request. II. It is here seen that a wily man takes advantage of that well-known affection to secure his own ends. Learn that the enemy may seek our hurt by means of our dearest relationships.

The folly of doing wrong. — A bee in inflicting a sting, it is said, leaves its barbed weapon in the wound, and being thus mutilated, inevitably dies. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the stinger dies, while the person stung lives. The bee stings itself to death in trying to sting some one else. There are men and women who might learn the lesson from this fact. If you purpose to sting others, remember that you may be more likely to injure yourself than them. Your stinging may hurt others and kill yourself. — *Hastings*.

19—25. (19) **rose up**, showing respect due to the queen-mother.^a **seat**, R. V., "throne." **right hand**, the place of honor, Ps. cx. 1. (21) *As vs. 17*. There may have been a real affection bet. the parties. (22) **ask . . kingdom**, rightly or wrongly Sol. suspected the beginnings of a plot. "To ask for Abishag was to ask for the kingdom. In the Oriental mind a monarch was so sacred, such a divinity hedged him in, that whatever was brought near to him was thenceforth separate from common use. This sacred and separate character attached especially to the royal harem." — *Spk. Com.* (23) **God do so**, as Ru. i. 17. (25) **Benaiah**, chief executioner, as cap. of body-guard.^b *Solomon's respect for his mother* (vs. 19). — I. Observe the courtly grace of the king; he rose — bowed — sat. II. Note the filial respect of this royal son: he gave his mother a seat on his right hand. III. Learn hence how mothers should be treated; and especially by those who have risen to wealth and power.

Widows of kings. — It was understood in all Eastern monarchies that the harem of a predecessor belonged to the succeeding sovereign. The first thing that a rival or a usurper aimed at was to win the prestige of possessing the wives of the royal house. Nathan reminds David that the Lord had given his master's wives into his bosom. Ishbosheth, weak as he was, had been stung into indignation against his general and great-uncle, the mighty Abner, because Abner had taken Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, Saul's concubine, to wife, which looked like a dangerously ambitious encroachment upon the royal prerogative. Absalom, by the vile counsel of Ahithophel, had openly taken possession of the ten concubines whom his father, in his flight from Jerusalem, had left in charge of the palace. The pseudo-Smerdis, when he revolted against the absent Cambyses, at once seized his seraglio. It is noted even in our English history that the relations between the Earl of Mortimer and Queen Isabella involved danger to the kingdom; and when Admiral Seymour married Queen Catharine Parr, widow of Henry VIII., he at once entered into treasonable conspiracies. Adonijah knew well that he would powerfully further his ulterior purpose if he could secure the hand of the lovely Shunamite. — *Farrar*.

26—30. (26) **Abiathar**, Sol. promptly acted concerning all likely to be interested in Adon.'s scheme, and so stamped out the very beginnings of conspiracy. He deposed Abiathar fr. his public office. **Anathoth**, 3 m. fr. Jerus. on the north, within the limits of the tribe of Benjamin. (27) **fulfil**, 1 Sa. ii. 31, 35. "This is the first passage in O. T. where the phrase to fulfil the word of the Lord appears." The reference is not to the springs of human action, but to the overruling providence of God, which thus brought about the fulfilment of the prophecy. — *Spk. Com.* **house of Eli**, Abiathar was descended from Ithamar, the youngest son of Aaron. The promotion of Zadok restored the priesthood to the line of Eleazar. (28) **tidings, etc.**, the alarm of Joab indicates guilty knowledge. **altar**, prob. the one at Gibeon.^c (29) **fall upon him**,^d even the sanctuary might afford no protection to a murderer.

Joab at the sanctuary. — I. Why is he here? 1. Because conscience has made him a coward. 2. Because men often seek in adversity the religion they despised in prosperity. II. Why is he slain here? 1. Because he has come too late. 2. Because "he shall have judgment without mercy that showed no mercy." 3. Because God pays surely, even if He pays slowly. — *Pulp. Com.*

The permanence of God's purposes. — God will find successors to all vacant offices. Joab and Abiathar must not imagine that the state or the church will go down when their energy and sagacity are removed from its policy and counsel. The Lord's cause can receive no patronage from bad men. Whatever happens, they must be cast out; and God will raise up a seed unto Himself, and a generation to serve Him, rather than accept the corrupt ministry of men who have trodden His law under foot and done despite to the spirit of His covenant. What a chapter is this for the vacancies which it creates in history; David dies, the mighty Joab is overwhelmed and removed, Adonijah descends to his grave, Abiathar is cast out, and Shimei is destroyed; yet the throne of Israel remains, the altar of God stands intact, and the great purpose of Providence passes serenely and majestically through all the tumult of human history. Always look for the permanent quantity in the details of unrest and rebellion with which history abounds. It would be an imperfect and unsettling view which took note of the tumult only, and did not see under all the upheaval and reshaping of things the hand that works night and day for the readjustment of proportions and the distribution of rewards and penalties to men according to the spirit of their conduct. An awful chapter: a chapter full of blood and terrible judgment; a great cry of weakness and of sin, a horrible pageant of darkness relieved with lurid flames; yet amidst all these commotions, and rendings of apparently permanent relations the throne of God stands sure, and the majesty of heaven rules over all. — *Parker.*

31-35. (31) **bury him, honorably**; as a criminal, executed by hand of justice, he had no claim to burial rites. **take away,** the penalty of unavenged crime being regarded as still hanging over the negligent party. (32) **not knowing,** 2 Sa. iii. 31-39; xx. 8-18. (33) **Comp. Dav.'s curse,** 2 Sa. iii. 29. **peace, prosperity.** Sol. is fully persuaded that his executions are in perfect accord with the Divine will. (34) **wilderness, prob. of Judah.** (35) **host, entire army, advancing Benaiah to be commander-in-chief.**

The terrible end of Joab (vs. 34). — I. He dies conscious of his guilt, without peace and pardon. II. Even in the very jaws of death he is defiant, rough, and proud. III. He does not leave the world like a hero, but like a criminal.

Friendship of the world (vs. 35). — When I see leaves drop from their trees in the beginning of autumn, just such, think I, is the friendship of the world. While the sap of maintenance lasts, my friends swarm in abundance; but in the winter of my need, they leave me naked. He is a happy man that hath a true friend at his need, but he is more truly happy that hath no need of his friend. — *Warwick's Spare Minutes.*

36-41. (36) **called for Shimei,** he was a "political suspect" and must be confined within a limited parole. The renewal of the intrigues of Adonijah warned Sol. that he must guard against and neutralize the influence of Shimei over the tribe of Benjamin. (37) **brook Kidron,** this was to be the limit of his parole. (38) **good, cheerfully accepting the easy and merciful condition.** (39) **Achish, comp. 1 Sa. xxvii. 2. Gath, Jos. xi. 22.** (40) **arose, in thoughtless haste and excitement.** (41) **come again, wh. indicated no evil intent.**

The end of the transgressor. — The incident — I. Shows the sins of — 1. Treason; 2. Blasphemy; 3. Perjury; 4. Disobedience; 5. Presumption. II. Describes their retribution. 1. Curses come home to roost; 2. Respite does not mean release, 3. Warnings are often lost on the wicked; 4. When God reckons, he reckons for all. — *Pulp. Com.*

The unprofitableness of sin. — "Father Hawley," of Hartford, was telling the scholars in a mission school of a boy in that city who had stolen money from his employer's drawer, and been sent to prison for his crime. "When he opened that drawer so stealthily," said Father Hawley, "and looked down on the pile of bank notes there, if only he could have seen written on top of them, in letters of fire, 'Ten years in State prison!' wouldn't he have slammed to that drawer again?" — *H. C. Trumbull.*

42-46. (42) **to swear, not fully stated** (vs. 38). (43) **oath of the Lord,** taken before the Lord; and using the name of the Lord. (41) **heart is privy to, or aware of.** The broken promise removed the pledged protection, and brought him under penalty of former sin. (45) **blessed, as a vindicator of**

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steadily look at them, so it is when right looks upon wrong. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you; offer him a bold front, and he runs away. He goes, it may be, uttering threats of rage, but yet he goes." — *Bushnell.*

"In general, treachery, though at first sufficiently cautious, yet in the end betrays itself." — *Livy.*

"Life is full of tests, which are a golden stairway to heaven, or a fiery descent into hell, as we choose to make them." — *Peloubet.*

the execution of Joab

a "God Himself had declared that blood defileth the land," and that the land could not be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it. Nu. xxxv. 33." — *Wordsworth.*

liberty of Shimei limited

b "The object apparently was to keep Shimei under the immediate eye of the government." — *Spk. Com.*

c "The servants were perhaps encouraged to run away by this prohibition on their master." — *Kitto.*

"A woman came to an Oriental king to have some wrong redressed, and he refused because he had not time. 'Then,' said she, 'if you have not time to do justice, you have not time to be king.'" — *Peloubet.*

the execution of Shimei

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a "This rapid suppression of all resistance was known in the formal language of the time as the 'establishment' or 'enthronization' of Solomon."—*Stanley*.

"Such firmness of resolution and such vigor of action but few had expected beforehand from the young prince."—*Ewald*.

Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter

b "The position taken by many that this princess became a proselyte, must be inferred partly from the circumstance that she is neither (ch. xi.) named among the wives of Sol. who practiced idolatry, nor is a single trace of Egypt. idol. to be found during the whole of his reign; and partly from the charac. of Sol. at this time."—*Keil*.

c 2 Chr. i. 13.

vs. 8. The greatest and best thing that can be said of a man is, that "he loved the Lord."

Solomon's wise choice

d Ge. xv. 1; xxviii. 12; xxxvii. 5.

righteousness. In beginning of his reign an impression of the firmness and vigor of his rule must be made. (46) **established**^a (Pr. xxv. 5). **hand of Solomon**, although but a young man, Sol. had now gained absolute control of the reins of government.

Shimei put to death (vs. 44).—In considering the subject of retributive justice, we shall show—I. How it should be exercised by men. 1. By men in their individual capacity not at all; 2. But, as public men, we may and must execute justice on those who transgress the laws. II. How it will be exercised by God. 1. Here; 2. Hereafter.—*C. Simeon*.

Often reproved, suddenly destroyed.—There are many who say, "When I come to die I shall be on my death-bed, and then I shall say, 'Lord have mercy upon me, a sinner.'" I remember an aged minister telling me a story of a man whom he often warned, but who always said to him, "Sir, when I am dying I shall say, 'Lord have mercy on me,' and I shall go to heaven as well as anybody else." Returning home from market one night under the influence of liquor, he guided his horse with a leap right over the parapet of a bridge into the river. The last words he was heard to utter were a most fearful imprecation; and in the bed of the river he was found dead, killed by the fall.—*Spurgeon*.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

1-4. (1) **made affinity**, national alliance, sealed with union of the two reigning families. Whether he had any right to marry an Egyptian is much disputed.^b **Pharaoh**, either Psusennes II. or his predecessor Psinaces. **city of David**, the hill of Zion. (2) **only, etc.**, the worship "in high places" was still rendered necessary until the temple could be constructed. Regarding this worship there is great diff. of opinion, cf. Deut. xii. 2 with Lev. xvii. 3-5. When the temple was ready the "high places" should have been abandoned. "There were two reasons for the prohibition of high places; first, the danger of the old idolatry creeping back if the old localities were retained for worship; and, secondly, the danger to the unity of the nation if there should be more than one legitimate religious centre. The existence of the worship at 'high places' did, in fact, facilitate the division of the kingdom."—*Spk. Com.* (3) **statutes**, both those wh. David enjoined, and those in wh. Dav. himself walked. (4) **Gibeon**^c (Jos. xxi. 17). **great high place**, because the tabernacle of the congregation and Moses' brazen altar of burnt offerings were there.

The grace of love (vs. 3).—I. God loves those who love Him, despite their imperfections. II. God forgives those who love Him, notwithstanding their infirmities. III. God will receive those who love Him, despite their ignorance. IV. Love is everything. It is—1. The fulfilling of the law. 2. The seal royal of the Christian. 3. The glory of the man. 4. The one thing needful.—*Pulp. Com.*

Definiteness in prayer (vs. 5).—A company was assembled to see some incense burned. A gentleman placed the incense in a mortar and proceeded to grind it. When it was fine he placed some upon the coals which were ready, and all anxiously awaited the perfume which was to be the result. They sat hushed for some minutes, when a murmur of disappointment arose. It was a failure. The gentleman took up the mortar and ground the remainder of the incense to powder; it was exceedingly fine. Then it was placed upon the coals, when immediately the room was filled with the delightful odor. Thus with our prayers; when we get them fine, when we have ground all the generalities, and simply go to the Lord with every little thing of joy, of sorrow, then our prayers ascend unto heaven, as a sweet-smelling savor to a loving and gracious God.—*Miss Sarah Smiley. The life depends on the heart*.—In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when the Roman Catholics were commanded to attend church under pains and penalties, some of their leaders applied to the Pope for guidance. "Let the Catholics of England," was the astute reply, "give me their hearts, and the Queen may do what she likes with the rest."—*Hammond*.

5-10. (5) **in a dream**,^d this was the way of Div. communication to Sol. **three times**. ask, in approval of his sacrifice, as a reward for the pure intention of the king, God answered Sol. (6) **great kindness**, comp. ch. i. 48. (7) **little child**, strong fig. of Sol.'s sense of unfitness for such responsi-

bilities. **go out or come in**, phrase for personal conduct. (8) **great people**, whose wise ruling is a great work. (9) **understanding, etc.**,^a kingly qualities of judgment, prudence, and practical discernment; statesmanship **good and bad**, justice and injustice. (10) **pleased**, bec. of its showing thoughtful sense of responsibility and a tone of true humility.

Solomon's readiness for the dream.—I. He had come from worship. Those who have been hearing of God are prepared to say with Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." II. He was alone with God. III. He was listening to God.—*A. Rowland.*

Solomon's choice (vs. 10).—I. The address which God made to Solomon when he said, "Ask what I shall give thee," He does in effect make to each of us, especially to the young. II. Though we need not the qualifications which Solomon required for his kingly office, yet we all need spiritual wisdom and understanding, and may therefore all imitate his example. III. God is pleased with those who make the choice and offer up the prayer of Solomon. Because—1. It is the effect of His grace; 2. It indicates opinions and feelings similar to His own; 3. It indicates humility; 4. It shows a benevolent concern for His glory, and for the happiness of their fellow-creatures; 5. It actually tends to promote His glory. IV. All who make this choice and adopt this prayer shall certainly be favored with a wise and understanding heart.—*Payson.*

Diffidence a sign of wisdom (vs. 9).—The celebrated Aboo Yûsuph, in the reign of Caliph Hadee, was a very remarkable instance of that humility which distinguishes true wisdom. His sense of his own deficiencies often led him to entertain doubts where men of less knowledge and more presumption were decided. It is related of this judge that on one occasion, after a very patient investigation of facts, he declared that his knowledge was not competent to decide upon the case before him. "Pray, do you expect," said a pert courtier, who heard this declaration, "that the caliph is to pay your ignorance?" "I do not," was the mild reply; "the caliph pays me and well for what I do know. If he were to attempt to pay me for what I do not know, the treasures of this empire would not suffice."—*Malcolm's Persia.*

11—15. (11) **long life**, the thing judged most desirable, but mere personal good. **enemies**,^b those opposing his rule. **discern**, hear. (12) **words**, the Heb. is singular. (13) **also given**,^c among the kings, generally, not limiting the comparison to kings of Israel. (14) This promise was not fulfilled bec. Sol. failed in the condition.^d (15) **dream**, as Ge. xli. 7. **to Jerus.**, renewing sacrifice at the tabernacle there as well as at Gibeon.^e **burnt offerings**, a "gift" to God, not a "sacrifice for sin," typifying the offering by the sacrificer of himself, soul and body, to God. **peace offerings**, a simple offering to God characterized by the eating of the flesh by the sacrificer, "betokening the enjoyment of communion with God." **feast**, to consume the peace offerings.

The wisdom of Solomon's choice.—I. The choice was for the good of others rather than for the advantage of himself. II. The choice was made of inward worth, and not of outward show. III. The choice made of the higher brought with it the lower blessings.—*A. Rowland.*

A life choice.—Hercules, on attaining manhood, went out into solitude, and sitting down there, deliberated long and anxiously with himself which of the two ways before him it were better to take—the way of pleasure, or the way of virtue. Solomon must now make his choice, and it really lies between pleasure and duty, between temporal and eternal blessings. He may choose glory, wealth, renown—in a word, earthly pleasure and prosperity—or he may choose character, wisdom, goodness; in other words, heavenly and abiding treasure. We know which he chose. So each one of us has to choose in turn between the showy and the solid, between the higher and the lower, between God and Mammon.—*Rowlinson.*

16—21. (16) **harlots**, Ge. xxxviii. 14, 15. **stood before**,^f as those who seek a judicial decision. (17) **in one house**, their sad trade involved living by themselves. (18) **no stranger**, so no witness could be brought. (19) **overlaid it**, lay on it during sleep; (20) This is the woman's assumption. (21) **considered it**, examined it by daylight.

The course of sin.—I. Impurity almost inevitably leads to deceit. II. Moral cowardice may lead to murder. III. Falsehood leads to falsehood. IV.

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^a One of the chief functions of the Oriental monarch is always to hear and decide causes.

"Though Sol.'s choice was made in a dream, we must regard it as springing fr. his will in some degree; and therefore as indicative of his moral character."—*Spk. Com.*

"He showed his wisdom by asking for wisdom. He became wise bec. he had set his heart upon it."—*Stanley.*

"He prayeth best who loveth best All things both great and small, For the good Lord that loveth us, He made and loveth all."

"We are never deceived, we deceive ourselves."—*Goethe.*

God approves his choice

^b 1 Ki. xi. 14—25.

^c Mat. vi. 33; Lu. xii. 31.

^d *Keil.* 1 Ki. [xi. 42.

^e 1 Ki. iii. 4.

"Wisdom consists chiefly in three things.—1. Knowledge to discern; 2. Skill to judge; 3. Activity to prosecute."—*T. Watson.*

"The first point of wisdom is to discern that which is false; the second, to know that which is true"—*Lactantius.*

the cause of the two women

^f "The mother of the living child tells her tale with all the plaintive-

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ness and particularity of truth."—Stanley.

"Perfect wisdom hath four parts, viz.—wisdom, the principle of doing things aright; justice, the principle of doing things equally in public and private; fortitude, the principle of not flying danger, but meeting it; and temperance, the principle of subduing desires, and living moderately."—Plato.

"Learning falls far short of wisdom. . . Knowledge is the treasure of the mind, but discretion is the key to it, without which it is useless. The practical part of wisdom is the best."—Fettham.

"There is not a man in the world but desires to be, or to be thought to be, a wise man; and yet if he considered how little he contributed himself thereunto, he might wonder to find himself in any tolerable degree of understanding."—Clarendon.

Solomon's judgment

a "There is no quality more highly prized in the E. than that keen discernment in the royal judge wh. detects the clue of real evidence amidst conflicting testimony, or that ready tact wh. devises a test of truth where the evidence affords no clue to any grounds of decision."—Kitto.

b Also vs. 27. "The word is peculiar."—Stanley.

vs. 26. "If in the hearts of sinners parental love be so strong, how strong must the fatherly love of God be (Is. xlix. 15)?"—Seiler.

Jealousy dries up the milk of human kindness. V. Sin overreaches itself. VI. When the sinner is most secure, then sudden destruction comes upon him. — *Pulpit Com.*

An ingenious judgment.—A jeweler who carried on an extensive trade, leaving his home with a valuable assortment of diamonds for a distant region, took with him his son and a young slave whom he had purchased in his infancy, and had brought up more like an adopted child than a servant. They performed their intended journey, and the merchant disposed of his commodities with great advantage; but he was seized by a pestilential distemper, and died suddenly in the metropolis of a foreign country. This accident inspired the slave with a wish to possess his master's treasures; and relying on the total ignorance of strangers, and the kindness everywhere shown him by the jeweler, he declared himself the son of the deceased, and took charge of his property. The true heir of course denied his pretensions, and solemnly declared himself to be the only son of the defunct. The contest produced various opinions. It happened that the slave was a young man of comely person and of polished manners; while the jeweler's son was ill-favored by nature, and still more injured in his education by the indulgence of his parents. Since no certain evidence could be produced on either side, it became necessary to refer the dispute to a court of law. There, however, from a total want of proof, nothing could be done. This caused a report of the case to be made to the prince, who, having heard the particulars, was confounded and at a loss how to decide the question. At length a happy thought occurred to the chief of the judges, and he engaged to ascertain the real heir. The two claimants being summoned before him, he ordered them to stand behind a curtain prepared for the occasion, and to project their heads through two openings, when, after hearing their several arguments, he would cut off the head of him who should prove to be the slave. This they readily assented to; the one from a reliance on his honesty, the other from a confidence of the impossibility of detection. Accordingly, each taking his place as ordered, thrust his head through a hole in the curtain. An officer stood in front with a drawn scimitar in his hand, and the judge proceeded to the examination. After a short debate, the judge cried out, "Enough, enough, strike off the villain's head!" And the officer, who watched the moment, leaped towards the two youths. The impostor, startled at the brandished weapon, hastily drew back his head; while the jeweler's son, animated by conscious security, stood unmoved. The judge immediately decided for the latter, and ordered the slave to be taken into custody, to receive the punishment due to his diabolical ingratitude. — *Percy Anec.*

22—28. (22) *Nay, etc.*, the false woman was determined to brazen the matter through. (24) *bring, etc.*, Sol. makes appeal to the instincts of nature.^a (26) *child, better babe.*^b She would even sacrifice her motherhood to save her babe's life. *bowels yearned*, supposed by the ancients to be the seat of the affections; like our use of "heart." "Her motherly heart burned for her son."—*Luther.* (27) *her*, whose true mother-feeling was thus shown. (28) *wisdom*, a superhuman prescience wh. God had given to the young monarch.

The judgment of Solomon (vs. 25).—I. The occasion which evoked it. II. The shrewdness displayed in it. 1. There were no witnesses; 2. There was no evidence to show that even the living child belonged to either of them; 3. The king's judgment was designed to draw out the defense of love from the true mother. The one whose child it was not, was willing the king's word should take effect. The true mother would rather lose her child than see it killed. III. The impression produced by it (vs. 28).

Solomon's shrewd decision (vs. 25).—This was apparently a very strange decision; but Solomon saw that the only way to discover the real mother was by the affection and tenderness she would necessarily show to her offspring. The plan was tried and succeeded; and it was a proof of his sound judgment, penetration, and acquaintance with the human heart, if not of his extraordinary and supernatural wisdom. There are several similar decisions recorded by heathen writers. Suetonius, in his *Life of the Emperor Claudian*, whom he celebrates for his wonderful sagacity and penetration, tells us that this emperor discovered a woman to be the real mother of a young man, whom she refused to acknowledge, by commanding her to marry him, the proofs being doubtful on both sides; for, rather than commit incest, she con-

fessed the truth. Diodorus Siculus also informs us that Ariopharnes, king of Thrace, being appointed to decide between three young men, each of whom professed to be the son of the deceased king of the Cimmerians, and claimed the succession, discovered the real son by ordering each to shoot an arrow into the dead body of the king: two of them did this without hesitation; but the real son of the deceased monarch refused. — *Greenfield*.

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"When desperate illness demand a speedy cure, distrust is cowardice and prudence folly."—*Johnson*.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

1-6. (1) **all Israel**,^a from the inauguration of Sol. the whole land yielded him willing obedience. (2) **princes**,^b ministers, officers. **son of**, grandson, 1 Chr. vi. 10. **priest**, prob. high priest, others think prime minister. Difficult to decide to whom the word "priest" applies; weight of authority refers it to Azariah. (3) **Shisha**, 1 Chr. xviii. 16. **scribes**,^c secretaries. **recorder**,^d remembrancer. (4) **over the host**, 1 Ki. ii. 35. **Abiathar**, comp. 1 Ki. ii. 26, 27; mentioned in this list because he had been priest for a short period of Sol's reign. (5) **Nathan**, cf. Zech. xii. 12. "The Nathan whose two sons, Azariah and Zabud, held such high positions, was in all probability not Nathan the Prophet, who is rarely introduced without his distinctive title, but Nathan, the younger brother of Solomon, in whose line the race of David was continued after the extinction of the elder branch in Jeconiah." — *Exp. B.* **principal officer**, "the word here used is *cohen* which ordinarily means 'priest.' The title *cohen* was, we know, borne by sons of David (2 S. viii. 18), who could not be priests in the ordinary sense of the word." — *Spk. Com.* **friend**, as 2 Sa. xv. 37; xvi. 16; privy counselor. (6) **household**, steward of the court and harem. **tribute**, levy of men, not taxes; comp. 2 Sa. xx. 24.

Solomon's princes

^a Comp. begin. of Dav.'s reign. 2 Sa. v. 4, 5.

^b "This list refers to a later period of Sol.'s reign; for it contains names of Sol.'s sons-in-law. 1 Chr. xii. 15." — *Wordsworth*.

^c 2 Ki. xli. 10.

^d 1 Chr. xviii. 15.

Royalty.—

Unbounded power and height of greatness give
To kings that lustre which we think divine;
The wise who know 'em, know they are but men;
Nay, sometimes weak ones too. The crowd, indeed,
Who kneel before the image, not the god,
Worship the deity their hands have made. — *Rowe*.

7-12. (7) **officers**, superintendents. **provided victuals**,^e portions of produce were set apart for the king's use, and these were collected by the officers. (8) **mount Ephraim**, Jos. xvi. (9) **Makaz**, not known, Shaalbim, Jos. xix. 42; Ju. i. 35. **Beth-shemesh**, Jos. xix. 41. **Elon-beth-hanan**, poss. Beit-Hanun, near Gaza, Jos. xix. 43. (10) **Aruboth**, not known. **Sochoh**, Jos. xv. 35; 1 Sa. xvii. 1-3. **Hepher**, Jos. xii. 17. (11) **Dor**, Jos. xi. 2; xvii. 11. (12) **Taanach**, Megiddo, Jos. xii. 21. **Beth-shean**, Jos. xvii. 11. **Zartanah**, as Jos. iii. 16; 1 Ki. vii. 46. "Here Sol. cast the temple vessels." **Abelmeholah**, Ju. vii. 22. The home of Elisha. **Jokneam**, Jos. xii. 22.

Royal revenues (vs. 7). — I. These were vast. To meet not only the common requirements of the court, but extraordinary royal banquets, as on occasion of visits of foreign princes — Q. Sheba, etc. II. Their collection distributed over the whole land. 1. Twelve districts; 2. Twelve collectors; 3. Twelve monthly portions. III. Attempt at equitable distribution of taxation.

Solomon's court. — The court was a scene of magnificence and gaiety, thronged with richly appalled attendants, and sparkling with evidences of boundless wealth. In the midst of this gorgeous array stood the stately figure of the king — fair in countenance, and resplendent in beauty — his robes scented with the perfumes of India, the crown on his head and the sceptre in his hand, and the guards and councillors surrounding his brilliant throne; or, as was often the case, the king, at early dawn, is driving out of Jerusalem in one of his numerous chariots, drawn by horses of unparalleled swiftness and beauty, himself clothed in white, followed by a train of mounted archers, all splendid youths of magnificent stature, dressed in purple, their long black hair flowing behind them, powdered with gold-dust, which glittered in the sun as they galloped along after their royal master. — *Josephus; Stanley*.

collectors of the revenue

^e "Not exchequer officers, who managed the crown lands, but general collectors of the royal revenue, wh. in the E. consist mostly of raw material, i. e. fruits and products of the land." — *Keil*.

"Mortal kingdoms are not lasting, and, while they last, are not uniform. They have their climacteric years, and terminate within certain periods. The kingdom of heaven shall have no end. The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." — *Spencer*.

^f Described in Porter's *Giant Cities of Bashan*.

^g Jos. xiii. 26; 2 Sa. ii. 8; xvii. 24.

^h *Baaloth* or *Bealoth*. LXX., Syr. and Vulg.

13-19, (13) **Ramoth-gilead**, Jos. xx. 8. **towns of Jair**,^f De. iii. 14. **Argob**, Josh. xiii. 30; De. iii. 4, 5. (14) **Mahanaim**,^g Ge. xxxii. 2. (15) **also**, comp. vs. 11. (16) **Hushai**, 2 Sa. xv. 32. **Aloth**,^h not identified. (17)

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a 2Sa. viii. 16.

"As merchants are glad to pay all their wealth for pearls of great price, so we ought not to spare any earthly treasure for the attainment of that most precious pearl, the kingdom of heaven." — *Cawdray*.

extent of the kingdom

b vs. 20, 21 appear to be out of place, and would better come in after vs. 25.

c 1 Ki. x. 25.

d Josephus; Wordsworth.

e Rabbinical writers; Smith's Dict.

f From Heb. *pasach* to pass over.

g Jos. xiii. 3; comp. De. ii. 23.

his chariots and horsemen

h "Parashim, as distinguished from — *susim*." Gesenius; so Keil.

i LXX. have "to the place where the king was."

"There is no service like his who serves because he loves." — Sir Philip Sidney.

Solomon's learning

j 1 Ki. x. 24; Job ix. 4; Pr. viii. 5.

k "The Egyptian wisdom was con-

Jehoshaphat, not the recorder.* (18) Shimei, 1 Ki. i. 8. (19) only officer, tho' the district was so large and wide. "We see with surprise that Judah seems to have been exempted from the burdens imposed on the other districts, and if so, the impolitic exemption was a main cause of the subsequent jealousies." — *Exp. B.*

A merchant sovereign. — When Georgia was invaded by Aga Mohammed, the founder of the present Persian dynasty, the only one of the Khorassanian chiefs who was not obliged to give hostages of fidelity, was Isaac Khan, chief of Turbet-e-Hyderree, a man of low birth, who by the peaceable pursuits of commerce, had been able, like the Medici family in Italy, to obtain a territory of two hundred miles in length, and to raise himself from being overseer of a caravansary, to the rank of an independent sovereign. His revenue was reckoned at £200,000, of which £80,000 proceeded from his purchased land property; £30,000 from his subjects, and £40,000 from the profits of his merchandise. He had 6,000 troops in his pay, but chiefly trusted to his policy for the maintenance of his power; nor did ever prince more securely reign in the hearts of his subjects and of the merchants whom he had attracted to his new emporium. To these, as well as to pilgrims and beggars of every country and religion, his hall was always open; and it was his principal relaxation from the fatigues of government and of traffic to dine in company with this motley multitude, conversing on equal terms with all, acquiring an accurate knowledge of everything which concerned the welfare of his people, and surprising his guests with his affability and his deep and various learning. — *Percy Anec.*

20—25. (20)^b as the sand, Ge. xxii. 17. eating, etc., the sign of prosperity developing self-indulgence. (21) all the kingdoms, petty nations around. river, Euphrates. presents, tribute.* (22) provision, for the entire court; indic. his state and hospitality. measures, Heb. *cors*; some think 86,^d others 44 Eng. gallons.* (23) fatted fowl, not the usual word for poultry. Suggestions made are, *capons*, *geese*, or more generally *what is choice*. (24) this side the river, i. e. west of Euphrates. Tiphseh,^f ford of the Euphr., Thapsacus. Azzah, Gaza.^g (25) See 2 Ki. xviii. 31. Dan . . Beer-sheba, extreme northern and southern boundary of the Holy Land.

Bringing presents. — Among eastern nations it has always been usual to bring presents when people visit one another; they never appear before a prince or great man without having something to offer. Even when poor people visit they bring a flower, or fruit, or some such trifle. One person mentions a present of fifty radishes; and when Bruce, the Abyssinian traveler, had agreed, at the request of a chief, to take a poor sick Arab with him for a great distance, the poor man presented him with a dirty cloth, containing about ten dates.

26—28. (26) Comp. numb. given in 2 Chr. ix. 25. horsemen,^a horses for riding, cavalry horses. A contravention of the Mosaic law, cf. De. xvii. 16. (27) those officers, as vs. 7—19. (28) dromedaries, better as marg. mules or swift beasts. place . . were, meaning is, "they brought the provender to the places where the horses and coursers were;"ⁱ i. e. the different cities where they were lodged. Barley, still used in the E. in place of oats.

Collectors of royal dues (vs. 27). — They lacked nothing — I. Of zeal in the service; 2. Of power to collect; 3. Of the quantity they had to supply from month to month. How seldom can it be said of those who collect for the cause of our King that they lack nothing. The lack of result often indicative of the lack of zeal in the collector, or of willingness in the people.

Taxes. — The taxes are indeed very heavy; and if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride, and four times as much by our folly; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot ease or deliver us, by allowing us an abatement. — *Benjamin Franklin*.

29—34. (29) heart, used of the intellect as well as of the affections.^j (30) east country, Arabia, famed for their moral wisdom. Egypt,^k Ac. vii. 22; Is. xix. 11; xxxi. 2, 3. (31) than all men, of his age. Ethan, etc., names of reputed learned men; comp. for the names 1 Chr. ii. 6; vii. 33, 44. (32) three thousand, many of wh. are lost. songs, as Cant. i. 1; Ps. lxxii., cxxvii.

(33) cedar, Heb. *erez*. hyssop, Ex. xii. 22; perhaps the moss-like plant, called *orthotrichum saxatile*. "What the character of Solomon's speculations on these subjects really was, whether parabolic, as Josephus seems to imagine, or medical, as some moderns have supposed, or such as to bring them under the head of natural history, we have no means of determining." — *Spk. Com.*

(34) Comp. ch. x. 1.

The wisdom of Solomon. — I. Its origin, vs. 29 (see also Ps. ii. 6; Da. ii. 21). II. Its greatness, vs. 30 sq. III. Its result, vs. 34.

Solomon's wisdom. — An Arabic legend illustrates the sagacity of Solomon as a mere stripling of thirteen. Two men came before David, who was puzzled how to reconcile their differences. The plaintiff had bought property of the defendant, and while digging out the cellar had found a treasure. He demanded that the defendant should take the treasure back, for he had bought the property without it, while the defendant asserted that it did not belong to him, as he had sold to plaintiff the property and all its contents. Solomon suggested, as the best way to end the dispute, that the plaintiff's son should marry the defendant's daughter, and take the treasure as their own." — *Isaacs*.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1-6. (1) Hiram,^a 2 Sa. vs. 11. a lover, in friendly alliance; an admirer of. (2) sent, in response to Hiram's embassy of congratulations. (3) could not, was not permitted to, 2 Sa. vii. (4) occurrent, or occurrence. (5) my God, comp. his God, vs. 3. Lord spake, 2 Sa. vii. 13; 1 Chr. xxii. 10. (6) 2 Chr. ii. 3-10. cedar trees, inclusive word for suitable timber. hire, wages. skill to hew,^b understands how to hew. Sidonians, prob. then under sceptre of Hiram.

Solomon's purpose to build a house to the Lord. — I. The motive (vss. 3-5). 1. Not ambition, love of glory, or pomp; 2. But the Divine will, and his father's charge. II. The time (vs. 4). A time of rest and peace. III. The request for assistance (vs. 6). In undertakings for God's glory we should trust Him who rules men's hearts.

Co-operation. — Co-operation is only another word for the distributions which God has made of talent and opportunity. It might be supposed that co-operation was simply a human act; whereas in its outworking, it shows the marvelous distribution which God has made of capacity, resource, opportunity; how He has related one man to another, and one event to another; when we study co-operation in this light we see that it is but the under or visible side of divine providence, the bringing together of parts apparently sundered, yet which need only to approach one another to show that they were meant to act in harmony. — *People's Bible*.

7-12. (7) Comp. 2 Chr. ii. 11-16. the Lord, Jehovah, recognized as supreme God of Canaan. (8) timber of fir, Heb. *berosh*, cypress, 2 Chr. ii. 8. (9) in floats, this materially lessened the labor of transit: floats are made by fastening together a number of trees. receive them, *Joppa*,^c Jaffa, the port of reception was only some 40 m. fr. Jerus. food, etc., this was the form of payment Hiram proposed. household, this payment was entirely distinct fr. that furnished to the workmen, cf. 2 Chr. ii. 10. (10, 11) pure oil, *lit. beaten oil*: superior quality. year by year, while the work lasted. (12) league, friendly alliance. "Heb. 'cut a covenant.' Covenants were ratified by the slaughter of victims, between the parts of which the contracting parties passed." — *Pulp. Com.*

Hiram and Solomon. — I. Gratification. Hiram "rejoiced greatly." II. Consideration (vs. 8). The demand of Solomon was no small one, and deserved consideration. III. Satisfaction (vs. 10). Not one which Solomon asked that Hiram did not grant. IV. Combination. Solomon and Hiram not independent of each other. Each did the part allotted to him; the result was success. — *F. Wagstaff*.

Preparation for the coming of Christ's kingdom. — I know the obstacles, but I know as well the power behind! I do not see success as yet, but I know that it is coming. So I do not see the cathedral as yet, when I go into the confused quarry-yard and see there the half-wrought stones, the clumsy blocks that are by and by to be decorated capitals. But when at last they are finished in form and brought together, the mighty building rises in the air,

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versant in physical sciences, such as astronomy, geometry, botany." — *Wordsworth*.

Solomon's alliance
Hiram, king of Tyre

a *Hiram*, 2 Chr. ii. 3.

b "The mechanical genius of the Phœnicians generally, and of the Sidonians in particular, is noticed by many ancient writers. — *Spk. Com.*

"Planters of trees ought to encourage themselves by considering all future time as present; indeed, such consideration would be a useful principle to all men in their conduct of life, as it respects both this world and the next." — *Bishop Watson*.

Hiram sells cedar to Solomon

c 2 Chr. ii. 16; Ezr. iii. 7.

"Man's whole duty to man is service; and therefore everybody is somebody's servant, and he stands highest who best serves the greatest number."

"A large, branching, aged oak is, perhaps, the most venerable of all inanimate objects." — *Shenstone*.

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an ever-during psalm in rock. I do not see the picture yet, when I look upon the palette with its blotches and stains and lumps of color. By and by, when the skilful brush of the painter has distributed those colors, I see the radiant beauty of the Madonna, the pathos of the Magdalene; I see the beauty of the landscape spread out upon the canvas, with meadow and hill and winding stream, and the splendors of the sunset crowning the whole. I do not see yet the perfect kingdom of God upon earth, but I see the colors which are to blend in it; I see the already half-chiseled rock out of which it shall be wrought; and I am not going to despond now, when so much already has been accomplished. — *R. S. Storrs*.

Solomon's workmen

a 1 Sa. viii. 10; 1 Chr. xxii. 2.

b 2 Chr. ii. 17, 18.

c "In the one case nationality, in the other degree of authority, is made the principle of the division." — *Spk. Com.*

d "Prob. some of these remain at the S. W. angle of the wall of the Haram area in the modern Jerus. Largest is 30 feet long by $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet high." — *Robinson's Pal. Explor. Report*.

e Ps. lxxxiii. 7. Eze. xxvii. 9.

Among the discoveries made at Jerusalem, under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund, are huge stones bearing Phœnician characters. Have thy tools ready — God will find thee work. — *Kingsley*.

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the building of the temple

f *Keil* argues the correctness of this number. See *Art. Smith's Bib. Dict.*

g "Either length of bone of fore arm, distance fr. elbow to tip of middle finger, or fr. elbow to knuckles." — *Bib. Educ.* ii. 278, 279.

h "Windows with closed beams, i. e.

13-18. (13) **levy**, as ch. iv. 6, reference here is plainly to forced labor.^a cf. 1 Sam. viii. 16. "It was, perhaps, from his Egyptian father-in-law that Solomon learnt the secret of forced labor, which alone rendered such undertakings possible." (14) Though arranged so as not to be oppressive, this became the occasion of disaffection, 1 Ki. xii. 4. (15) **bare burdens**, mere laborers.^b **hewers**, quarry-men. These were Canaanites. "The blotches of smoke are still visible on the walls and roofs of the subterranean quarries where these poor serfs, in the dim torchlight and suffocating air, labored without reward, perished without pity, and suffered without redress." — *Exp. B.* (16) **officers**, overseers. Minds are needed as well as hands. The numbers differ in 2 Chr. ii. 18, fr. diff. principle of counting.^c (17) **brought**, hewed out. **great stones**, beveled at edges.^d (18) **stone-squarers**, a proper name, *Gebalites*.^e

The builders of the temple (vs. 18). — I. Solomon's builders, Israelites. 1. Solomon did not act like Pharaoh (Ex. ii. 23); 2. We do not hear of murmuring in the work. These ancient builders examples to modern ones. II. Hiram's builders, heathen (Ps. xxii. 29). A prophetic anticipation of fact as set forth Ep. ii. 14, 19-22; iii. 4-6. Learn: — The temple a house of prayer for all nations. Many help in the material work of the church who do not share in the privileges of it. Many built the ark, only eight saved in it.

The work of preparation. — The huge trunks of cedar and cypress were sent rushing down the heights of Lebanon by schittage, and laboriously dragged by road or river to the shore. There they were constructed into immense rafts, which were floated a hundred miles along the coast to Joppa, where they were again dragged with enormous toil for thirty-five miles up the steep and rocky roads to Jerusalem. For more than twenty years, while Solomon was building the temple and his various royal constructions, Jerusalem became a hive of ceaseless and varied industry. Its ordinary inhabitants must have been swelled by an army of Canaanite serfs and Phœnician artisans to whom residences were assigned in Ophel. There lived the hewers and bevelers of stone; the cedar-cutters of Gebal or Biblos; the cunning workmen in gold or brass; the bronze casters, who made their molds in the clay ground of the Jordan valley; the carvers and engravers; the dyers who stained wool with the purple of the murex, and the scarlet dye of the trumpet fish; the weavers and embroiderers of fine linen. Every class of laborer was put into requisition, from the descendants of the Gibeonite *Nethinim*, who were rough hewers of wood and drawers of water, to the trained artificers whose beautiful productions were the wonder of the world. — *Farrar*.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1-4. (1) **four hundred**, etc., this date is very difficult to fix.^f **Zif**, "bright ness," "the bloom of flowers," corresponding to May. **house** . . Lord, in Mount Moriah, made sacred by the sacrifice of Abraham, and a theophany to David. (2) **house**, or temple. **cubeits**,^g according to Fergusson (*Dict. Bib.* iii. 1451), "90 feet long, 30 feet wide, 45 feet high." "The elaborate particulars furnished us of the measurements of Solomon's Temple are too late in age, too divergent in particulars, too loosely strung together, too much mingled with later reminiscences, and altogether too architecturally insufficient, to enable us to reconstruct the exact building, or even to form more than a vague conception of its external appearance." — *Exp. B.* (3) **porch**, portico, extending across the whole front. The proportions are double those of the tabernacle. **temple**, holy place. (4) **windows**,^h etc., for ventilation chiefly.

The purposes of the temple. — It was a place — I. For sacrifice. II. For prayer and praise. III. For the consecration of persons and things. IV. For

remembering the law of the Lord. V. For the union of the people. VI. For the revelation of God.—*A. Rowland.*

Good architecture the work of good men.—Good architecture is the work of good and believing men. It was formed by the thoughts, and hands, and powers of free citizens and soldier kings. By the monk it was used as an instrument for the aid of his superstition: when that superstition became a beautiful madness, and the best hearts of Europe vainly dreamed and pined in the cloister, and vainly raged and perished in the crusade,—through that fury of perverted faith and wasted war, the Gothic rose also to its loveliest, most fantastic, and finally, most foolish dreams, and in those dreams was lost.—*Ruskin.*

5-10. (5) **chambers,**^a side stories: "*a lean-to.*" **oracle**, most holy place: later called the "holy of holies." (6) **narrow rests**, thinning the wall for each story left a ledge or rest for the joists, consequently the upper rooms were wider than the lower. **be fastened**, *R. V.*, "have hold," because the temple building was too sacred. (7) **made ready**, fitted together so that it might at once be set in place. **neither hammer**, *etc.*, see Ex. xx. 25; De. xxvii. 5. (8) **chamber**, or set of chambers. The lowest row was entered from the ground. (9) **house**, temple building without the "lean-to." (9) **covered**, *etc.*, roofed it, after the model of the tabernacle, with sloping roof. (10) As vs. 5, 6. **chambers against**, *etc.*, *R. V.*, "the stories against all the house, each five cubits high."

Noise or silence.—There is nothing wrong in noise itself. In all preparation there must be signs of energy and restlessness and even of apparent confusion, yet a solemn and steadfast purpose may be running through all the energetic engagements. This may be the meaning of many a war and controversy and distressing tumult. Whilst the heathen are raging, they may be undergoing a process of preparation for incorporation into the temple of God. If we could have looked upon Lebanon at the time when the hewers of trees were engaged upon it, we should have seen nothing but confusion. Before the hewers of wood went to Lebanon that famous locality was proverbial for its beauty and fragrance. Lebanon was watered by the streams from the snowy heights when all Palestine was parched up. Now look at Lebanon when the fellers of trees are carrying out their purpose; how harsh the sounds, how crashing the fall, how like a devastation the whole appearance; looked at within its own limits, the scene is one that pains the heart. Was it for this violent overthrow that all this noble beauty was perfected? We must take the larger view, and turn not only to Lebanon, but to Mount Moriah, and there observe what is being done with the material which Lebanon supplies. The noisy timber-fellers and the quiet builders belong to the same great company of workers for the Lord God of Israel. The noisy men must not complain of the quietness of those who go about their work without making any noise; nor must the quiet constructors rebuke the energy of men without whose activity they themselves could not proceed to lay another course in all the sacred structure of the sanctuary. We need the son of thunder, and the son of consolation; the great wind, and the silent sun; the tempestuous rain, and the noiseless dew: all these must be considered as part of the great ministry which God has appointed for the accomplishment of His purposes upon the earth.—*People's Bible.*

11-14. (11) **came**, thro' a prophet—perhaps Nathan—or poss. as before, in a dream or vision. (12) **if**, reminding Sol. that all Div. promises depend on conditions. (13) **dwell**,^b *etc.*, so keeping up the national prosperity. (14) **finished it**, as is immediately narrated; encouraged by the promise just received.

Silence.—This silent way is God's way, and is predominant in all the great operations of nature. Gravitation works silently. Evaporation, which takes up three billion tons of water every minute—in fact enough to supply all the rivers of the world—works silently. All chemical forces which build up forests and uphold mountains work silently. So of men. Silently they hear, silently they think, silently they decide. No stillness of ocean depths is so great as that in which soul-building goes on. It is as though the soul of man sat in some retired chamber, with telephone wires entering from a hundred points, conveying messages of every sort, and there in perfect silence the soul acts upon the intelligence received, and forms its character before it deigns

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fixed, whose lattices or blinds cannot be opened or closed at pleasure, as the windows of ordinary dwellings."—*Keil.*

description of the temple

a "Appearance of narrowness in the exterior view was obviated by the stories of chambers for the use of the priests built against the sides."—*Kitto.*

"As the king, when he enters a town, finds the streets through which he is to pass cleaned, and his palace adorned, so much more ought we, whom God hath chosen for His temple to purify ourselves from all uncleanness, and to adorn the place of His habitation with all virtue and loveliness."—*Cavendish.*

"We were charm'd, not awe-struck; for the beautiful was there triumphant."—*Talfourd.*

God's promise to Solomon

b Ex. xxv. 8; Eze. xxxvii. 26-28.

"When he spake all things into being, the everlasting silence remained unbroken. No stir was seen, no commotion felt. The starting into life of ten thousand times ten thousand millions of angels from the deep abyss of eternity created no noise."—*F. W. Faber.*

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to give any answer to the outer world. This thought of the silence of the most important processes of our lives is awe-inspiring. — *A. F. Schaffler.*

size and carvings of the temple

a "So that the oracle was a cube of 20 cubits: this cubical form is noted, even in heathen philosophy, as the form of moral perfection" — *Wordsworth.*

"'Tis the eternal law, that first in beauty should be first in might." — *Keats.*

the oracle

b Ex. xxx. 6; xl. 5, 26.

c "The lavish use of the precious metals in ornamentation was a peculiar feature of early Oriental architecture." — *Spk. Com.*

A vain man's motto is, "Win gold and wear it;" a generous, "Win gold and share it;" a miser's, "Win gold and spare it;" a prodigal's, "Win gold and spend it;" a broker's, "Win gold and lend it;" a gambler's, "Win gold and lose it;" a wise man's, "Win gold and use it."

the cherubims

d "As standing on the highest step of created life, and uniting in themselves the most perfect created life, are the most perfect revelation of God and the Life." — *Bühr, thro' Keil.*

e Ge. viii. 11.

f "Symbols of growth, bloom, and potent life in the kingdom of God." — *Keil.*

15-18. (15) *within*, now describes the internal fittings. *both*, as marg. *from the floor. flr*, juniper. (16) *built, etc.*, meaning he measured 20 cubits^a from the rear, and there put up a partition, so constructing the holy of holies. (17) *forty*, so twice the length of the oracle. (18) *knops*, as marg. *gourds. open flowers*, better *opening flower-buds.*

Beauty in architecture. —

The hand that rounded Peter's dome
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
Wrought in sad sincerity —
Himself from God he could not free.
He builded better than he knew;
The conscious stone to beauty grew,
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon
As the best gem upon her zone,
And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids.
These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass;
The passive master lend his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned. — *R. W. Emerson.*

19-22. (19) *ark, etc.*, chief object in holy of holies. Then on Mt. Zion. (20) *forepart, R. V.*, "within the oracle was a space," etc. Keil translates it: "and the interior of," etc. *pure gold*, wh. was beaten into thin plates. *altar, of incense, R. V.*, "covered the (stone?) altar with cedar," preparatory for overlaying it with gold. (21) *house*, the holy place as well as the oracle. *chains, etc.*, ornamental work, like chains, running over the partition wall. (22) *whole house*, or the rest of the building. *overlaid, etc.*,^c so that nothing may meet the eye but pure gold. *was by, R. V.*, "belonged to." *The strength and beauty of moral character.* — 1. Moral character must be firmly based on a foundation of imperishable truth. 2. A strong, vigorous character is often hid under the veil of the brightest and tenderest graces. — *Hom. Com.*

The gold in the world. — Estimate the cubic yard of gold at \$10,000,000, which it is in round numbers. And all the gold in the world might, if melted into ingots, be contained in a cellar twenty-four feet square and sixteen feet high. All the boasted wealth already obtained from California and Australia would go into an iron safe nine feet square and nine feet high. So small is the cube of yellow metal that has set populations on the march, that roused the whole world to wonder. The contributions of the people in the time of David for the sanctuary exceeded \$34,000,000. The immense treasure David is said to have collected for the sanctuary amounted to \$4,445,000,000. The gold with which Solomon overlaid the "most holy place" — only a room thirty feet square — amounted to more than \$190,000,000. — *Timbs.*

23-30. (23) *cherubims, d Ex. xxxvii. 6-9*, appropriate symbols of the glory of the Lord. *olive, the tree of peace.* (24) *uttermost part*, the point. (25, 26) As symbols, their unity in size was an important feature. (27) *inner house*, the holy of holies. They formed a sort of screen across the chamber. (28) *overlaid, etc.*, the figures being made of wood. In tabernacle the cherubim were of gold. (29) *Comp. vs. 18.* (30) *floor*, applying to this inner holy chamber. *within and without*, refers only to the oracle and holy place.

The cherubim. — I. To associate earthly with heavenly worship. II. Made of olive wood — symbol of fruitful worship. III. With extended wings, to teach alacrity in service. IV. Their equal size and appearance, to suggest harmony and union in the service of God. V. The walls suggest salvation. The worship and worshipper under the protection of heaven.

Ministering angels (vs. 23). —

How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succour us that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skyes like flying pursuivant,

Against fowle fiendes to ayd us militant!

They for us fight, they watch, and dewly ward,

And their bright squadrons round about us plant;

And all for love and nothing for reward,

O why should heavenly God to men have such regard!

— *Spenser.*

31-38. (31) **doors**, in the partition, *vs.* 16. **fifth part**, "lintel was one-fifth of the width of the wall, and each door-post one-fifth of its height. Thus the opening was a square of four cubits of six feet."—*Spk. Com.* (32) **Asoss**, 18, 29. Prob. the gold plates were hammered to fit the carved wood-work. (33) **door of temple**, from the porch into the entire building. **fourth part**, *i. e.* five cubits high. (34) **folding**, like shutters, so the whole width did not need to be opened. (35) **fitted**, hammered or pressed. (36) **inner court**, of the priests; 2 Chr. iv. 9. **three rows, etc.**, either as a fence, or as a floor. (38) **Bul**, deluge, rainy season, our November. **seven years**, exactly seven years and six months.

The doors of the temple.—I. They were suggestive of the feelings and purposes with which the house should be entered. II. They indicated what might be found in that house—olive, joy; palm, fruitfulness and growth; flowers, beauty of character; gold, material prosperity; cherubims, holiness. III. Who would not be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord?

Beauty in strength.—In the wonderful old church of St. Mark's at Venice, is placed an alabaster pillar said to have been saved from the ruins of Solomon's temple, and now used as a part of the support of the high altar. It is cut in a beautiful spiral shaft of graceful proportions, and blossoms at the top into an exquisitely carved capital. It stands bravely in its place, and bears its share of the weight. But your first thought is, "How beautiful!"—*Marian Deming.* *The completed temple.*—Alone and isolated in its grandeur stood the Temple Mount. Terrace upon terrace its courts rose, till high above the city, within the enclosure of marble cloisters, the temple itself stood out, a mass of snowy marble and of gold, glittering in the sunlight against the half encircling green background of Olivet. . . . Nor has there been in ancient or modern times a sacred building equal to the temple, whether for situation or magnificence.—*Edersheim.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1-6. (1) **own house**, palace, temple. Longer time was taken than for the temple, bec. such preparations had not been made for it. Also the buildings were more various and extensive. (2) **house . . . Lebanon**, Sol's armory, so called because it presented a perfect forest of cedar pillars. **four rows**, prob. should be three, as the Sept. has it. (3) **covered, etc.**, so really a cedar house. **beams**, side-chambers, (*cf.* vi. 5). (4) **windows**, ch. vi. 4. **light, etc.**, "the windows were directly opposite one another, giving what we call a *through* light." (5) **square**, not arched at the top. (6) **porch**, a covered colonnade; the purpose of this building is not mentioned; favorite feature of Persian architecture. **before, etc.**, a smaller porch stood before the "porch of pillars," having a ("thick beam") step work for entrance.

His own house.—A very curious thing this, that whilst Solomon was building the temple of God he was also building his own house. It does not follow that when a man is building his own house he is also building the temple of God; but it inevitably follows that when a man is deeply engaged in promoting the interests of the divine sanctuary, he is most truly laying the foundations of his own house, and completing the things which most nearly concern himself. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."—*People's Bible.*

7-12. (7) **porch of judgment**, keeping up custom of judging *in the gate*, **one side . . . other**, this was not an unenclosed porch like the "porch of pillars" mentioned previously, but it was enclosed with cedar wood walls all round from the floor to the ceiling.—*Cam. B.* (8) **dwelt**, the place already described was devoted to state purposes. **house**, private residence of the queen, not the harem. **Pharaoh's daughter**, ch. iii. 1. **like unto**, of similar workmanship. (9) **within and without**, *i. e.* squared, not merely faced. (10) **great stones**, ch. v. 17. (11) **above**, upon the foundation just described. (12) **Comp.** ch. vi. 36. **both for, R. V.**, "like as."

B. C. cir. 973.

the finishing
of the temple

"The clearest window that ever was fashioned, if it is barred by spiders' webs, and hung over with carcasses of insects, so that the sunlight has forgotten to find its way through, of what use can it be? Now, the church is God's window; and if it is so obscured by errors that its light is darkness, how great is that darkness!"—*H. W. Beecher.*

"An artist has more than two eyes."—*Haliburton.*

B. C. 973 to 960.

Solomon's
palace

"Keep religion in its place, and it will take you straight through life. But if you do not put it in its place you may just as well have nothing to do with it. Its place is what? First!"—*Drummond.*

the porch
and the
queen's
palace

"The sentiment of justice is so natural, so universally acquired by all mankind, that it seems to me inde-

B C. 973 to 960.

pendent of all law, all party, all religion." — *Voltaire*.

"Justice is the bread of the nation; it is always hungry for it." — *Chateaubriand*.

"The sublimity of wisdom is to do those things living, which are to be desired when dying." — *Jeremy Taylor*.

Hiram, the Tyrian brass-founder

a See Ex. xxxi. 6.

b "Prob. a fine network over the whole, and chain-work hanging in festoons outside." — *Spk. Com.*

"The whole world without art and dress would be but one great wilderness." — *Butler*.

Jachin and Boaz

c Comp. 2 Chr. iii. 16; iv. 13; Jer. iii. 33.

d Jer. iii. 17; Ga. ii. 9; Ro. iii. 12.

The power whether of painter or poet, to describe rightly what he calls an ideal thing, depends upon its being to him not an ideal but a real thing. No man ever did or ever will work well but either from actual sight or sight of faith.

Beauty with strength. — The great Creator has so exquisitely proportioned His external dwelling-place that there is everything about it to delight the eye and gratify and elevate the taste. He has stamped upon it all the glory of form, irradiated it with all the brilliance and softness of color, and finely attuned it to all the rapture and harmony of sound. The masterpiece of the most gifted artist is but a dim, imperfect reflection of the native, peerless beauty of the universe. The Being whose self-created temple is so full of grandeur and beauty is worthy of the most gorgeous sanctuary that the hand of man can fashion. The ocean loses none of its power because it is silvered with fretted foam, or sparkling with the golden sheen of reflected sunbeams. The mountain is not less majestic because it is belted with feathery-branched pines, garlanded with slender wild flowers, and clothed with a purple robe of blooming heather. — *Hom. Com.*

13-18. (13) **Hiram**, comp. 2 Chr. ii. 7.^a (14) **cunning**, but not "filled with the spirit of God." (Ex. xxxvi. 1.) wrought all his work, *i. e.* metal-work. (15) **brass**, prob. copper. (16) **chapters**, or capitals. (17)^b The Sept. in this verse reads, "And he made two nets of checker work . . . even a net for the one chapter and a net for the other chapter." This agrees better with *vs.* 41, and the Hebrew for "seven" and "a net" are very similar. (18) **pomegranates**, one of the commonest ornaments in Assyria.

The pillars of Hiram. — These are emblematic of the church of God. — I. The church is stable — 1. Because it is founded in truth; 2. Built up in truth; and 3. Sustained and encompassed by the God of truth. II. The church is adorned — 1, with the graces of the Holy Spirit; 2, with the beauty of holiness; 3, with the reflected glory of its risen and glorified head (2 Cor. iii. 18). — *Hom. Com.*

Genius and enthusiasm. — The greatest genius is he who has the greatest capacity for hard work, and who finds his greatest pleasure in it. The artist is ever an enthusiast. When Macready acted Romeo for the first time — being then only sixteen years of age — his success was so great that a host of friends crowded round him at the close, and shook his hand with fervent congratulations. A lady asked him, "Well, sir, how do you feel?" and he, with a boyish ingenuousness, answered — "I feel as if I should like to act it all over again." — *Pulpit Com.*

19-22. The Heb. text of *vss.* 19-21 is evidently imperfect. The *R. V.*, is much better than the *A. V.* (authorized version). (19) **lily work**, imitation of the stalks, leaves, and blossoms. **in the porch**, either inside the porch, toward the porch, or *as* in the porch. **four cubits**, this was the width of the lily work. (20) **belly**, a portion of the cornice arched, or bent out. **two hundred**,^c see *vs.* 42. This the number on each pillar. (21) **pillars**, *vs.* 15. Probably not structural but ornamental like obelisks. **in the porch**, or *at* the porch, entrance of the vestibule.^d **Jachin**, marg. *He will establish*. **Boaz**, strength, or in strength. So the two together make a sentence. (22) **lily work**, *vs.* 19.

Lily work (vs. 22). — Consider — I. That there is an acceptableness in a good and true work in itself. II. The soundness and honesty of service in God's spiritual temple. III. As upon the top of Hiram's pillars was "lily work," so majesty crowned with gracefulness will be found in all the Divinest thoughts. 1. The pillars must be before the florid ornamentation; 2. But beauty is also in God's sanctuary. — *G. J. Proctor*.

The old church. —

How like an image of repose it looks,
That ancient, holy, and sequester'd pile!
Silence abides in each tree-shaded aisle,
And on the gray spire caw the hermit rooks;
So absent is the stamp of modern days,
That, in the quaint carved oak, and oriel stain'd
With saintly legend, to Reflection's gaze
The Star of Eld seems not yet to have waned.
At pensive eventide, when streams the west
On moss-green pediment and tombstone gray,
And spectral Silence pointeth to Decay,
How preacheth Wisdom to the conscious breast,

Saying, "Each foot that roameth here shall rest;"
To God and Heaven, Death is the only way. — *Moir.*

23-26. (23) **molten sea**, in place of the *laver*.^a So called because of its immense size and capacity. **ten cubits**, fifteen feet in diameter. **height five cubits**, seven and a half feet.^b The dimensions are given on the mode of measurement by the radius, as was then customary; a circle was reckoned at six times its radius. (24) **knops**, *lit.* gourds, a ball-ornament, resembling fruit, in two rows.^c **ten in a cubit**, so three hundred in the circle. (25) **oxen**, corresponding to the twelve tribes and their arrangement (Nu. ii.) in the wilderness. (26) **handbreadth**, three inches. **flowers of lilies**, or in shape of the lily flower; edge turned as a cup.

Holy places. — It is a wise, a salutary, and a laudable provision of the Church's discipline, that she sets apart, and consecrates, by solemn religious rites, to God's glory the places which she intends for His worship; and by outward signs of decency and reverence, of majesty and holiness, impresses them with an appropriate character, which, whilst it redounds to the honor of God, operates also with no mean or trivial influence on the minds of His people. Connected with this character, and in some degree generated by it, together with an awful veneration for the great Proprietor, a certain secret sense of serene and holy pleasure is diffused over the pious and meditative mind, as soon as the feet cross the threshold which separates the house of God from common places. We feel with delight that we are on "holy ground;" and a still small voice within, as we draw near to "worship God in the beauty of holiness," answers in the words of the apostle at the sight of the "excellent glory," "It is good for us to be here." — *Bp. Mant.*

27-31. (27) **ten bases**, for the *lavens*, *vs.* 38, comp. 2 Chr. iv. 6, square stands, with ornamental edges. **four**, *etc.*, *i. e.* 6 feet each side, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. (28) **borders**, ledges, moldings, or rims at top and bottom, leaving a panel for decoration: the panel had, on its upper part, figures of animals, and on its lower, festoons of leaf and flower. (29) **base above**, or stand to keep firm the *laver*. **additions**, garlands, *R. V.*, "wreaths of hanging work." (30) **plates**, *R. V.*, "axles." **undersetters**, *lit.* **shoulders**.^d (31) **mouth**, prob. an arching at the top of the base. Rawlinson says that "no commentator has given a satisfactory explanation of this passage."

Symbolic art. — It is an incarnation of fancy, and is a sort of petrified poetry, or concrete rhetoric. It is the blossom of the Art-tree, whose root is Thought, and whose trunk is Imagination. It is inventive, imitational, and composite. Gothic is imitational, Greek inventional, and Byzantine composite. Egyptian ornament is thoughtful, and always allegorical. The Assyrian is still quaint, simpler, and more primitive. The Greek revels in noble sweeping curves and in fretted foliage, highly conventionalized. The Oriental types in their art lost their symbolic character, and become enriched and idealized by fancy; harmony and a sweet grace are in every line. The Etruscan is rude and Asiatic, with Greek luxuriance. The Roman is strong and vigorous, leafy, luxurious, and voluptuous. The Byzantine is barbarian, rich, knotted, linked, and studded like embroidery. The Moorish is the poetry of geometry, and the mathematics of color, varied and changeful as Nature. The Gothic is Nature subdued, and limited by rules and space. The Indian is varied, strange in its blendings and studied intermixtures, arranged by the instinct of men of a hot climate; but the Persian is the most graceful and poetical of all Oriental work; gorgeous and yet delicate in color. It is full of the broadest effects of contrasting hues, and wreathed and blossomed with threads of flowers, bright as those of a missal. In the harmonies of dyes there are invention and imagination. Let our students follow nature boldly and lovingly, but not servilely, — learning to compose as she does, — not following her laws without laying down his own. Above all, let him remember that ornamentation is to art what words are to thought, and that if design and architecture are dead, no ornamentation, however beautiful, can give them life. It will be at the best but a wreath of flowers round the pale brow of the corpse. — *Ruskin.*

32-37. (32) **borders**, panels. **wheels**, like chariot-wheels.^e (33) **naves**, piece of timber in center of a wheel, in wh. the spokes are inserted.^f **felloes**, *i. e.* sections of the exterior rim of the wheel. (34) **undersetters**, *see vs.* 30. **of the very base**, cast with it. (35) **round compass**, circular elevation. (36)

B. c. 973-960.

the molten sea

^a Ex. xxx. 18-21.^b "It is now generally supposed that the bowl bulged considerably below the brim, and further that it had a foot, or basin wh. received the water as it was drawn out by taps fr. the bowl." — *Spk. Com.* Comp. 2 Ki. xxv. 13; 2 Chr. iv. 2.^c 1 Ki. vi. 18."The wrought oaken beams, pillars, and frieze, and high fantastic roof, of those dusk places in times far aloof cathedrals call'd." — *Keats.*

the brazen bases

^d "Four strong cast brackets or bars, wh. proceeding fr. the four upper corners of the bases, stretched upwards to the outer rim of the *laver*, wh. thus rested partly upon them." — *Keil.*

For decorations comp. Eze. i. 10; x. 14; xli. 19; Re. iv. 6, 7.

"They are valuable in their own place, and for their own purposes; frames, as they are, to set the picture in; caskets for truth's jewels: dead poles, no doubt, yet useful to support living plants, and very beautiful when the bare stem is festooned with green leaves, and crowned with a head of flowers." — *Guthrie.*^e "The height of the earliest Assyrian chariot wheels was under 3 feet." — *Spk. Com.*^f A. S. *nafu*, Skr. *nābhī*, nave and

m. c. 973 to 960.

navel. Eze. i. 15-21; iii. 13; x. 10-13

a Eze. xli. 18, 25, 26.

"Those who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, should remember that nothing can atone for the want of prudence."—*Johnson*.

the brazen lavers

b "The entire height of the lavers and stands has been estimated at 13-ft. 9-in."—*Spk. Com.*

c Ex. xxvii. 3; 2 Kl. xxv. 14; 2 Chr. iv. 11.—*Wor & d-worth, Keil*.

"The pots were the cauldrons in which it was usual to boil the peace-offerings (1 Sa. ii. 13, 14)."—*Spk. Com.*

finishing of the temple

d Jos. xlii. 27; Ju. viii. 5-8, 14-16; 2 Chr. iv. 17; Ps. lx. 6, cvlii. 7.

e 1 Chr. xviii. 8.

f Ex. xxv. 31; xxxvii. 17; xxxix. 37; xl. 24, 25.

g Ex. xli. 22.

h Ex. xxv. 33; xxxvii. 23; Nu. iv. 9.

"Those whom we call the ancients were in truth novices in all things, and properly constituted the infancy of mankind; and, as we have added to their knowledge in the experience of succeeding ages, it is in ourselves that we should recognize that antiquity which we revere in others."—*Prescott*.

ledges, lit. *hands*, reaching out fr. the undersettlers. **borders**, panels. **proportion**, same kind of ornament, but neces. of smaller size.^c **additions**, as vs. 29, festoon work. (37) **one casting**, we should say one mold.

A *far-seeing builder*.—When Sir Christopher Wren built the church of St. Magnus, there were houses on each side of London Bridge, which projected as far as the church. When these houses were pulled down, the footpath came directly against the church, so that the people who walked on that side, were obliged to go around into the coach-road. This was found very inconvenient, and a meeting of the inhabitants was held to consider if they could, with safety cut a road through, which was thought too hazardous an expedient; and the neighbors apprehending it might bring the church about their ears, abandoned the scheme. A second meeting was afterwards held, when it was determined by a small majority to make the experiment. The workmen, on breaking through the wall, found a complete and perfect arch, which Sir Christopher, foreseeing with prophetic taste that the houses would at some future period be pulled down, had left in its present form.—*Percy Anec.*

38—45. (38) **forty baths**, about 340 gallons. **four cubits**, in height. (39) **the sea**, molten sea of vs. 23. (40) **lavers**, not those already described, but *pots*, for carrying away the ashes.^c **basons**, for receiving the sacrificial blood of victims. (41) **pillars**, etc., vs. 15-39. (42) **four hundred**, the 400, as vs. 20. (43) **bases**, as vs. 27. (44) **one sea**, vs. 23, 25. (45) **bright brass**, scoured or polished.

The *spirit of Devotion*.—The man whose life is spent in devotion, though bound to earth by the dearest human ties, holds high fellowship with the world above. In him earth and heaven are united—both are understood by him in their true significance, and held in proper balance and esteem. He is like a tall, gigantic mountain whose broad base is fixed in the rocks far down beneath our feet, but whose top, springing into the lofty expanse above, reposes under the pure covering of radiant snow and sunlight. He is lifted above the pleasures of this world, and finds consolation and strength in the darkest day of adversity. The apostle was "in prison more frequent," but in his dungeon he found the presence of Jesus, and could pray and sing praises unto God. "I thought of Jesus," said the holy John Rutherford, when imprisoned for the Gospel's sake, "until every stone in the walls of my cell shone like a ruby."—*Hom. Com.*

46—51. (46) **clay ground**, or marl; wh. would bind so as to be suitable for a mold. **Succoth**,^d East of Jordan, Ge. xxxiii. 17, prob. *Sukkot*, near Bethshan. **Zarthan**, near, but west of the river; comp. 2 Chr. iv. 17. (47) **weight . . out**, too many to take trouble of weighing; much of this brass was taken fr. cities of Hadadezer.^e (48) **vessels**, furniture, and utensils. **of gold**, the altar was made of stone, then covered with cedar wood, then plated with gold. **table of gold**, comp. 2 Chr. iv. 8, 19. **shewbread**, the bread of the face or presence—symbolic of the continual presence of Jehovah with his people. (*See Dict. Bible, Smith.*) (49) **flowers**,^f ornamentation of candle. **tongs**, for trimming the lamps. (50) **bowls**,^g for containing oil for lamps. **snuffers**, scissors. **basons**, not as in vs. 40—"but for libations of wine" (*Keil*), or for the water and blood of sprinkling. **spoons**, prob. for bringing incense to the altar. **censers**,^h **hinges**, hollows, sockets in wh. pins of doors moved. (51) **ended**, Ex. xl. 33. **David . . dedicated**, the store wh. David had prepared for the temple was not exhausted, but stored away in the temple treasuries.

Dependence upon art for comfort.—In no circumstances whatever can man be comfortable without art. The butterfly is independent of art, though it is only in sunshine that it can be happy. The beasts of the field can roam about by day, and couch by night on the cold earth, without danger to health or sense of misfortune. But man is miserable and speedily lost so soon as he removes from the precincts of human art, without his shoes, without his clothes, without his dog and his gun, without an inn or a cottage to shelter him by night. Nature is worse to him than a stepmother—he cannot love her; she is a desolate and a howling wilderness. He is not a child of nature like a hare. She does not provide him a banquet and a bed upon every little knoll, every green spot of earth. She persecutes him to death, if he do not return to that sphere of art to which he belongs, and out of which she will show him no mercy, but be unto him a demon of despair and a hopeless perdition.—*Ruskin*.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

B. C. 960

1-5. (1) **Then**, probably the 7th month of the 11th yr. of his reign, one month before the temple was finished. **elders, etc.**, Sol. gathered all the representatives of the nation, in order that his act might be regarded as a national one.^a (2) **all the men**, as spectators, not official actors. **feast . . . Ethanim**,^b feast of tabernacles, or ingathering, Le. xxiii. 33-44. (3) **the priests, etc.**, they bore the ark itself, and the Levites the furniture, *etc.*, of the tabernacle.^c (4) **the tabernacle**, most prob. the orig. one from Gibeon, wh. with the old furniture and utensils, was preserved as a relic. (5) **not be told, or counted.**^d

The dedication of the temple.—From this we learn. I. That churches should be dedicated to God, and that with all possible solemnity and stateliness. II. That churches must be consecrated to God. III. That churches sincerely dedicated to God will be consecrated by God.—*Pulpit Com.*

Influence of personal devotion.—God and good angels alone know the vast incalculable influence that goes out into the universe of matter, from the conquered evil and the voiceless prayer of one solitary soul. Would'st thou bring the world unto God? Then live near to him thyself. If divine life pervade thine own soul, everything that touches thee will receive the electric spark, though thou may'st be unconscious of being charged therewith.—*L. M. Child.*

6-11. (6) **oracle**,^e the portion called in the tabernacle the *holy of holies*. **cherubims**,^f 1 Ki. vi. 23-27. (7) **and the staves**,^g wh. projected fr. the ark so as to rest on priest's shoulders. (8) **drew out**, intimating that the ark had now reached its final rest.^h **not seen without**, did not project into the outer chamber. **there . . . day**, "this statement is curious, considering that the writer of the books of Kings wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem, and consequently when the temple had been burnt, and its contents destroyed or carried off. It can be no otherwise explained than as a quotation from an author who lived while the temple was still standing.—*Spk. Com.* (9) **nothing, etc.**,ⁱ comp. Heb. ix. 4. It is suggested that as there was now more room in the holy of holies, Sol. removed the "pot of manna" and the "rod" and placed them elsewhere in the oracle. (10) **cloud**, visible symbol of Div. presence, Ex. xxix. 43; xl. 34. (11) **glory**, a special brilliancy, on wh. mortal eyes could not gaze.

The ark an emblem of the human heart.—1. As vivifying and adorning the most splendid creation of human genius. 2. As the hiding place for the Divine Word (Ps. cxix. 11). 3. As having affinity with angelical life. 4. As it exercises itself in showing mercy. 5. As it is the shrine of Divinest manifestations.—*Hom. Com.*

Bringing the Ark.—Two processions advanced from different quarters. The one came from the lofty height of Gibeon, bearing the Sacred Tent, tattered, no doubt, and often repaired, with its goats'-hair covering and boards of acacia wood. Together with it were brought the ancient brazen altar, the candlestick, and the table of shewbread, and also the brazen serpent. This train was joined on Mount Zion by another still more stately procession. From its temporary halting-place under the tent erected by David on Mount Zion, came forth the Ark of acacia wood, containing only the two Tables of the Law, and supported as of old by the Levites on their shoulders.—*Stanley.*

12-16 (12) **Lord said**, promised.^j **thick darkness**, the holy of holies was entirely dark; no natural or artificial light was provided. (13) **a settled place**,^k this was the great idea of the temple, it was the permanent centre of the worship of Jehovah. (14) **turned his face**, he had been speaking towards the holy of holies. **blessed**, the Hebrew king was not authorized to bless the people—that was the prerogative of the priests (Num. vi. 23; cf. Levit. ix. 22), and he is only said to bless here as felicitating, as wishing them a blessing.—*Pulp. Com.* **stood**, attitude of respect and attention. (15) **spake**, comp. 2 Sa. vii. (16) **no city**, for a permanent dwelling place; 2 Sa. vii. 6; 2 Chr. vi. 5, 6.

The glory cloud.—A divine manifestation, imaging forth higher forms of divine manifestation which should follow. I. The incarnation of Christ. II. Tho gift of the spirit.—*J. Waite.*

Loss by neglecting means of grace.—My Æolian harp is not sounding, and

the ark brought in

^a Comp. Day's bringing of ark fr. house of Obed-Edom, 2 Sa. vi.; 1 Chr. xv.

^b "Fr. the new moon of October to the new moon of November."—*Robinson.*

^c Nu. iii. 29-32; iv. 5-16.

^d Comp. 2 Sa. vi. 13; 1 Chr. xv. 26.

the glory filled the house

^e 1 Ki. vi. 19-22.

^f The wings of the cherubim spread fr. wall to wall. 1 Ki. vi. 27.

^g "A rough unheun projection of the rock, under covering of the golden cherubs, the ark was thrust in, and placed lengthways, on what is called 'the place of its rest.'"—*Stanley.*

^h Ex. xl. 20; De. x. 2, 5.

the address of Solomon

ⁱ Ex. xix. 9, 16, 18, xx. 21; De. iv. 11, v. 22.

^j "He who in the progress of the building ventured to look through the partition, would have seen a small, square chamber, like an Egyptian adytum, absolutely dark, except by the light received through this aperture."—*Stanley.*

Comp. Ps. xviii. 11, xxvii. 2; Is. xlv. 15; He xii. 18.

^k Ps. cxxxii. 14.

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yet a fine, fresh wind is blowing in at the window. Why hear I not its soft mystic strains? I remember, it was put away in the lumber room and some of its strings are broken. There is a gracious revival in the church, and believers are greatly refreshed by the visitations of God's spirit, but I am in a sadly worldly unbelieving condition. May it not be because I neglect private prayer, and have not been regular at the prayer-meeting; my family concerns and business cares have kept my heart in the lumber room, and my soul has lost her first love? Yes, these are the reasons. Lord, tune my heart, and I will again seek the places where the heavenly wind of Thy Spirit blows graciously and refreshingly. How can I bear to be silent when thy daily mercies are all around me singing of Thy love? — *C. H. Spurgeon.*

α 2 Sa. vii. 10—16.

b "Sol, with filial reverence and delicacy of feeling, does not mention the cause of this Divine prohibition." — *Wordsworth.*

c Ex. xxxiv. 28.

17—21. (17) in the heart, as a cherished purpose. (18) well . . . heart,^a God graciously accepted the intention, though it could not be fulfilled. (19) thou shalt not, bec. a man of blood.^b 1 Chr. xxviii. 3. (20) performed his word, in establishing Sol. on Dav.'s throne. (21) wherein is the covenant, referring to the tables of stone wh. contained terms of the covenant.^c

David's intention to build the temple (vss. 17—19). — I. Man's purposes are sometimes greater than his power. Limitations of — I. Character; 2. Body; 3. Culture; 4. Circumstances: want of means, or liberty; 5. Destiny; 6. Life. II. The importance and value of these gracious but unfulfilled intentions. 1. They are facts to God; 2. They are facts to those who cherish them; 3. Unfulfilled intentions are not without their practical influences on society. III. The comfort which these considerations are calculated to afford. This theme is full of comfort to — 1. The poor and uneducated; 2. The suffering; 3. Those who are called to premature death; 4. All good men in the presence of their imperfect lives. — *W. L. Watkinson.*

Worship. —

"In the spirit of that significant Oriental usage which drops its sandals at the palace door, the devout worshipper will put off his travel-tarnished shoes, will try to divest himself of secular anxieties and worldly projects, when the place where he stands is converted into holy ground by the words, 'Let us worship God.'"
— *J. Hamilton.*

The Pagan's myths through marble lips are spoken,
And ghosts of old beliefs still flit and moan
Round fane and altar overthrown and broken,
O'er tree-grown barrow and gray ring of stone.

Blind Faith had martyrs in those old high places,
The Syrian hill-grove and the Druid's wood,
With mothers offering to the fiend's embraces
Bone of their bone, and blood of their own blood.

Red altars, kindling through that night of error,
Smoked with warm blood beneath the cruel eye
Of lawless power and sanguinary terror,
Throned on the circle of a pitiless sky.

Beneath whose baleful shadow, overcasting
All heaven above, and blighting earth below,
The scourge grew red, the lip grew pale with fasting,
And man's oblation was his fear and woe!

Then through great temples swell'd the dismal moaning
Of dirge-like music and sepulchral prayer;
Pale wizard priests, o'er occult symbols droning,
Swung their white censers in the burden'd air.

As if the pomp of rituals and the savor
Of gums and spices could the Unseen please;
As if His ear could bend, with childish favor,
To the poor flattery of the organ keys!

Feet red from war-fields trod the church-aisles holy
With trembling reverence; and the oppressor there,
Kneeling before his priest, abased and lowly,
Crush'd human hearts beneath his knee of prayer.

Not such the service the benignant Father
Requireth at His earthly children's hands;
Not the poor offering of vain rites, but rather
The simple duty man from man demands. — *Whittier.*

"Religion is a life of every time, a spirit of all work, a secret wonder in the thought, a manly duty in the will, a noble sweetness in the temper. In short religion is the very respiration of all faithful and loving toil, and to detach it for moments specially reserved is like proposing to take your walk in the morning, and do your breathing in the afternoon." — *James Martineau.*

22—26. (22) altar, the altar of burnt-offering, in the court of the priests.^a Sol. was raised up some five feet, so as to be seen by the people. (23) keepest, etc., comp. De. vii. 9. (24) with thine hand, acknowledging that the strength to build the house had come fr. God. (25) keep, this Thy further promise. so that, etc., R. V., "if only," provided that; this being ever the condition of Div. blessing. (26) be verified, proved by experience.^b

Waiting upon God. — A noted preacher was being waited for on the hills of Wales. The time had elapsed, the preacher was in the town, but was not on the hillside. The people were impatient, and the host of the preacher sent a messenger to tell him that the occasion was complete, and the people were ready and earnestly expecting him to come. The messenger went. The messenger came back again and said, "I do not know what is the matter, but the chamber door is locked. I heard voices within. I listened, and I heard the preacher say, 'I will not go, unless you go with me.' He is talking to some other man. He wants the other man to come, and unless that other man will come, he says he will not appear amongst us to-day. What is to be done?" The host understood the case. He said, "All will be well presently." And so it was. The closeted preacher unlocked the door, came out with an invisible companion, "one like unto the Son of man," and old Wales, accustomed to the noblest religious eloquence that ever fell from human lips, was never more deeply stirred and vitally thrilled than when that man spoke in the power of the other Man, and revealed the kingdom of God to an expectant and thankful people. — *Parker.*

27—30. (27) heaven of heavens,^c De. x. 14; Ps. cxlviii. 4; Is. lxvi. 1. (28) respect, take notice; graciously consider. (29) eyes . . hearken . . place, a blended metaphor. If God's eyes were toward, He would be attentive to listen. The choice of Jerus. as the place had been specially revealed to Dav., and confirmed by the events just now recorded. (30) toward this place, or in this place: comp. Daniel.^d

Greatness and majesty of God (vs. 27). — I. The heavens, so vast, glorious, holy, present no limits to presence and manifestation of God: do not provide full scope for manifestation of Divine glory. II. Much less can earthly temples, erected by human hands, do this. III. Yet earthly temples provide for certain peculiar manifestations of the Divine glory; conviction, pardon, reconciliation of man.

Waiting for an answer. — In the International Exhibition of 1862 were two pictures which I think I shall never forget. The first was called "Waiting for the Verdict." Standing at the door of a room where a trial was going on, there was a little gathering of people. A woman — oh, what agony was in her look! — and a dear little child lying against her asleep; another, who looked like the grandmother, holding the youngest child; the grandfather, with one hand fallen down between his legs, the other covering his face, from which the big tears were rolling; the dog looking up and wondering; the elder sister standing there against the door all anxiety. What meant it all? Before the bar in that court of justice the father was standing, and they were "waiting for the verdict." There was a second picture. The same people standing at the same place, only one is among them we did not see before. A man is sitting on the bench, his wife, with joyful look, embracing him; the dog licking his hand; the grandmother, with eyes swollen with weeping, only they are tears of joy now, holding up a dear little child for a kiss from the father, who a few minutes before had been standing before that bar. Why are they all so changed? Why joy where there was sorrow — happiness where there was misery? A "word only" had done it all. "Not guilty," "The Acquittal."

31—36. (31) trespass, do any kind of wrong in any of the ways wh. might be cleared by an oath.^e Ex. xxii. 7-11. the oath, for the man who swears it, R. V., "and he come and swear." (32) wicked,^f here the man who made false accusations. justifying, exonerating. (33) smitten, etc., comp. Le. xxvi. 17; De. xxviii. 25. (34) bring them, comp. De. xxx. 1-18; Ne. i. 8-9. (35) shut up, Le. xxvi. 19; De. xi. 17; xxviii. 23, 24. (36) servants, future kings. teach, etc., shows that all affliction was viewed as chastisement and correction, intended for removal of sin, not as vengeance.

The house of prayer. — I. Some of the objects of prayer indicated. 1. Forgiveness of sin against man; 2. Deliverance from national disaster; 3. Suppli-

B. c. 960.

the
dedicatory
prayer

^a "Sol. was on a brazen platform, erected for the special purpose, five cubits long and broad, and three cubits high (2 Chr. vi. 13), kneeling, and with his hands stretched out to heaven (1 Ki. vii. 54)."—*Keil.*

^b 2 Sa. vii. 25; 2 Chr. xxi. 7; Ps. lxxxix. 38-37; cxxxii. 12; Lu. i. 32, 33.

Divine
favor
invoked

^c "The heaven in its most extended compass. Sol. strikes down all rationalistic assertions, that the Israelites imagined Jehovah to be only a finite national god. The infinitude and supramundane exaltation of God cannot be more clearly and strongly expressed than it is in these words."—*Keil.*

^d Ac. vii. 49; 1 Ki. xx. 23.

^e Da. vi. 10.

forgiveness
of trespass

sending of
rain

^e Nu. v. 21.

^f Eze. xviii. 20.

"What I have done is worthy of nothing but silence and forgetfulness;

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but what God hath done for me is worthy of everlasting and thankful memory."—*Bishop Hall*.

"Whatever difficulties you have to encounter, be not perplexed, but think only what is right to do in the sight of Him who seeth all things, and bear without repining the result."—*Moir*.

healing of famine

a "Lit. consumer; a more terrible kind of locust."—*Gesenius*.

b "To perceive one's sinfulness."—*Hitzig*.

"To recognize one's sufferings as Div. chastisements."—*Keil*.

c 1 Sa. xvi. 7; 1 Chr. xxviii. 9; Ps. xi. 4; cxxxix. 1, 2; Je. xvii. 10; Jno. xxi. 17; Ac. i. 24; 1 Jno. iii. 20; Re. ii. 23.

d Ps. cxxx. 4.

e Ps. ii. 8; Mat. xii. 42; ii. 1, 2; Ac. viii. 27.

f 2 Ki. xix. 19; Ps. lxxvii. 2.

"All is holy where devotion kneels."—*Holmes*.

aid in war

g Eccl. vii. 20; Ja. iii. 2; 1 Jno. i. 8, 10.

h Da. ix. 5; Ps. cvi. 6.

"God washes the eyes by tears until they can behold the invisible land where tears shall come no more."—*Beecher*.

cation for material prosperity. II. The spirit of prayer suggested. Faith in God. Holy purpose of obedience.

Prayer compared to letters.—Certainly all the "pretense" prayers must go among the eternal strays. Like many letters which never reach their destination, many prayers have to be marked "misssent," or with some other fatal brand, and consigned to oblivion. Sometimes prayers remain unanswered because they are not directed right—not addressed to God, but to the audience. Other prayers never "go through" because the address is illegible. They are too full of pomp and rhetorical flourish—mere "monologues of flowery prose." Other prayers get lost because they are "unavailable matter"—prayers whose answers might gratify us, but would fall like showers of daggers on our neighbors—and so are denied passage through the divine channels, as sharp-edged tools, corroding acids, explosives, and the like, are not allowed in the mails. No legally "stamped," sincerely directed, and well-meaning prayer is ever lost. The answer may be delayed, but the prayer is "on file."—*Anon.*

37—43. (37) famine, Le. xxvi. 26. pestilence, De. xxvi. 25. blasting, mildew, De. xxviii. 22. locust, De. xxviii. 33, 42. caterpillar,^a not mentioned in Pentateuch. besiege, De. xxviii. 52. plague, etc., Le. xxvi. 16. land . . cities, De. xxviii. 52. The Sept. reads here, "in one of their cities." (38) plague . . heart,^b the evil in him wh. is cause of outward suffering. (39) his ways, as Divinely tested.^c (40) fear,^d the true godly fear: those forgiven and recovered are made truly humble. (41) stranger,^e comp. Nu. xv. 14. "Nothing is more remarkable in the Mosaic law than its liberality with regard to strangers (see Ex. xxii. 21; Lev. xxv. 35; Deut. x. 19. Even in religious matters, where anciently almost all nations were exclusive, they were bound to admit strangers to nearly equal privileges." (42) they shall hear, a prophecy, but one wh. human foresight could make. (43) all . . name, the noblest spirits reached beyond the exclusiveness of Judaism.

The stranger.—I. Jehovah's universal sovereignty. II. The representative character of Israel. III. The attraction of the temple for all longing human hearts. IV. The response of God to every suppliant, no matter who he might be.—*J. Waite*.

Solomon vs. modern Christians (see vs. 43).—"The opposition Carey met in his desires to Christianize the heathen seem to us wonderful and incredible. Indeed the greater portion of Carey's ministerial friends were themselves either opposed or doubtful. Mr. Fuller was so startled by the novelty and the magnitude of the proposal, that he described his feelings as resembling those of the unbelieving Israelite, 'If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such things be?' When at a gathering of ministers in Northampton, Carey suggested as a topic for discussion the duty of Christians to attempt the conversion of the heathen, Mr. Ryland, the father of Dr. Ryland, sprang to his feet and said: 'Young man, sit down! When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your help or mine!'"

44—48. (44) toward the city, Heb. the way of the city. (45) cause, or right. (46) sinneth not,^f Pr. xx. 9. (47) bethink, marg. *bring back to their heart*.^h (48) all their heart, with full sincerity. De. xxx. 2.

The unifying power of prayer.—I. All men are alike in their moral needs. II. The exercise of prayer is an invisible power that unites the entire race. III. Prayer is a divinely-appointed means of bringing all men to a true knowledge of God. IV. Prayer recognizes the fact of a universal brotherhood.—*Hom. Com.*

Praying towards the temple.—By a decree passed in the eighteenth year of the Emperor Adrian, the Jews were forbidden not only to enter into the city of Jerusalem (then called Elia), but even to turn their looks towards it; which most probably had a reference to this custom of turning their faces towards the Holy City at their prayers. I observed that Mecca, the country of their Mohammedan prophet, and from which, according to their idea, salvation was dispensed to them, is situated towards the south, and for this reason they pray with their faces turned towards that quarter.—*Mariti*. The Mexicans prayed generally upon their knees, with their faces turned towards the east, and therefore made their sanctuaries with the door to the west. *Slavery.*—Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still, Slavery! still thou art a bitter draught; and

though thousands in all ages have been made to drink of thee, thou art no less bitter on that account. It is thou Liberty! thrice sweet and gracious goddess, whom all in public or in private worship, whose taste is grateful and ever will be so, till nature herself shall change—no tint of words can spot thy snowy mantle, or chemic power turn thy sceptre into iron;—with thee to smile upon him as he eats his crust, the swain is happier than his monarch, from whose court thou art exiled. Gracious heaven! grant me but health, thou great bestower of it, and give me but this fair goddess as my companion, and shower down thy mitres, if it seems good to thy wise providence, upon those hands that are aching for them. — *Sterne*.

49-53. (49) cause, as *vs.* 45. (50) compassion, power to awaken compassion.^a (51) furnace of iron, *De. iv.* 20.^b A place of extraordinary trial and adversity. (52) eyes, *etc.*, see note on *vs.* 29. in all, *etc.*, *R. V.*, "whosoever they cry unto thee." (53) inheritance,^c *De. iv.* 20; *ix.* 26, 29; *Is. xix.* 25.

Pleading the promises. — In this prayer the plea rests — I. On the mercy of God (*vs.* 50). II. On the covenant of God (*vs.* 51). III. On the faithfulness of God (*vs.* 53). IV. To us the promises are Yea and Amen in Jesus Christ.

The refining furnace (vs. 51). — A lady called on a silversmith, and begged to be told the process of refining, which he fully described to her. "But do you sit while you are refining?" asked she. "O yes, madam; I must sit with my eyes steadily fixed on the furnace, since if the silver remain too long it is sure to be injured," said he. "And how do you know when it is sufficiently refined?" "Whenever I see my own image reflected in it, I know the process is completed." She at once saw the beauty and comfort of the expression. — *Whitcross*.

54-56. (54) kneeling, his precise attitude was not given in *vs.* 22. (55) stood, the proper attitude of blessing. (56) rest, as *Ex. xxxiii.* 14,^d *etc.*, the rest of God in His temple was pledge of rest for the people.

Solomon's thanksgiving prayer (vs. 54-61). — The words in which Solomon blessed the people contained — I. An address to God. This consisted of — 1. A thanksgiving for mercies received; 2. A prayer for the continuance of them. II. An exhortation to the people. He besought them — 1. To be perfect with the Lord; 2. To preserve continually the frame they now possessed. — *C. Simeon*.

Using God's promises. — A rosebud is a promise of a rose, but if the heart of an iceberg received it, what blossom-promise would the iceberg have? Sponge and water are promises of cleanliness, but allowed merely to rest on a dirty floor, they make nothing but mud. No man ever got hold of a promise except in a seed state. Many are foolish enough to gloat with weak satisfaction over the seed, never planting it and carrying it on to a perfect blossom. And often, also, they plant the promise in unhealthy, worm-infested, barren soil, and after waiting long for the first green leaves, declare the promise a cheat. — *Golden Rule*.

57-61. (57) let . . us, as *De. xxxi.* 6; *Jos. i.* 5. (58) incline, "the doctrine that God inclines men's hearts appears first in *Sc.* in the Davidic Ps." (59) cause, interest. at all . . require, the *Heb.* is "the thing of a day in its day." The *R. V.* translates "as every day shall require." (60) all the people, comp. *vs.* 43. (61) perfect, sincere, whole-hearted, thoroughly devoted, as . . day, life, one act of worshipping obedience.

The character of God known by the character of His people. — I. We have the abiding presence of God sought (*vs.* 57). II. We have the result of that presence stated (*vs.* 58). III. We have the lesson for the world taught by the Divine presence and its consequences.

Hearing by the clock. — While the Rev. R. Watson was preaching, one Sabbath morning, at Wakefield, in Yorkshire, he observed a man rise from his seat to look at the clock in the front of the gallery, as though he wished to give the preacher a hint to approach to a conclusion. Mr. Watson observed in a very significant manner, "A remarkable change has taken place among the people of this country, in regard to the public services of religion. Our forefathers put their clocks on the outside of their places of worship, that they might not be too late in their attendance. We have transferred them to the inside of the house of God, lest we should stay too long in His service. A sad and ominous change!" And then, addressing the man whose rude behavior

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"Sorrow is knowledge; they who know the most must mourn the deepest." — *Byron*.

the covenant pleaded

^a *Illus. Ezr. i. 3; vii. 13; Ne. ii. 6; Ps. cvi. 46.*

^b *Is. xlviii. 10.*

^c *1 Pe. ii. 9, 10.*

"Devotion, when it does not lie under the check of reason, is apt to degenerate into enthusiasm." — *Addison*.

Solomon's benediction

^d *De. iii. 20; xii. 10; xxv. 19.*

"Do not let your head run upon that which is none of your own, but pick out some of the best of your circumstances, and consider how eagerly you would wish for them were they not in your possession." — *Marcus Aurelius*.

Solomon's exhortation

^e *Ps. cxlix. 36; cxli. 4.*

Comp. Phi. ii. 13; He. xiii. 20, 21.

^f *2 Ki. xx. 3; Phi. iii. 12-16.*

"Oh, how sweet to work all day for God, and then lie down at night beneath His smile." — *M'Cheyne*.

"The world is too much with us." — *Wordsworth*.

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Solomon's sacrifice

a "Profusion was a usual feature of the sacrifices of antiquity. 300 oxen formed a common sacrifice at Athens." — *Spk. Com.*

b "The screen of hills wh. forms the watershed of Coele-Syria." — *Stanley.*

c Ge. xv. 18; 2 Kl. xiv. 25.

It was a frequent saying of Gonsalvo de Cordova, the great Spanish general, "Never stint your hand; there is no mode of enjoying one's property like giving it away." — *Barlow.*

God's promise to Solomon

d Comp. 2 Chr. vii. 11, 12.

e 2 Sa. vii. 12-16; 1 Kl. ii. 4; 1 Chr. xxii. 10.

"Look upon doing good as truly your business as prayer, or hearing the word, or meditation, etc. And therefore never think your time mispent which is laid out in visiting the imprisoned or sick, relieving the necessitous, comforting the afflicted, and reducing those that err into the paths of sobriety and truth." — *Lucas.*

a Divine warning

f 2 Chr. vii. 19.

had called forth the remark, he said, "You need be under no alarm this morning; I shall not keep you beyond the usual time

62-66. (62) sacrifice, for God's acceptance of it, see 2 Chr. vii. 1. (63) peace-offerings, as part of these could be eaten it became a great feast for the people. (64) hallow, etc., prob. the whole area of the court: this was done temporarily, to accommodate the multitudes of persons bringing sacrifices. meat offerings, fine flour with oil and incense, accompanied with music by the Levites, 2 Chr. vii. 6. (65) feast, the feast of Tabernacles. from . . Hamath,^b indic. the extensive district fr. wh. the people had come. river of Egypt,^c not the Nile, but the *Wady-el-Arish*. (66) eighth day, i. e. of the feast of Tabernacles, wh. followed the dedicatory feast of seven days. blessed, comp. vs. 14, thanked. tents, not literally such: the word is used for homes, survival of nomadic customs.

They blessed the king. — The Hebrew has, for blessed, "thanked." The Tamul translation has, for blessed, "praised." So in Joshua xxii. 33, also in 2 Sam. xxii. 47, and in all other passages where the word occurs (when used in reference to God), it is rendered, "praise," or "praised." The word bless, among the Hindoos, is, I think, not used, as in English, to praise, to glorify, but to confer happiness, to convey a benediction, or to show good will. St. Paul says, "Without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the greater," and this, I believe joined with greatness, is the only idea the Orientals attach to those who bless others. Hence he who blesses another, must be a superior, either in years, rank, or sanctity. The heathen never bless their gods. — *Roberts.* *The joy of an accomplished purpose.* — In his last days the venerable Bede was engaged in a translation of the New Testament on which he had set his heart. He dictated to one of his disciples the last verse in the Gospel of John. "It is finished, master," said the scribe. "It is finished," replied the dying saint. "Lift up my head, let me sit in my cell, in the place where I have so often prayed. And now, glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Ghost." And, with these words, as if the rapture of having accomplished a patiently prosecuted purpose was too great for him, his spirit fled.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1-5. (1) finished, etc., as ch. vi. 37, 38, vii. 1.^d (2) second time, for first see ch. iii. 5. The problem of chron. is difficult to decide. Those questions arise: (1) Did Sol. wait 13 yrs. after completing the temple before its dedication (ch. viii.)? (2) Did God wait 3 yrs. before answering the prayer of Sol., in ch. viii.? (3) May not these warning words of God refer to Sol.'s continual prayers and sacrifices? The (3) prop. seems to accord best with the looseness of the Heb. tenses. as . . Gibeon, by night, and through a dream. (3) hallowed, referring to the glorious manifestation of the Divine presence wh. appeared at the time of dedication. eyes and mine heart, this was fulfilment beyond Sol.'s prayer, ch. viii. 29. (4) integrity, unwavering fidelity to the true God. Sol. was already "coquetting with idolatrous practices." (5) establish,* permanently confirm.

The power of individualism. — 1. The national is vastly influenced by the personal; 2. A monarch may foster or blast the religious interests of his people; 3. The greater the authority placed in the hands of one man, the greater is his responsibility for its use or abuse; 4. How momentous are the opportunities presented within the compass of a single life! — *Hom. Com.*

The danger of attained success. — The will of man is free, and that which may be the instrument of the greatest good may become a power for propagating terrible mischief. The noble may become ignoble, the refined base, the honored contemptible. Few great men exercise the questionable caution of a certain celebrated musical composer who spent the last forty years of his life in almost complete idleness, saying, "An additional success would add nothing to my fame; a failure would injure it. I have no need of the one, and I do not choose to expose myself to the other." — *Barlow.*

6-9. (6) at all turn, better trans. *wholly turn.*^f (7) proverb, etc., see De. xxviii. 37. byword, *lit.* a sharp, pointed saying. (8) which is high, *R. V.*, "and though this house be high," i. e. conspicuous now in its glory, shall be

conspicuous in its ruin.^a hiss, the expression of contempt.^b (9) taken hold, with idea of bringing in fr. other lands; as well as of applying themselves to.

The renewed covenant (vss. 1-9).—The incident illustrates—I. The fidelity of God and the blessed results that attend it. 1. In the answering of the prayer; 2. In the repetition of the promise. II. The infidelity of man and the fatal consequences that follow it. Learn—1. That all human loss and misery spring from forsaking God; 2. That according to the height of privilege is the depth of condemnation if the privilege is abused. — *Pulpit Com.*

Overcoming evil with good.—The ancient Greeks fancied that on a certain shore dwelt the beautiful sirens, who sang so charmingly that the seamen sailing by were attracted almost irresistibly to the shore, where their vessels were wrecked on the hidden reefs. Even the wise Ulysses did not dare to sail past these islands without binding himself to the mast, although he could see that the shores were lined with wrecks and the bleaching bones of those who had yielded to the sirens' seductions. But Orpheus took the wiser plan. With his own lyre he made sweeter music than the sirens' song, a music that saved both himself and the sailors from the deadly attraction of the charmed song. — *Peloubet.*

10-14. (10) twenty years, to be counted fr. foundation of temple in fourth year of Sol.'s reign. when, during wh. two houses, the temple taking seven years, the palace thirteen years.^c (11) Hiram, etc., ch. v. twenty cities,^d on the frontier land of Phœnicia and Galilee. Prob. near the Cabul mentioned in Jos. xix. 27. (12) pleased him not, poss. he had hoped for a cession of the bay of Accho, so did not care for an inland mountain district; or he desired corn lands and found these mountain villages of no agricultural value. (13) Cabul, all mere villages, like the one named Cabul.^e (14) six-score, etc. Heb. "Now H. had sent;" this fact explains the gift of the 20 cities, the cedar, etc., had already been paid for, but the gold was a new obligation. Keil considers this gold a loan for wh. Sol. had pledged the villages; 2 Ch. viii. 2, is the proof that Sol. paid the debt.

A generous spirit.—1. Is careful in estimating. 2. Liberal in providing. 3. Prompt in giving. 4. Is one of the noblest fruits of Christianity. — *Hom. Com.*

Arabian generosity.—The Arabians are said to be remarkably lavish in their generosity. Gibbon relates that a dispute had arisen who, among the citizens of Mecca, was entitled to the prize of generosity, and a successive application was made to the three who were deemed most worthy of the trial. Abdallah, the son of Abbas, had undertaken a distant journey, and his foot was in the stirrup when he heard the voice of a suppliant, "O son of the uncle of the Apostle of God, I am a traveler, and in distress!" He instantly dismounted to present the pilgrim with his camel, her rich caparison, and a purse of four thousand pieces of gold, excepting only the sword, either for its intrinsic value, or as the gift of an honored kinsman. The servant of Kais informed the second suppliant that his master was asleep; but he immediately added, "Here is a purse of seven thousand pieces of gold—it is all we have in the house—and here is an order that will entitle you to a camel and a slave." The master, as soon as he awoke, praised and enfranchised his faithful steward, with a gentle reproof that by respecting his slumbers he had stinted his bounty. The third of these heroes, the blind Arabah, at the hour of prayer, was supporting his steps on the shoulders of two slaves—"Alas!" he replied, "My coffers are empty; but these you may sell: if you refuse I renounce them." At these words, pushing away the youthful slaves, he groped along the wall with his staff. — *Barlow.*

15-19. (15) levy, or system of forced labor,^f ch. v. 13-18. Millo, prop. the Millo,^g see 2 Sa. v. 9. Heb. "the filling in," probably some specially important part of the oldest walls; "that part of the wall of Jerus. wh. crossed the Tyropœum valley." wall, he repaired Dav.'s wall: he may also have extended the wall to enclose the temple-area.^h Hazor, Jos. xi. 1. On the north overlooking Lake Merom, Sol. girdled his land with strong cities. Megiddo, Jos. xii. 21, to dominate the Plain of Esdraelon. Gezer, Jos. x. 33; xii. 12, to protect the kgm. fr. Egypt. (16) Canaanites . . city, it seems never to have been conquered by Israel.ⁱ present, or dowry.^j (17) built, rebuilt Gezer, enlarged Beth-horon. Beth-horon, Jos. x. 10; 2 Chr. viii. 5, protected Judah against invasion fr. Philistia. (18) Baalath, Jos. xix. 44. Tadmor, Heb.

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"The Israelites were not to be cut off, except for an entire defection." — *Spk. Com.*

Ps. xli. 14.

^a De. xxix. 24-26; Je. xxii. 8, 9.

^b 2 Chr. xxix. 8; Je. xviii. 16; Mic. vi. 16.

completion of contract with Hiram

^c 1 Ki. vi. 38; vii. 1.

^d "These twenty cities were mere villages: Cabul was one of these, and the other 19 were prob. small places adjacent to it." — *Thomson.*

^e LXX. trans. frontier land. Josephus says a Phœnic. word for unpleasing. Others think it means pawned; others derive fr. verb to vanish, so worthless.

Comp. 2 Chr. viii. 1, 2.

"Give all thou canst! High Heaven rejects the love of nicely calculated less or more." — *Lovell.*

"Let friendship creep gently to a height; if it rush to it, it may soon run itself out of breath." — *Fuller.*

Solomon's store-cities

^f 2 Chr. viii. 8-10.

^g LXX. trans. the akra, or citadel.

^h 1 Ki. xi. 27.

ⁱ Jos. xvi. 3; xxi. 21; Ju. i. 29.

^j Though in the East, husbands

B. C. *chr.* 960,

generally pay for their wives, yet dower is given in some cases."—*Spk. Com.*

Comp. 2 Chr. viii. 4.

1 Ki. iv. 26.

Ecc. ii. 4.

the remnant of the Canaanites reduced to bondage

Ju. i. 28, 30, 33, 35.

"To be free is not to do nothing, but to be the sole arbiter of what we do and what we leave undone."—*La Bruyère.*

"Rejoice in your liberty, but in your lawful liberty. True freedom consists with the observance of law."

"The abettors of slavery are weaving the thread in the loom; but God is adjusting the pattern. They are asses, harnessed to the chariot of liberty, and whether they will or no, must draw it on."—*Beecher.*

"The greatest glory of a free-born people is to transmit that freedom to their children."—*Havard.*

Solomon's navy

Tamor, or Tamar. Either a town in the S. of Judæa; or Palmyra.^a (19) store, for provisions, etc. Centres for military operations.^b desired, etc., referring to his pleasure-grounds.^c

Despotism.—It is as astonishing as it is melancholy to travel through a whole country, as one may through many in Europe, gasping under endless tears, groaning under dragoons and poverty, and all to make a wanton and luxurious court, filled for the most part with the worst and vilest of all men. Good God! What hardheartedness and barbarity, to starve perhaps half a province to make a gay garden. And yet sometimes this gross wickedness is called public spirit, because forsooth a few workmen and laborers are maintained out of the bread and blood of half a million.—*Gordon.*

20—23. (20) left, to mingle with the Israelites in the land. (21) bond-service,^d poss. they had shown dangerous symptoms of disaffection, and were crushed by being put to forced labor, as Is. had been in Egypt. (22) no bondmen, comp. 1 Ki. v. 13, 14. Their temporary service was regarded only in the light of a tax. Not menials, but entrusted with services of dignity and honor. (23) five . . fifty, comp. ch. v. 16.

The king's plans for the benefit of the land.—I. His buildings. 1. The temple; 2. Storehouses for times of need. This having regard for things spiritual and temporal. II. In making this provision he spared his own people all servile labor possible.

Clarkson and slavery.—In 1785, Dr. Pickard, Master of Magdalen College in the University of Cambridge, gave out the following subject for one of the University prizes: "*Anne liceat invitos in servitutem dare?*" "Is it right to make slaves of others against their will?" Mr. Thomas Clarkson, who was then a student at the University, determined to become a candidate for the prize. He took great pains to obtain the fullest information on the subject, and had the happiness of attaining the object of his ambition. After reading his essay publicly as usual, in the Senate House, he set out for London on horseback. While on the road, the subject of the essay entirely engrossed his thoughts; he became at times seriously affected as he traveled on. He once stopped his horse, and dismounted, and sat down on a bank by the roadside. Here he tried to persuade himself that the contents of the essay which he had read in the Senate House the day before were not true. The more, however, he reflected on the authorities on which he knew them to be founded the more he gave them credit, the more he was convinced that it was an imperious duty in some one to undertake the glorious task of putting an end to the sufferings of the unhappy Africans. Agitated in this manner, he reached London, where he shortly afterwards published an English translation of his essay. His mind, however, was not satisfied that this was all humanity required of him. To make the case of the Africans known was desirable as a first step; but would this of itself put a stop to the horrors of the trade? He believed not; he believed there could be no hope of success, unless some one would resolve to make it the business of his life. The question then was, was he himself called upon to do it? His own peace of mind required that he should give a final answer to the question. To do this, he retired frequently into solitude. The result was, that after the most mature deliberation, he determined to devote his whole life, should it be necessary, to the cause. Of the glorious fruits of this sublime act of devotion, the reader need scarcely be told. From the latter end of December, 1786, till the year 1794, Mr. Clarkson labored with such unceasing assiduity to achieve the work of African emancipation that his constitution was at length literally shattered to pieces; his hearing, memory, and voice, were nearly gone; he was, in short, utterly incapable of any further exertion, and was obliged, though with extreme reluctance, to be borne out of the field where he had placed the great honor and pride of his life. After eight years' retirement, he felt his constitution so far recruited that he returned again to the contest: and has had the proud satisfaction of living to see the noble object of his life's solicitude at length accomplished by the Act of the Abolition of the Slave Trade—the Magna Charta of Africa.—*Percy Anec.*

24—28. (24) unto her house, ch. vii. 8; 2 Chr. viii. 11. then . . Millo, "the word 'then' may mean either (1), that when her palace was completed, Solomon then had workmen who were liberated and were employed on Millo (*Keil*), or (2), that when she vacated David's house, the building of Millo

could be proceeded with."—*Pulp. Com.* (25) three times, on the occasions of the appointed feasts.^a offer, not in person, but through the priests.^b (26) navy, after his great architectural work, this was the chief event of Sol.'s reign. Ezion-geber,^c at northern end of Elanitic gulf.^d (27) shipmen, skilled sailors. Israelites had no experience of the sea. (28) Ophir, only sugg. can be given as to its situation. See Gen. x. 29. The countries chiefly favored are Africa, India, Arabia. four . . talents, comp. 2 Chr. viii. 18.^e

The public worship of God.—1. Is the duty of all—king and subjects. 2. Cannot be neglected without mischievous results (chap. iii. 2-4). 3. Should be observed with regularity and solemnity. 4. Is the secret of national prosperity and greatness. 5. Is fraught with blessing to the individual worshipper.

—*Hom. Com.*

Religion in government.—A king must make religion the rule of government, and not to balance the scale; for he that casteth in religion only to make the scales even, his own weight is contained in those characters—*Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*; he is found too light; his kingdom shall be taken from him.—*Bacon*

CHAPTER THE TENTH

1-5. (1) Sheba, "in Arabia Felix, in the northern portion of what is now called Yemen."^f heard, through Arab traders. fame . . Lord, the fame given to him by Jehovah. hard questions, riddles. Verbal puzzles were the fashion of the age.^g (2) train,^h or caravan. spices,ⁱ Arabian Sheba was the great spice country of the ancient world. precious stones, onyx and emerald, and pearls, fr. Pers. Gulf. (3) questions, problems, riddles. (4) house, his palace. (5) meat, etc., comp. ch. iv. 22, 23. sitting . . servants, the method of seating the state officers at the royal banquets: or perhaps an assembly. attendance, etc., those personal attendants who stood to serve the guests. ascent,^j private way to the temple across the Tyropœum Valley: an arched viaduct, the remains of wh. have been recently discovered.

The Queen of Sheba.—I. She went, notwithstanding the distance of her residence. The gospel is brought to our door. II. She went, notwithstanding all the anxieties of her public station. The claims of business must not be allowed to clash with the claims of religion. III. She went, though uninvited. We have been invited—how often? IV. She went to hear the wisdom of a mortal, at best fallible, and who, after all, was guilty of sad and criminal defection. We are invited to hear One greater than Solomon. Let us beware lest the Queen of the South, by her treatment of the less, become a swift witness against us on account of our treatment of the greater.—*Brooks*.

Hard questions.—According to Oriental accounts, the Queen of Sheba sent ambassadors with a letter to Solomon before she went herself. With them she sent five hundred youths dressed like maidens, and the same number of maidens like young men. She sent also a closed casket, containing an unperforated pearl, a diamond intricately pierced, and a goblet of crystal. The letter thus referred to these things: "As a true prophet, thou wilt no doubt be able to distinguish the youths from the maidens; to divide the contents of the enclosed casket: to perforate the pearl; to thread the diamond; and to fill the goblet with water that hath not dropped from the clouds, nor gushed forth from the earth." When they reached Jerusalem, Solomon told them the contents of the letter before they presented it, and made light of their mighty problems. He caused the slaves to wash themselves, and from the manner in which they applied the water detected their sex. He directed a young and fiery horse to be ridden through the camp at the top of its speed, and on its return caused its copious perspiration to be collected in the goblet. The pearl he perforated by a stone occultly known to him. The threading of the diamond puzzled him for a moment, but at length he inserted a small worm, which wound its way through, leaving a silken thread behind it. Having done this, he dismissed the ambassadors without accepting their presents. This and the reports her emissaries brought determined the queen to visit Jerusalem in person. When she came, Solomon, who had heard a piece of scandal about her,—no less than that she had cloven feet,—first of all demonstrated his sagacity by the mode in which he tested this report. He caused her to be conducted over a crystal floor, below which was real water, with a quantity of fish swimming about. Balkis, who had never seen a crys-

B. C. cir. 960.

a Ex. xxiii. 14-17.

b 2 Chr. viii. 12-14. c Nu. xxxiii. 35; De. ii. 8.

d "As the entire tract about Elath (Akaba) is destitute of trees, it is conjectured that the wood for the fleet was cut in Lebanon, floated to Gaza by sea, and thence conveyed across to Ezion-geber by land carriage."—*Spk. Com.*

e "Poss. 30 talents were given to Hiram for his help."—*Wordsworth*.

B. C. cir. 953.

visit of the queen of Sheba

f "Some think it was in African Ethiopia, i. e. Abyssinia, towards the south of the Red Sea."—*Jamieson*.

Mat. xii. 42

"His moral and religious wisdom."—*Spk. Com.*

"In regard to the names of the Lord."—*Keil*.

g "For legendary specimens of these trials of wit, see *Stanley, Jew. Ch.* ii. 209.

h Heb. *chayil*, with great power, or grandeur.

i Such as frankincense, myrrh, opobalsam, guntragacanth, and ladanum.

j "Word used is *olah*, wh. means burnt-offering. Comp Eze. xl. 26, however."—*Wordsworth*.

B. C. cir. 953.

her praise of the king's greatness

a Mat. xiii. 16, 17;
Lu. x. 23, 24.

b Pr. viii. 15.

"Ships, wealth,
general confidence
—all were his; he
counted the
at break of day; and
when the sun set,
where were they?"
—Byron.

the king and queen exchange gifts

"The genuine balsam, which grew near Jericho, and at Engaddi, was introduced into Palestine by the Queen of Sheba."
—Josephus.

"The wood is very heavy, hard, and fine-grained, and of beautiful garnet color."
—Smith Bib. Dic.

c2 Chr. ix. 11.

d Ps. xcii. 1-3.

Solomon's gold

"The revenue of modern Persia is under three millions."
—Spk. Com.

"Customs duties, which the merchants not in the royal employ were obliged to pay out of their profit."
—Ewald.

e "State shields usually hung up in the palace, or on the walls outside it, and worn by the body-guard on state occasions."
—Stanley.

f 1 Ki. xiv. 27.

tal floor, supposed there was water to be passed through, and therefore slightly lifted her robe, enabling the king to satisfy himself that she had a very neat foot, not at all cloven.—*Kitto*.

6—9. (6) *acts*, marg. *sayings*. (7) *prosperity*, may mean *goodness*, but comp. vs. 5. (8) *happy*, greatly privileged to serve so great and wise a king.^a *men*, LXX. "thy wives," the Syriac and Arabic versions have the same. (9) *blessed, etc.*,^b comp. 2 Chr. ii. 12; Ezr. i. 3.

The half not told.—A minister once preached, in a country village in Lincolnshire from "The half was not told me." The words were considered in an accommodated view, as appropriate to the felicity of the righteous, and also as awfully applicable to the case of the ungodly, throughout the endless ages of eternity. When speaking on the latter head, a man exceedingly intoxicated rushed into the room, sat down, and behaved with decorum during the service. After worship was concluded, it was found that he had thus intruded himself in consequence of a wager. Some one offered to lay him a tankard of ale that he durst not venture in. "Yes," added he, with an oath; "and if hell-door was open, I would go in." In a few days, death, the king of terrors, arrested his awful progress, cut the brittle thread of life, and consigned him over to the retributions of eternity.

10—13. (10) *spices*, *besamin*, fr. *basam*, to be fragrant, whence *balsam*. (11) *navy of Hiram*, built and manned for Sol. by Hiram, *almug trees*, Hebraized form of a Deccan word for sandal wood, wh. grows only on the coast of Malabar, south of Goa." (12) *pillars*, *balustrades*.^c *harps*,^d Heb. *cinnôr*. *psalteries*, Heb. *nebel*: the triangular-shaped *harp*, played with a plectrum; and the *lyre*, played with the hand. (13) *all her desire*, such interchange of presents was common. *royal bounty*, i. e. gifts of his own selection.

Interchange of gifts.—I. The queen is not content with words of praise and thanks. Gives practical expression to her gratitude. Verbal thanks useless if the life be void of lovely deeds. II. Solomon needed not her gifts. Gave greater in return. Our gifts to Christ not to be compared with His to us.

Tribute-bearer.—"Tribute-bearers," says Mr. Sharpe, in his *Illustration of the Bible from the Ancient Monuments*, "bringing, among other gifts, ivory, ebony, apes, ostrich eggs, and feathers from Ethiopia to Thothmosis III., form part of a procession sculptured on the wall of an underground tomb near Thebes. As Ophir, the port to which Solomon traded, was probably near to Sonakin on the west coast of the Red Sea, in the neighborhood of the Nubian gold mines, his ships naturally brought him some of the same varieties as Thothmosis received from that country. The *almug* wood was probably ebony. The word translated 'peacocks,' probably meant parrots, which are natives of Ethiopia. It is the root of the Greek word *peittakos*, a parrot. Peacocks are not found so far to the north, and the situation of Ophir must be fixed by the gold mines.

14—17. (14) *one year*, one particular year, not year by year. This was the turning point in Sol.'s estrangement fr. God. "In the pomp of such ceremonies, amid bursts of rejoicing melody, the people began to believe that not even the Pharaohs of Egypt, or the Tyrian kings with 'every precious stone as their covering,' could show a more glorious pageant of royal state."—*Exp. B.* *six . . gold*, by one estimate equal to more than \$15,000,000. (15) *merchantsmen*, or retailers; ambassadors have been suggested. *the spice merchants*, the large wholesale traffickers who acted as the king's agents. As the word, "spice," is not in the Heb., the *R. V.* trans. "and the traffic of the merchants." *Arabia*, or the *mingled people*, tributary tribes. 2 Chr. xvii. 11. *governors*, officers who ruled under authority, not as kings. (16) *targets*, large long shields coated with gold.^e *beaten*, out into plates for coating. (17) *shields*, a smaller kind.^f *forest, etc.*, ch. vii. 2.

The shields of King Solomon and our Shield.—I. Those of Solomon were—1. Numerous; 2. Costly; 3. Penetrable; 4. Stored away from their wearers; 5. Worn only on state occasions; 6. Worn, not by the king, but by his guard. II. Our shield is—1. One—the Lord God is the sun and shield; 2. A free gift; 3. Impenetrable to even "fiery darts;" 4. Always at hand; 5. Not intended to show but use; 6. Worn by ourselves.

High possibilities.—There is in man a Higher than Love of Happiness; he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness. Was it

not to preach forth this same Higher that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered, bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in Man, and how in the Godlike only he has Strength and Freedom? . . . Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the Everlasting Yea, wherein all contradiction is solved; wherein whoso walks and works it is well with him." — *Carlyle, Sartor Resartus*.

18-23. (18) of ivory, not solid, but veneered with ivory intermingled with gold. (19) round behind, "rounded canopy attached to the back." stays, or arms. lions, figures supporting the arms, emblems of sovereignty, as lion is natural king of beasts. (20) twelve lions, represent. of twelve tribes. "All the tribes had an interest in the royal house and a right of approach to the throne." (21) nothing accounted of, bec. so abundant. (22) at sea, on the Mediter. Tharshish, Tartessus in Spain, a great trading place fr. the earliest times. Did Sol. have two fleets? or is this expression derived from the char. of the craft? Opinion favors two fleets. with, in conjunction with. ivory, or elephants' teeth. apes, a long-tailed monkey. peacocks, may mean parrots. "Wordsworth very justly sees in the mention of these curious beasts and birds a symptom of declension in simplicity and piety, a token that 'wealth had brought with it luxury and effeminacy, and a frivolous, vainglorious love for novel and outlandish objects.'" — *Pul. Com.* (23) all the kings, of his age.

The ivory throne. — A symbol of regal government which should be — I. Righteous in its principles; in order — 1. To maintain the dignity of the throne; 2. To enforce the authority of the law. II. Imposing in its administration. 1. In outward ceremony; 2. In moral significance. III. Beneficent in its aims. — *Barlow*.

True wisdom (vs. 23). — There is no true wisdom that does not rest calmly on a basis of truthfulness of heart, and is not guarded and nurtured by righteousness and purity of life. Man is one — one and indissoluble. The intellect and the conscience are but two names for diverse parts of the one human being — or, rather, they are but two names for diverse workings of the one immortal soul. And though it be possible that a man may be enriched with all earthly knowledge, whilst his heart is the dwelling-place of all corruption, and that, on the other hand, a man may be pure and upright in heart, whilst his head is very poorly furnished, and his understanding very weak, yet these exceptional cases do not touch the great central truth: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding." Go out into the world, I pray you, and strip everything that appeals to you of its disguises, and you will find it true that, where Christ is not, there — let it woo ever so sweetly, and sing ever so melodiously — there is only a siren that tempts you down beneath the sunny surface of pleasure to the black depths below, where she lived on dead men's bones! There is your choice. On the one side there calls you the god-descended, beautiful, and serene Wisdom, with diadem on her brow, and blessing in her hands, and peace upon her lips — a Wisdom behind which Christ stands with face fairer, yet lips fuller still of grace, a heart gentler than the woman-wisdom that Solomon knew of, and hands full of better blessing than any that dawned upon him; and, on the other side, a loud-voiced, clamorous, painted, deceiving harlot, who calls you to herself to stifle you with her poisonous breath. — *A. Maclaren*.

24-29. (24) all the earth, fig. of speech to describe Sol's extensive fame. to, R. V., "the presence of." (25) rate, fixed sum as tribute. (26) bestowed, divided to the several cities: ch. ix. 19. (27) as stones, a strong fig. to produce deep impression of Sol's wealth. sycamore, the fig-mulberry. (28) linen yarn, prob. should be trans. a troop, or company. (29) six hundred, etc., about \$175. kings . . . Hittites, to whom Sol. supplied them. means, i. e., "imported them through Sol's traders."

The wisdom of Solomon (vs. 24). — I. The source of it. (1) God gave it (2) in answer to prayer (3) by use of means. observation, meditation, intercourse with men of other lands. II. Its attractiveness. (1) It was heard of far and wide; (2) People came to hear it, and see its fruit; (3) They presently saw that wisdom, without grace, was not sufficient to keep Solomon from sin.

Useless wealth. — There is a Russian story of one who entered a diamond mine in search of great riches. He filled his pockets with great gems, and then threw them away to make room for larger ones. At length he became

B. C. cir. 953.

his throne
and riches

a "The gilding is to be so understood that only the wood and other metals are covered with gold, and the ivory is inserted within the gilded parts." — *Keil*.

b Two places are supposed. Tartessus in Spain, and Tarsus in Cilicia.

Ps. xlviii. 7; Is. xxxiii. 1; lxi. 19; Jon. 1. 3; Je. x. 9; Eze. xxvii. 12.

When King Demetrius had sacked and razed the city of Megara to the very foundation, he demanded of Stilpo, the philosopher, what losses he had sustained. "None at all," said Stilpo, "for war can make no spoil of virtue." — *Barlow*.

his horses
and chariots

c "These kings were probably Sol.'s vassals, whose armies were at his disposal, if he required their aid." — *Spk. Com.*

De. xvii. 16; Is. xxxi. 1; Ho. xiv. 3.

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"A distinguished man lay on his death-bed, when a great mark of distinction and honor was brought to him. Turning a cold glance on the treasure he would once have clutched with an eager grasp, he said with a sigh, 'Alas! this is a very fine thing in this country; but I am going to a country where it will be of no use to me.'"—*Haven.*

very thirsty, but there was no water there. He heard the flow of rivers, but they were rivers of gems; he hastened forward at the sound of a waterfall, but it was a cascade of jewels. Though very rich in precious stones, he was dying of thirst, and his riches were worse than useless."—*Peloubet.*

Luxury.—

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made

O Luxury! thou curs'd by Heaven's decree!
How do thy potions with insidious joy
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee to sickly greatness grown
Boast of a florid vigor not their own.

At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank, unwieldy woe;
Till, sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

—*Goldsmith, Deserted Village.*

B. C. 950 to 940.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

Solomon's
fall

a De. xvii. 17.

b "Holy Scrip.
recog. Phar.'s
daugh. as his wife.
—the wife of his
youth and of his
better days."—
Wordsworth.

c "There is a tra-
dition recorded by
Menander, that
Sol. married a
daughter of Hi-
ram, king of
Tyre."—*Spk. Com.*

d De. vii. 1-4; Eze.
ix. 1; Ne. xiii. 23.

e "In the E., at
the present day,
the extent of a
man's harem
rises with his
rank; and usually
the king considers
it a sort of duty, a
piece of necessary
state to have
most of all,—more
than any of his
subjects can afford
to maintain."—
Kitto.

his idolatry

f De. xi. 28; xiii.
2; xxviii. 14.

g "Believed to be
the moon-goddess,

1-4. The first 40 vss. of this chap. have no parallel passage in Chron. (1) But, Heb. "and;" "it was in the nature of things that Solomon, when he had imitated all the other surroundings of an Oriental despot, should sink, like other Oriental despots, from sensuousness into sensualism, from sensualism into religious degeneracy and dishonorable enervation."—*Exp. B.* loved, not so much for themselves, but for the honor and glory wh. such a harem would add to his renown. strange women, foreigners,^a who introduced their idolatries into the capital and court. together with, besides,^b the censure does not apply to her. Zidonians, Phœnicians.^c (2) Lord said, Ex. xxxiv. 16.^d The law, mentioning only the Canaanites, covered the Hittites and Zidonians, but the ideal of the law applied equally well to all idolators. clave, intim. that he devoted himself to sensual pleasures to the neglect of religion and government. (3) seven hundred, etc.,^e these numbers are so large, it has been suggested that there is corruption in the text wh. should read 70. princesses, daughters of the kings and governors of tributary nations. (4) old, fifty or fifty-five. Such a self-indulgent life made him prematurely old.

Solomon's fall.—I. The beginning (vss. 1-4). II. The progress (vss. 5-8). III. The end (vss. 9-13). Learn—I. What it teaches:—(1) That for the sinful heart outward prosperity is allied to spiritual dangers; (2) That knowledge is no protection against moral shortcomings. II. How it warns us—(1) To watch; (2) Pray.

The insidiousness of temptation.—Sometimes temptation comes to us like an army with open attack, but more often like a malaria. We breathe in the poisoned air from neighboring marshes; we bring the deadly sewer-gas into our houses by the very triumph of modern conveniences; cesspools in hundreds of yards send up their malaria to enter every open window in summer, and then in winter we shut up every crack and crevice lest God's pure air enter our rooms, to save coal; till our whole systems are poisoned, and in some hour of weakness or overwork suddenly we are consumed with a burning fever. If the fever had come like a deadly serpent, we would have avoided it; if it had come like the north wind, we would have sheltered ourselves from it; if in battle array, we could fight it. But it has come with our daily breath, its footsteps unheard, without knocking at the door, and has insidiously poisoned our whole system before we are aware of our danger.—*Peloubet.*

5-8. (5) went after, not merely permitted idolatry in his capital, but was himself snared by it. Ashtoreth, Astarte, female deity of the Phœnicians.^a Milcom, or Molech. 2 Ki. xxiii. 13. (6) not fully, Sol. never gave up the worship of Jehovah, but blended it with other worship. (7) Chemosh,

supreme deity of Moabites.^a in the hill, afterwards known as Olivet :^b outside the actual city, but opposite Jehovah's temple. (8) all his . . . wives, *i. e.* affording each the opportunity of continuing her native idolatry.

Solomon's life; its spiritual significance (vs. 6).—Amongst the many instructive things which we discover in the life of Solomon are the following:—I. The co-existence of good and evil in the same human soul. II. The energy of the degenerating tendency in human nature. This in Solomon was stronger than—1. The influence of parental piety; 2. His own religious convictions; 3. His own clearest conceptions of duty. III. The utter insufficiency of all earthly good to satisfy the mind.—*Thomas.*

Fallen. —

So fallen ! so lost ! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore !
The glory from his gray hairs gone
For evermore !
Of all we loved and honored, nought
Save power remains ;
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.
All else is gone ; from those great eyes
The soul has fled ;
When faith is lost, and honor dies,
The man is dead.
Then pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame ;
Walk backward with averted gaze,
And hide the shame. — *Whittier.*

9-13. (9) twice, ch. iii. 5; ix. 2. (10) commanded, as ch. vi. 12. (11) Lord said, probably by the prophet Ahijah or Iddo — not in a dream. *rend*, as a tear in a garment divides it into two pieces. *servant*, or one of thy subjects. *Ref.* is to Jeroboam.^c (12) David . . . sake, 2 Sa. vii. 15; 2 Chr. vi. 6. Concrete example of God's mercy and faithfulness. (13) all, the entire number of tribes. one tribe, Judah and including Benj. Jerusalem's, but for this provision the religious capital would have been removed fr. the city of David to Shiloh or Bethel. Mt. Zion, however, was the object of Jehovah's unflinching regard.

Solomon's fall (vs. 9). — Consider — I. Solomon's fall. Notice — 1. How it began; 2. To what an extent it proceeded. He suffered his wives to commit idolatry in the land: he built temples for their gods even in Jerusalem itself; he actually united with them in the worship of their idols; 3. With what aggravations it was attended; 4. With what consequences it was followed. II. The instruction to be gathered from it. 1. That temporal prosperity is very unfavorable for spiritual advancement; 2. That however advanced any man may be in age or piety, he is still in danger of falling; 3. That smaller sins, if not guarded against in time, will issue in the greatest; 4. That every sin we commit is aggravated by the mercies we have received. — *C. Simeon.*

The vanity of power. — "The kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" are absolutely valueless for all the contributions they can lend to human happiness. The autocrats who have been most conspicuous for unchecked power and limitless resources have also been the most conspicuous in misery. We have but to recall Tiberius who, from the enchanted isle which he had degraded into the sty of his infamies, wrote to his servile senate that "all the gods and goddesses were daily destroying him;" or Septimius Severus, who, rising step by step from a Dalmatian peasant and common soldier to be emperor of the world, remarked with pathetic conviction, "*Omnia fui et nihil expedit*;" or Abderrahman the Magnificent, who, in all his life of success and prosperity, could only count fourteen happy days; or Charles V., over-eating himself in his monastic retreat at San Yuste in Estremadura; or Alexander, dying "as a fool dieth;" or Louis XIV., surrounded by a darkening horizon, and disillu- sioned into infinite *ennui* and chagrin; or Napoleon I., saying, "I regard life with horror," and contrasting his "abject misery" with the adored and beloved dominion of Christ, who was meek and lowly of heart. Napoleon confessed that, even in the zenith of his empire, and the fullest flush of his endless victories, his days were consumed in vanity and his years in trouble. Nothing is more certain than that, if earthly happiness is to be found at all, it

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embodying the idea of productive power. She has also been identified with the Assyrian divinity *Ishtar*, who represents the planet *Venus*."

^a "Wargod of Moab." — *Stanley.*

^b "Hence that part of Olivet was called the high-place of Tophet. (Je. vii. 30-34) And the hill is still known as the Mount of Offence, or the Mount of Corruption." — *Jamieson.*

Je. xxxii. 35; 2 Ki. xxii. 13, 14; Je. xlviii. 13.

"The shadows of our own desires stand between us, and our better angels, and thus their brightness is eclipsed." — *Dickens.*

God is angry with Solomon

^c 1 Ki. xii. 20; 1 Ki. xi. 30, 31.

It is said of Tully when he was banished from Italy, and of Demosthenes when he was banished from Athens, that they wept every time they looked towards their own country; and is it strange that a poor deserted believer should mourn every time he looks heavenward?

"The soul once tainted with so foul a crime, no more shall glow with friendship's ballow'd ardor; those holy beings whose superior care guides erring mortals to the path of virtue, affrighted at impiety like thine, resign their charge to baseness and to ruin." — *Johnson.*

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can only be found in righteousness and truth; and if even these do not bring earthly happiness, they securely give us a blessedness which is deeper and more eternal. — *Farrar*.

Hadad

a "These adversaries must have constantly reminded him that he owed the quiet possession of the throne, as well as the peaceful sovereignty of the whole kingdom inherited from his father, only to the grace, truth, and long-suffering of the Lord." — *Keil*.

b Nu xxiv. 18, 19;
1 Chr. xviii. 12, 13.

Hadad and Pharaoh

c The Vatican Sept. reads, out of the city of Midian.

d "Borders on the E. on Edom, on the N. on south extremity of Pal., and is the most northern district of the Sinaitic peninsula: the wilderness lying between Idumæa and Egypt." — *Keil*.

e "Also name of a city, Eze. xxx. 18; and of an Eg. goddess." — *Wordsworth*.

Rezon

f 2 Sa. x. 16-19.

Jeroboam

g From the Heb. *rabab*, to be many, and *am*, people.

h "Some think this means that he closed up the vacant space between Zion and Moriah: as there had been no hostile incursions to make breaches." — *Ewald; Keil*.

14-17. (14) stirred up, overruling the ambition of Hadad so as to make him his agent in punishing Sol.^a The writer collects in one passage the hist. of Sol's. adversaries. Hadad, a title rather than a name. king's seed, of royal family. (15) in Edom,^b 2 Sa. viii. 14. (16) every male, evidently meaning all he could find. (17) Egypt, the nearest country in which he might hope for protection.

Slight backsliding. — At Preston, at Malines, at many such places, the railroad lines go gently asunder: so fine is the angle, that at first the paths are almost parallel, and it seems of small moment which you select. But a little farther one of them turns a corner, or dives into a tunnel; and, now that the speed is full, the angle opens up, and, at the rate of a mile a minute, the divided convoy flies asunder; one passenger is on the way to Italy, another to the swamps of Holland; one will step out in London, the other in the Irish Channel. It is not enough that you look for the better country; you must keep the way: and a small deviation may send you entirely wrong. — *J. Hamilton*.

18-22. (18) Midian, prob. a city so called.^c Paran, desert of *El Tih*, south of Judæa,^d Ge. xiv. 6. victuals, regular allowance for his support. (19) Tahpenes, prob. head, or origin of the age. A name not found on the Eg. monuments.^e (20) Genubath, not noticed in Script. weaned, etc., a great event in E. "A significant token of his adoption into the royal family." household, the Egyptian seraglio. (21) let me, a refugee could not leave court without the king's permission: esp. one who had become the king's brother-in-law. (22) what, etc., evidently Hadad hid his real intentions.

Punishment of backsliding. — When Amurath, emperor of the Turks, had notice given him that a doctor of law had cheated a poor pilgrim that was gone to Mecca, and at the man's return would not restore to him the jewels he had entrusted with him, but resolutely denied that he had received any such things from him, the emperor one day, in a third person, asked the doctor what he thought a man that had notoriously betrayed his trust might justly deserve. He answered, it was fit that so notorious a villain should be pounded alive in a mortar. He had no sooner said the word but the emperor gave order that so it should be done to him who had so notoriously cozened the poor pilgrim. — *A. Hornick*.

23-25. (23) Rezon, a genuine Aramæan name. Hadadezer, 2 Sa. viii. 3-12.^f Zobah, 1 Sa. xiv. 47. (24) band, R. V., "troop," — of fugitives who escaped fr. the slaughter of Zobah by desertion fr. Hadadezer. Rezon trained them till they were able to dislodge the Israelites fr. Damascus. and reigned, i. e. he reigned. Damascus, Ge. xiv. 15. (25) abhorred, revolted fr. it, and vexed it. "Thus with Hadad in the south to plunder his commercial caravans, and Rezon on the north to threaten his communication with Tiphseh, and alarm his excursions to his pleasantries in Lebanon, Solomon was made keenly to feel that his power was rather an unsubstantial pageant than a solid dominion." — *Exp. B.*

Misery of a backslider. — After poor Sabat, an Arabian, who had professed faith in Christ by means of the labors of the Rev. H. Martyn, had apostatised from Christianity, and written in favor of Mohammedanism, he was met at Malacca by the late Rev. Dr. Milne, who proposed to him some very pointed questions, in reply to which, he said: "I am unhappy! I have a mountain of burning sand on my head. When I go about, I know not what I am doing." It is indeed "an evil thing, and bitter to forsake the Lord our God." — *W. Nicholson*.

26-29. (26) Jeroboam,^g whose people are many. servant, state officer, cf. vs. 28. Ephrathite, Ephraimite; 1. Sa. i. 1. Zereda, comp. Ju. vii. 22: 1 Ki. vii. 46; 2 Chr. iv. 17. lifted, etc., rebelled, raised a sedition. (27) cause, or occasion. built Millo, ch. ix. 15. breaches,^h wh. time had made in the walls. (28) mighty, etc., expression not confined to warlike prowess: a man of such skill and activity that he was marked out for promotion.

charge, forced labor required for his own tribe. (29) Shilonite,^a of Shiloh, ch. xiv. 2-4.

Backsliding. — Terrible is the falling away of any who make profession and act quite contrary to conviction. A lady here (Huddersfield) thus relates her own case: "Once Mr. — and I were both in the right way. I drew him into the world again. I am now the most miserable of beings. When I lie down I fear I shall awake in hell. When I go out full dressed, and seem to have all the world can give me, I am ready to sink under the terrors of my own mind. What greatly increases my misery is the remembrance of the dying speech of my own sister, who told me she had stifled convictions and obstinately fought against light to enjoy the company of the world. 'Sister,' said she, 'I die without hope. Beware this be not your case!' 'But, indeed,' said Mrs. —, 'I fear it will.'" — C. Venn.

30—35. (30) rent it, acting his message. Comp. ch. xi. 11. (31) ten pieces, to represent 10 tribes. Obs. that he only had 9 tribes, and a share of Levi. (32) one tribe, vs. 13. (33) Ashtoreth, vss. 5-7. (34) the whole, trans. *aught of the kingdom*.^b (35) his son's, ch. xii. 15.

The kingdom divided. — I. The one new garment represented the one undivided kingdom. II. The twelve pieces represented the twelve tribes. III. The ten represented those who revolted from Rehoboam. Note—God's tender remembrance of David (vs. 32). Note—The certain punishment of idolatry (vs. 33).

The emptiness of godless pleasure. — "How was it," I said (to the poet Robert Ferguson), "that you were the gayest in the party last night?" "I do not know that I can better answer you," he replied, "than by telling you a singular dream I had. I dreamed that I had suddenly quitted the world, and was journeying, by a long and dreary passage, to the place of final punishment. A blue, dismal light glimmered along the lower wall of the vault, and from the darkness above, where there flickered a thousand undefined shapes, I could hear deeply-drawn sighs, and hollow groans, and convulsive sobbings, and the prolonged moans of an unceasing anguish. I was aware, however, though I knew not how, that these were but the expressions of a lesser misery. I went on and on, and the vault widened; and the light increased, and the sounds changed. There were loud laughers, and shouts of triumph, and, in brief, all the thousand mingled tones of a gay and joyous revel. 'Can these,' I exclaimed, 'be the sounds of misery when at the deepest?' 'Bethink thee,' said a shadowy form beside me, — 'bethink thee, if it be so on earth.' And as I remembered that it was so, and bethought me of the mad revels of plague-stricken cities, I awoke." — Hugh Miller.

36—40. (36) light, 2 Sa. xxi. 17.^c "Dav.'s line was to last, though most of the kingdom was taken from his descendants." (37) soul desireth, as a king all his ideas and purposes would be realized; this indicates that ambitions were already working in Jer.'s mind. (38) if, the conditions of Div. blessing made with prev. kings are repeated even more forcibly to Jer.^d (39) this, failing to keep covenant. afflict, punish; or rather chastise. (40) sought to kill, it appears that Jer. could not wait his time, but attempted rebellion, wh. proved premature. Shishak, or Sheshonk:^e his portraiture still exists on the walls of Karnak.

Lost opportunities. — One of the saddest things in the future for those who reject God will be to see two pictures ever before them; one, the picture of what God meant them to be, — the beautiful, useful, happy life that was possible for them, drawn out in all its various features of exquisite loveliness and glory; the other, the picture of what they are. To see those pictures side by side, and know that we might have been so happy and so good, and that it is our own fault alone that we are not, — this alone would make a hell. — Peloubet.

"Of all sad words of tongue or pen
The saddest are these, it might have been."

41—43. (41) book, etc., this may be the court history of the reign; it furnished materials, but has not itself survived.^f (42) forty years, comp. reigns of Saul and David. (43) slept, etc., the usual formula of a king's death. No hint is here given of his repentance. Rehoboam, (*enlarger of the people*)^g so far as known his only son.

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^a "As Ahijah afterwards rebuked Jeroboam for his sins (1 Ki. xiv. 6-16), he cannot be regarded as in any way concurring at the means which Jeroboam took for the attainment of the end wh. the prophet foretold." — Wordsworth.

Ahijah predicts the division of the kingdom

^b "The Heb. will bear either sense, but the context requires this." — Spk. Com.

The most important part of your education is that which you now give yourselves.

Jeroboam flies to Egypt

^c Ps. xviii. 28; cxxxii. 17.

"The lighting of the light is a figure of prosperity, as the extinguishing of it is a figure of adversity." Job xviii. 5, 6; Pr. xx. 20." — Keil.

^d 2 Sa. vii. 11; Ex. xix. 5; De. xv. 4, 5; Zec. iii. 7.

^e "About this time a new dynasty had arisen in Eg. with very diff. feelings towards Sol." — Ewald.

Solomon's death

^f 2 Chr. ix. 29.

^g Rechabam, fr. Heb. rachab, in

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one of its forms, to make wide, and am, people, 1 Ki. xiv. 21, 31; 2 Chr. xii. 13.

Rehoboam

the deputation

α Jos. xxiv. 1, 32; Ju. ix. 1-57.

β "Their representatives approached the new king with a firm but respectful statement of their grievances,—the enormous exactions of the late king, and the expenditure of the revenues of the kingdom on the royal establishments." And made the meat of his table heavy. LXX. trans.¹¹ Stanley.

the advice given

c Pr. xi. 14; xv. 22; xxiv. 6.

d "Whips having leaden balls at the end of their lashes, with hooks projecting from them."—Gesenius.

The best rules to form a young man are to talk little, to hear much, to reflect alone upon what has passed in company, to distrust one's own opinions, and value others that deserve it.—Sir W. Temple.

the advice taken

e 2 Chr. xxii. 7; xxv. 20; Acts ii. 23.

A French counselor, being asked to lay down some general rules for government, took a piece of paper

The eclipse of Solomon.—So long as he walked with God he was of importance for the historian; but as soon as he forsook God, and was consequently forsaken of his wisdom, he becomes as insignificant as an empty vessel which has once held sweet perfume, or a piece of carbon through which the electric current has ceased to flow. The sunshine has left that peak, and shines on other summits. Never was there a sadder eclipse.—Maclaren.

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

1-5. (1) went, "after a prior coronation at Jerus." Rehoboam had none of the recommendations of his father or grandfather, and the influential persons in the nation availed themselves of the solemn enthronization at Shechem to put forward their desires.—*Cam. B.* all Israel, the name "Israel" already identified with 10 northern tribes. Shechem,^a now *Nablûs*: on flank of Mt. Gerizim; capital of tribe of Ephraim. make . . king, no settled purpose of revolt led Israel to meet Rehob. at Shechem. (3) in Egypt, as ch. xi. 40. heard, of death of Sol. wh. made him free to return. 2 Chr. x. 2. (3) called, informed and invited him. (4) yoke, referring to the taxation and forced labor of Sol.'s reign.^b (5) three days, time necessary for consultation.

A national deputation.—I. Who commissioned it? The nation. Hence worthy of respect. II. Who constituted it? Men trusted by the people. Hence should be treated with courtesy. III. What was the work to be done? Crave a mitigation of taxation. Hence the wish of the people to be considered. IV. How was it received? Kindly. The king would not commit himself to a rash and impromptu reply.

Servants honored for the sender's sake.—As Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, the late Duke of Wellington always made it a point of receiving and entertaining the judges when they arrived in the county on circuit. He felt that the judges represented the sovereign, and no claim of society, no call even of duty, was strong enough to hinder him from paying the same marks of respect which his loyalty would have induced him to pay to the sovereign had she been personally present.

6-11. (6) old men,^c senators; men of wide experience. (7) be a servant, i. e. make prudent concessions: yield a little to their dictation. For once be ruled by the people. The old men wisely estimated the difficulty of the situation. (8) young men, his companions. "The jeunesse dorée of a luxurious and hypocritical epoch, the aristocratic idlers in whom the insolent self-indulgence of an enervated society had expelled the old spirit of simple faithfulness." (9) give ye, what was to be expected from giddy, inexperienced young men, just excited by seeing their companion on the throne? (10) my little, finger is not in Heb. (11) scorpions, a kind of whip, knotted scourge.^d

Rehoboam's infatuation.—Seen I. In his refusal to hearken to the people. 1. They had assembled to honor him. 2. They had a not unreasonable reservation. II. In the answer he gave them. III. In the circumstances attending the answer. 1. It was deliberately and advisedly given. 2. He trusted in his fortune.—J. A. Macdonald.

Popular hatred.—Let no man slight the scorns and hate of the people. When it is unjust, it is a wolf; but when it is just, a dragon. Though the tyrant, seated high, does think he may contemn their malice; yet he ought to remember that they have many hands, while he hath one neck only. If he, being single, be dangerous to many, those many will to him alone be dangerous in their hate. The sands of Africa, though they be but barren dust and lightness, yet, angered by the winds, they bury both the horse and rider alive. Against the hatred of a multitude there is no fence but what must come by miracle; nor wealth, nor wit, nor bands of armed men can keep them safe that have made themselves the hate of an enraged multitude. It is thunder, lightning, storm and hail together.—Feltham.

12-15. (12) Jeroboam, the Sept. here as in vs. 3 omits "Jeroboam and." (13) roughly, insultingly, in overbearing tone. (15) from the Lord,^e lit. it was a turning brought about by the Lord. The wilful folly of the king and his companions wrought the fulfilment of Div. prophecy.

The adjourned meeting.—I. The king's haughty, harsh, imperious manner. II. The effect produced—(a) On the deputies, probably they secretly rejoiced at the occasion thus offered for rebellion; (b) On the aged counselors. Their

sorrow at the headstrong conduct of the king; (c) On the nation. A great war born of a few rash words.

A judge's caution.—Judge Buller, when in the company of a young gentleman of sixteen, cautioned him against being led astray by the example or persuasion of others, and said, "If I had listened to the advice of some of those who called themselves my friends when I was young, instead of being a Judge of the King's Bench, I should have died long ago a prisoner in the King's Bench."

16-20. (16) what portion, comp. 2 Sa. xx. 1. "We receive naught fr. David; why yield aught to his seed?" to your tents, go home and prepare for war. see . . David, the seed of David should hereafter rule over only the tribe of Judah. Plain intimation of intended entire separation. (17) dwelt, etc., had taken up residence within the limits of Judah. This included a large portion of the tribe of Simeon. (18) Adoram, the tax-collector.^a Whether to coerce, to collect taxes, or to appease Israel, is difficult to decide. stoned him, in a popular tumult. It was intended to be an act of defiance. made speed, really fled in fear of his own life. (19) rebelled, marg. fell away. (20) all Israel, all the people heard on the ret. of the rep.'s fr. Shechem. made him king, by popular election and anointing, probably at Shechem.

The rending of the kingdom.—I. The human element. 1. The seed of evil sown in one generation bears fruit in the next; 2. There is danger in following the prompting of foolish inexperience and headstrong self-will. II. The Divine element. 1. God ordains the laws through which human agencies produce the results He wishes; Though the agencies be evil, He brings about good results.

The value of losses.—Too long a period of fair weather in the Italian valleys creates such a superabundance of dust that the traveler sighs for a shower. He is smothered, his eyes smart, the grit even grates between his teeth. So prosperity, long continued, breeds a plague of dust even more injurious, for it almost blinds the spirit. A Christian making money fast is just a man in a cloud of dust,—it will fill his eyes if he is not careful. A Christian full of worldly care is in the same condition. Afflictions might almost be prayed for if we never had them. —*Spurgeon*.

21-24. (21) Benjamin, not mentioned in the matter before; the tribe having claims to the throne would feel set aside as much by Ephraim as by Judah. It was the glory of Benjamin that Jerusalem, the joy of the whole earth, the civil and religious capital of the nation, was largely within its border. It was also on the boundary line of Judah. This fact had, no doubt, brought the two tribes into close contact, and had given them interests in common; and now Benjamin could not fail to see that separation from Judah would mean the loss of Jerusalem. —*Pul. Com.* (22) Shemaiah, 2 Chr. xi. 2; xii. 5-8. man of God, De. xxxiii. 1; frequently used in Bk. of Kings. (23) remnant, "the children of Israel wh. dwelt in the cities of Judah." (24) from me,^b a Div. providence as a Div. punishment.

African rite of brotherhood.—Capt. Burton, in his work on Africa, tells us the following singular and beautiful rite which he found among the people. Two persons wish to take upon themselves what they call "The Brother Rite." To do this, they sit down face to face, with their legs crossed, holding in their laps their implements of war. A sheep or goat is then killed, and its heart roasted and brought to them, and a half given to each. One of them then takes a knife, and opens a vein on the left breast of the other, over the heart; and, as the blood flows, he smears his piece of heart in the blood and eats it; the other doing in the same manner with him. Next, each catches some of the blood of the other, and rubs it into his own wound; and the rite is now complete. This rite is designed to signify that henceforth they are halves or parts of each other. Each, through his own blood thus eaten, and thus absorbed by the other's veins, is considered as living in and of the other. Henceforth, should either be in any trouble, the other is to feel "It is myself that is in trouble," and thus do for the other whatsoever in like circumstances he would do for himself. —*S. C. Wilks*.

25-29. (25) built, prob. fortified and beautified: restored it,^c apparently with idea of making it his capital. Penuel,^d Ge. xxxii. 30, on east side of

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and wrote on the top of it "moderation," in the middle of the leaf "moderation," and at the bottom "moderation."

the rebellion of Israel

^a Comp. 2 Sa. xx. 24; 1 Ki. iv. 6; v. 14.

"There never was a saint yet that grew proud of his fine feathers, but what the Lord plucked them out by and by. There never was an angel that had pride in his heart, but he lost his wings."—*Spurgeon*.

Rehoboam is restrained from war

^b 2 Chr. xiii. 4-12.

"Forgiveness to the injured does belong; but they ne'er pardon who have done the wrong."—*Dryden*.

"Have love! not love alone for one, But man as man thy brother call; And scatter like the circling sun, Thy charities on all."—*Schiller*.

Jeroboam's golden calves

^c Ju. ix. 49.

^d "It was like a key to the great

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caravan road wh. led over Gilead to Damascus, and also of the road by Tainor (Palmyra) to the Euphrates and Mesopotamia." — Wordsworth.

"It is suggested that they were imitations of the 2 cherubims that guarded the ark." Spk. Com.

Jeroboam establishes idolatry

a Heb. fr. the ends of the people, meaning from all ranks.

b Nu. iii. 6, 10; 2 Ki. xvii. 33; Eze. xlv. 7, 8.

c2 Chr. xxvi. 16. "Jeroboam was evidently a shrewd and clear-sighted worldly politician." — Porter.

"Pretty good is likely to mean awful bad! It is a bad thing to stop short of the best when a little more exertion would secure it."

Jeroboam's hand is withered

d Nu. xix 16; 2 Ki. xxiii. 16.

"We belong to another state than that in which we live, to a divine commonwealth; and a man is to

Jordan. (26) in his heart, or these were his thoughts, 1 Sa. xxvii 1. "He clearly foresaw that if the people went up thither, as in time past, three times a year, to keep the feasts, the religious sentiment would in time reassert itself and sweep him and his new dynasty away. With one religion, one sanctuary, one priesthood, there could not long be two kingdoms. People who had so much in common would, sooner or later, complete the unity of their national life under a common sovereign." — *Pul. Com.* (27) go up, as bound to do three times each year. The feasts had been appointed partly to preserve the national unity. (28) took counsel, of his leading supporters. calves, there can be little doubt, consequently, that the "calves" were imitations of the colossal cherubim of Solomon's temple, in which the ox or calf was probably the *forma præcipua* (ch. vi. 23). thy gods, Ex. xxxii. 4, the plural is used here as elsewhere for dignity, so that the proper translation is "behold thy God," i.e. Jehovah. (29) Bethel, in the S. Ge. xii. 8. Dan, in the N. Jos. xix. 47. "Dan had been since the earliest days, the seat of a chapelry and ephod served by the lineal descendants of Moses in unbroken succession; Bethel was associated with some of the nation's holiest memories since the days of their forefather Israel." — *Exp. B.*

Idols. — The missionaries among the Gentoos are obliged to use various methods to attract their attention to Divine things. One day a missionary took with him a little boy from the school to a shady place, where many people were passing, and set him to read aloud; when some one began to listen, he conversed with the boy about what he was reading. The subject was the absurdity of idolatry; and a Brahmin in the crowd said, "My little fellow, why do you speak so lightly of the gods of your fathers?" The boy replied, in a loud voice, "Speak lightly of them! Why, they have eyes, and see not; they have mouths, and speak not; they have ears, and hear not; they are vanity and a lie; and why not speak lightly of them?" The Brahmin walked away confounded.

30-33. (30) became, not absolutely intended to set up a new religion, but to this it inevitably led. "The sin of which he was guilty was the sin of worldly policy. 'The sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin,' is the sin again and again repeated in the policy, half-worldly, half-religious, which has prevailed through large tracts of ecclesiastical history." (31) house of high places, a temple. It is called *house, etc.*, in contempt. *lowest, etc.*, fr. people indiscriminately, not exclusively fr. tribe of Levi.^b The Levites in a body went over to Rehoboam. (32) feast, as substitute for the feasts held at Jerus. Prob. imitation of feast of tabern., but set a month later. he offered, assuming rights of priest. (33) he offered, obs. the repetition.^c To allay the fears of his newly ordained priesthood, Jerob. himself offers the first of the sacrifices, cf. Lev. x.; Num. xviii. 7, 22. the month, etc., the entire system of Jeroboam receives its condemnation in these words. His main fault was that he left a ritual and a worship where all was divinely authorized, for ceremonies and services which were wholly of his own devising. Not being a prophet, he had no authority to introduce religious innovations." — *Spk. Com.*

Sins or hell. — Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in the beginning of the twelfth century, said, "If I could see the shame of sin on the one hand, and the pain of hell on the other, and must, of necessity, choose one, I would rather be thrust into hell without sin, than go to heaven with sin."

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-5. (1) man of God, named *Sadon*, by Josephus. "Nearly all that we know of Jeroboam is made up of two stories, both of which are believed by critics to date from a long subsequent age, but which the compiler of the Book of Kings introduced into his narrative from their intrinsic force and religious instructiveness." — *Exp. B.* by the word, etc., encouraged and inspired by the Spirit of the Lord. by the altar, on the ascending platform. (2) Josiah, 2 Ki. xxiii. 17. men's bones,^d wh. would be defilement and disgrace for it. (3) sign, a remarkable event connected with the prophet's word, wh. would confirm his further message. (4) put forth, stretch it out as if to seize the prophet. dried up, shriveled. (5) rent, cracked so that the ashes fell through.

Jeroboam's idolatry reprov'd (vs. 4). — Notice — I. Jeroboam's unbelieving expedient. Scarcely was he raised to the throne, before he established idolatry throughout his dominions. To this he was instigated by unbelief. II. His vindictive wrath. The sending of the prophet from Judah, instead of humbling, rather incensed him. III. His exemplary punishment. Forced to ask for the prayers of him whom he had just before endeavored to destroy. — *C. Simeon.*

The punishment of presumption. — Valens, the Arian emperor, would have signed a sentence of banishment against Basil, but could not by reason of a sudden trembling of his right hand, so that he could not write one letter of his own name, but for anger tore the paper in pieces, and left Basil alone. There is a story of one who, hearing perjury condemned by a godly preacher, and how it never escaped unpunished, said in a bravery, "I have often forsworn myself, and yet my right hand is no shorter than my left." These words he had scarce uttered, when such an inflammation arose in that hand, that he was forced to go to the chirurgeon and cut it off lest it should have infected the whole body: and so it became shorter than the other. — *Trapp.*

6-10. (7) *refresh*, with bath and food, things needed after a journey. *reward*, such were usually given to prophets, as Balaam.^a (8) *half thine house*, Nu. xxii. 18. (9) *charged me*, "the prophet's refusal to participate was a practical and forcible disclaimer of all fellowship, a virtual excommunication, a public repudiation of the calf-worshippers." (10) *another way*, a further test of his obedience. He that calls another to duty should himself be faithful.

An incorruptible patriot. — Charles II. sent Lord Treasurer Danby to Andrew Marvel, with offers of protection; the lord found him, and assured him that he was sent from his majesty, to know what he could do to serve him. "It is not in his majesty's power to serve me," said Mr. Marvel; when the lord answered, "that his majesty, from the just sense he had of his merit alone, desired to know whether there was any place at court he would be pleased with?" To which he replied, "that he could not with honor accept the offer, since if he did, he must be either ungrateful to the king in voting against him, or false to his country in supporting the measures of the court." — *Montagu's Essays.*

11-15. (11) *old prophet*, name unknown. He was evidently acting from bad motives in thus interfering with his fellow-prophet.^b (12) *What way*, he would seek to remove fr. Israel the interdict implied by the prophet's refusal to eat with the king. (13) *ass*, prob. too old to walk far, and wanted to overtake the traveler. (15) *me*, thy fellow-prophet.

A false prophet. — At the time of the noted imposture of the "Holy Maid of Kent," who pretended that God had revealed that in case Henry VIII. should divorce Queen Catharine of Arragon, and take another wife during her life, his royalty would not be of a month's duration, one Peto, who appears to have been an accomplice, was preaching before Henry, at Greenwich, and in the same strain with the nun, did not scruple to tell his majesty to his face that he had been deceived by many lying prophets, while himself as a true Micaiah, warned him that the dogs should lick his blood as they had licked the blood of Ahab. Henry bore this outrageous insult with moderation, but to undeceive the people he appointed Dr. Curwin to preach before him on the Sunday following, who justified the king's proceedings, and branded Peto with the epithets of "rebel, slanderer, dog and traitor." Curwin, however, was interrupted by a friar, who called him "a lying prophet, who sought to alter the succession of the crown," and proceeded so virulently to abuse him that the king was obliged to interpose, and command him to be silent. Peto and the friar were afterwards summoned before the king and council, but were only reprimanded for their insolence. — *Percy Anec.*

16-19. (16) *may not*, evidently *duty* was contending with *inclination*. I may not, but I should like to. (18) *an angel*, "the old prophet does not lay claim to so solemn a message, as that which the prophet of Judah had received directly 'by the word of the Lord.' And in this the Judean prophet's sin lay that he did not seek as much confirmation for the reversed order as he had for that which came to him at first." — *Cam. B.* he lied, surely he could have done so only to curry favor with the king. (19) *went back*, inclination getting its sway by help of this new supposed prophetic message.

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remember his higher citizenship as he walks the streets of his earthly city. — Emerson.

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the withered hand restored

^a Nu. xxii. 18: 1 Sa. ix. 7, 8; 1 Ki. xiv. 3; 2 Ki. v. 5; viii. 8, 9.

Everything has had its thought. Every thought might have its thing if man had practical faith and courage.

"Nemesis is one of God's hand-maids." — Algar.

the old prophet of Bethel

^b "The invit. of the proph. could only spring either fr. the intention to tempt him, that is, to bring him to ruin, and to take fr. his prediction its effect on king and people; or the desire to refresh himself by intercourse with him, and derive profit fr. his prophetic gift for his own spiritual life." — Keil.

"The first and worst of all frauds is to cheat oneself. All sin is easy after that." — Bailey.

the true prophet is deceived

^c Je. xxlii. 16, 17, 32; Eze. xiii. 6, 7.

"Poverty and wealth have dif-

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ferent temptations, but they are equally strong. The rich are tempted to pride and insolence; the poor to jealousy and envy. The envious and discontented poor invariably become haughty and overbearing when rich; for selfishness is equally at the bottom of these opposite evils. Indeed, it is at the bottom of all manner of evils." — *Mrs. Child.*

he is reproved for his disobedience

a "God caught him in his own snare; He made him the instrument of declaring the prophet's sin and God's righteousness." — *Wordsworth.*

b Ge. xlvii. 30; xlix. 29; 1. 25; 2 Sa. xix. 37.

he is killed by a lion

c 2 Ki. ii. 24; Eze. ix. 6; 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.

d See *Kemble's Ch. Year. Eighth Sunday after Trinity.*

and buried in a cave

e 1 Ki. xiii. 1-6.

f Comp. Mat. xxvii. 60.

g 2 Ki. xxiii. 17.

h "He may have had some superstitious hope of being benefited at the resurrection by being in the same grave with a man of God." — *Jamieson.*

i He may also have feared the

The disobedient prophet (vs. 18). — This history may teach us — I. That whenever God has plainly declared His will, no grounds of supposed expediency, and no less fully authenticated declarations, however they may profess to proceed from Him, should ever induce us to depart from it. II. That we cannot judge of a man's eternal state from the way in which he may be taken out of this world. III. That we should not be induced heedlessly to follow any guile, whatever may be his pretensions, or whatever his apparent sanctity. IV. That no command of God is to be lightly regarded, and that the nearer people are to God the more certainly will their transgressions be punished. — *T. Grantham.*

Satan's devices. — The wild hyena, which shows great cunning in tracking its prey, and deceiving the shepherd and his dogs, is just as simple and stupid when required to protect itself. It lies silent and motionless when the hunter approaches its hole, imagines that it is not seen, and allows him to fasten a cord to its foot. This he does with great gentleness, but has no sooner bound it to a tree than he loudly summons his comrades to the spot, and in spite of its rage, and all its attempts to escape, they soon put it to death. The devil plays the part of this hunter to the ungodly. He always pipes to them in soft accents, "Great is the Divine mercy; there is no danger; all will be forgiven." No sooner, however, has he bound them with his cords, and received the signal from God, than he changes his tone: "Thou cursed fellow," he cries, "thou despiser of the Most High, woe be to thy soul. Thou has served me well, and shall not want thy wages!" — *Gotthold.*

20—22. (20) **came**, really he had this intimation from God. **disobeyed**, "the very unfaithfulness of this accredited messenger of the Most High, and the instant punishment it provoked, became part of the Divine protest against the new régime, against the unfaithfulness of Israel." — *Pul. Com.* (22) **camest back**, this act of disobedience, if known by Jer., would harden him in his idea that this had not been a true prophet. **sepulchre, etc.**, this was one of the earnest desires of the Hebrews.^b

Trust in God. — When poor Captain Allen Gardiner lay starving to death in that Antarctic isle with his wretched companions, he yet painted on the entrance of the cave which had sheltered them, and near to which his remains were found, a hand pointing downward at the words, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him." — *Farrar.*

23—27. (23) **the ass**, evidently a second one, see vs. 27. **brought back**, see vs. 17-19. (24) **a lion**, from the wood near Bethel.^c **carcase**, word first used Le. v. 2. The singular features of this event indicate a Divine miracle. The lion slays, but does not eat. The ass remains, and is untouched. The lion even watches beside his victim. (25) **men passed**, yet were unmolested. (26) **disobedient**,^d he does not add, as he should have done, "thro' my seductions." **torn, marg. broken.** (27) **the ass**, prob. one mentioned, vs. 13.

Temptation unsuccessful and successful. — I. A strong temptation was resisted. II. A new temptation was successful. How came this temptation to succeed? 1. The conquest of one evil may only bring on the assault of another; 2. Lingered near scenes of temptation may imperil us fatally. III. A trivial act of disobedience was a great sin. IV. A tragic punishment was inflicted. — *A. Rowland.*

Profession and practice of obedience. — Pharnaces sent a crown to Cæsar; at the same time he rebelled against him. But Cæsar returned the crown and this message back: "Let him return to his obedience first, and then I will accept the crown by way of recognizance." Thus God will not be crowned with our bare profession, except we crown that with a suitable conversation.

28—34. (28) **found, etc.**, as vs. 24, 25. These peculiar circumstances caused the matter to be generally talked about; and so news of the prophet's message to Jeroboam was widely spread.^e (29) **upon the ass**, the one waiting beside it. (30) **his own grave**, families often possessed their own tombs hewn in the rocks.^f There seems also to have been a column erected near the entrance.^g (31) **beside his bones**,^h i. e. in the next cell, or shelf. (32) **saying, etc.**, ch. xiii. 1-6. Samaria, as Samaria dates its existence fr. the house of Omri (1 Ki. xvi. 24), the compiler of Kings — prob. after the siege of Josiah — translated the prophet's meaning into the language of his day. (33) **lowest, etc.**, see ch. xii. 31. **consecrated, lit. filled his hand.** (34) **sin**, here meaning cause of suffering and desolation.

Judgment and its result. — I. Mercy displayed in the midst of judgment. 1. The prophet's body was preserved from dishonor. 2. The message he had borne received added weight from his punishment. 3. He still preached in his grave. II. The punishment of unfaithfulness. God demands "a pure offering." III. Bethel's answer to God's warnings. 1. The prophet's fear. 2. The king's unconcern. — *J. Urquhart.*

Danger in the hour of success. — It is not always in the midst of the storm that the mariner finds his greatest danger, but in the deceitful and uncertain calm when some sudden and unexpected gust may strike his vessel unprepared. It was only lately that the *Eurydice*, a noble British man-of-war, after successfully navigating the world, was approaching the shores of England with every stitch of canvas spread, when her sails were smitten with a terrific blast, and in a few moments she heeled over and sank to the bottom of the sea, with hundreds of brave seamen whose hearts were beating with joy in the near prospect of home! (1 Cor. x. 12). — *Barlow.*

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

1-4. (1) **Abijah**, (*Jehovah is my father*). This name prob. given in Egypt before the schism. fell sick, considered one of the penalties of the king's disobedience. (2) **disguise thyself**,^a if she went as the queen Jer. felt sure of unfavorable answer. **Shiloh**, Jos. xviii. 1.^b **Ahijah**, ch. xi. 29. (3) **loaves, etc.**,^c these were such a present as a poor woman might bring. **cracknels, cakes**. Heb. *nikkudim*, cakes marked with points;^d or kind of sweet seed-cake. (4) **were set**, comp. 1 Sa. iv. 15.^e

The worldly man in the time of trouble. — Jeroboam's trouble. (a) Note his character — idolatrous, superstitious; (b) The illness of his son; (c) His great anxiety. II. Jeroboam's policy. (1) Will obtain the aid of the prophet. Why? (2) Wishes for his unbiassed opinion: hence sends one in disguise. (3) He obtains a true answer, though the character of the messenger is known to the prophet. A type of the man who in prosperity rejects religion, but who in trouble seeks its consolation, yet whose pride prevents his right seeking in the way of true repentance.

The beginning of loss. —

"This is the state of man; to-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope: to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him,
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost;
And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a-ripening, nips his root,
And then he falls. — *Shakespeare, Henry VIII.*

5-9. (5) **ask . . thee**, R. V. "to inquire of thee;" the queen had no petition. for her son, concerning the fate of her son. **feign, etc.**, this the prophet's blindness would prevent him from detecting. (6) **come in, etc.**, addressing her first, and at once showing the uselessness of the disguise.^f **heavy**, lit. *hard*. (7) **Lord God**, declaring those Div. rights which Jer. refused to acknowledge.^g (8) **rent**, as in Ahijah's former prophecy.^h (9) **other . . images**, two expressions for the same thing, viz. the golden calves. **cast . . back**, indic. the insolent wickedness of his attempts.ⁱ

Spiritual vision. — I. Sin seeks disguises. Truth needs none. II. God sees through all disguises. III. God can open the eyes of the blind, 1. *Literally*: 2. *Spiritually*. — *J. A. Macdonald.*

Wickedness its own punishment. — The malefactor who is to be crucified carries his cross with his own body; and in like manner wickedness creates from itself, to be borne by itself, each several form of chastisement. . . . But some persons are like children, who after seeing in the theatres malefactors in gold-embroidered tunics and purple mantles, crowned and dancing, admire and applaud them as happy beings, until they appear upon the stage goaded and scourged, and with fire streaming from their gay and finely wrought apparel. — *Plutarch.*

10-13. (10) **cut off, etc.**, R. V. "cut off from Jer. every man child;" this done by Baasha, ch. xv. 28, 29. **shut . . Israel**, see De. xxxii. 36. R. V. "him that is shut up and him that is left at large;" the bond and free. — *Gesenius.*

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rising of the sepulchres when the prophecy was fulfilled. 2 Ki. xxiii. 18.

sickness of Abijah

a "By her guise she is of the peasantry, and she bears a basket. Yet her gait scarcely befits her garb." — *Kitto.*

b Jos. xviii. 8-10; xix. 51; xxi. 2; xxii. 12; Ju. xviii. 81; xxi. 12, 19, 21.

c 1 Ki. xiii. 7; 2 Ki. viii. 8, 9.

d Fr. Heb. *nakad*, to prick.

e Ge. xxvii. 1-29.

Abijah the prophet is forewarned

f Ps. cxviii. 1-6; Pr. xxi. 30; Lu. xii. 2; He. iv. 13.

g Comp. 1 Sa. xv. 26-28.

h 1 Ki. xi. 29-31.

i Ne. ix. 26; Ps. l. 17. Eze. xxiii. 85.

"A babe is the bold-est of pilots, and guides a mother's fearless thoughts down through scenes of coming years. The old ark never made such voyages as the cradle daily makes." — *Beecher.*

and told the doom of Jeroboam

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a "I will sweep out after the house of Jeroboam, as one sweepeth out dirt, till it is gone."—*Keil*.

b "Troops of dogs, more than half wild, sleep by day, and scour the streets by night, clearing away all the offal and carrion they can find."—*Spk. Com.*

1 Ki. xvi. 4; xxi. 24; Je. xv. 3; Re. xix. 17, 18.

A white garment appears worse with slight soiling than do colored garments much soiled; so a little fault in a good man attracts more attention than grave offenses in bad men.

and the punishment of Israel

c "The doom of Jer.'s house will surely arrive; nay, it has already begun to be executed, not only in the death of his son, but by the appointment of a king in his place."—*Wordsworth*.

d De. xxviii. 63, 64; xxix. 27; Jos. xxiii. 15, 16.

e 2 Ki. xv. 29; xvii. 6, 23; xviii. 11.

We in this world are surely not planted in the wilderness, in a territory unclaimed by the Lord Paramount. Nor is the Proprietor of this vineyard a careless landlord. He is jealous of His rights. He comes often, and with a piercing scrutiny

The young (under wardship) and the older (free to go at will).—*Cam. B.* take . . remnant, i. e. wholly clear away the family.^a (11) dogs eat, these prowl about among the refuse of Eastern streets.^b (12) the child, prob. a young man; affectionately called here a child. (13) some good thing, born before Jer, turned aside to idols, he kept faithful to God, so was graciously removed from the evil to come. "We are not told wherein the goodness consisted, but Rabbinic tradition guessed that in opposition to his father he discountenanced the calf-worship and encouraged and helped the people to continue their visits to Jerusalem."—*Exp. B.*

Abijah's piety rewarded (vs. 13).—Notice—I. Abijah's commendation. Consider it—1. As it was in itself; 2. As existing under his peculiar circumstances. He was a young man, a youth of high distinction. II. His reward. This serves to show—1. That God loveth piety wherever He beholds it; 2. That He will reward it wherever it is found in the lowest degree.—*C. Simeon*.

Shut up (vs. 10).—Sometimes when a successful prince has endeavored to extirpate the preceding royal family, some of them have escaped the slaughter, and secured themselves in a fortress or place of secrecy, while others have sought an asylum in foreign countries, from whence they have occasioned great anxiety to the usurper. The word shut up, strictly speaking, refers to the first of these cases; as in the preservation of Joash from Athaliah in a private apartment of the temple. Such appears also to have been the case in more modern times. "Though more than thirty years had elapsed since the death of the Sultan Achmet, father of the new emperor, he had not, in that interval, acquired any great information or improvement. Shut up during this long interval in the apartment assigned him, with some eunuchs to wait on him, the equality of his age with that of the princes who had a right to precede him, allowed him but little hope of reigning in his turn, and he had, besides, well-grounded reasons for a more serious uneasiness."—*Baron de Tott*.

14-16. (14) that . . now, the king when raised to the throne would destroy the house of Jer., but the prophet sees the beginning of the punishment now in this death of the firstborn.^c (15) reed, wh. is moved with every wind; prophecy of national instability and commotions. root up, allusion to the great captivity.^d the river, the Euphrates.^e The proph. of Moses (De. xxix. 28) is here for the first time reiterated. groves, R. V., "their Asherim," usually regarded as symbols of Astarte. But Prof. Moore in Polychrome Bible, Judg. iii. 7, holds that in most O. T. passages the asherah (plural asherim) is the second post or pole wh. stood at the place of worship, beside the altars of Jehovah as well as of Baal. (16) give . . up, letting it be no longer His special people.

The shaken reed (vs. 15).—I. Picture the reed—a type of Israel—in the water, the source of its life. II. The water itself, the source of its nourishment, the instrument of its disturbance. III. When thus shaken it is rooted up.

Retribution.—I landed at a village of rude huts on the shore of the river, and sat down on a stone, waiting for my donkey, which I purposed to ride through the desert in the cool of the evening to Assouan, where my boat was moored. While I was sitting there two boys were playing and wrestling together; they were naked, and about nine or ten years old. They soon began to quarrel, and one of them drew the dagger which he wore upon his arm, and stabbed the other in the throat. The poor boy fell to the ground bleeding; the dagger had entered his throat on the left side, under the jawbone, and being directed upwards had cut his tongue and grazed the roof of his mouth. Whilst he cried and writhed about upon the ground, with the blood pouring out of his mouth, the villagers came out from their cabins and stood around talking and screaming, but affording no help to the poor boy. Presently a young man stood up and asked where the father of the boy was, and why he did not come to help him. The villagers said he had no father. "Where are his relations, then?" he asked. The boy had no relations; there was no one to care for him in the village. On hearing this he uttered some words which I did not understand, and started off after the boy who had inflicted the wound. The young assassin ran away as fast as he could, and a famous chase took place. They darted over the plain, scrambled up the rocks, and jumped down some dangerous-looking places among the masses of granite which formed the background of the village. At length the boy was caught,

and, screaming and struggling, was dragged to the spot where his victim lay moaning and heaving upon the sand. The young man now placed him between his legs, and in this way held him tight whilst he examined the wound of the other, putting his finger into it, and opening his mouth to see exactly how far it extended. When he had satisfied himself on the subject he called for a knife; the boy had thrown his away in the race, and he had not one himself. The villagers stood silent around, and one of them having handed him a dagger, the young man held the boy's head sideways across his thigh, and cut his throat exactly in the same way as he had done to the other. He then pitched him away upon the ground, and the two lay together, bleeding and writhing, side by side. Their wounds were precisely the same; the second operation had been most expertly performed, and the knife had passed just where the boy had stabbed his playmate. The wounds, I believe, were not dangerous, for presently both the boys got up and were led away to their homes. It was a curious instance of retributive justice, following out the old law of blood for blood, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.—*Hon. R. Curzon.*

17-20. (17) **Tirzah**, the site is uncertain.* Jos. xii. 24. (18) **buried him**, in state, as the king's son, and the heir. (19) **warred**, chiefly with the kings of Israel, cf. vs. 25. **chronicles**, lit. *words of days*: public records of events of the reigns, subsequently collected and edited. (20) **slept**, his end appears to have been untimely, 2 Chr. xxi. 18, 19.

Affliction and judgment (vs. 1-20). — I. The stricken king. II. The resort for help. 1. His trouble drives him toward God. 2. He is drawn by the remembrance of past mercy. 3. His hope is defeated by his own deceit. 4. Gifts could not make up the lack of a true penitent heart. III. The Lord's answer. 1. Disguise is impossible before God. 2. Jeroboam's ingratitude. 3. The doom. IV. The shadow of falling judgment. 1. Abijah's death. 2. Jeroboam's death. — *J. Urquhart.*

The object of afflictions. — "Look at this flute; it was a piece of wood; what has made it a flute? The rifts, the holes in it." What life is there through which affliction does not make some rift? All went well till then; but through that rift in the life came thought and feeling. "So," said the preacher, "I listened to a flute one day, complaining that it was spoiled by having a number of holes bored in it. 'Once,' it said, 'I was a piece of wood, very beautiful to look upon; now I am spoiled by all these rifts and holes; and it said all this mournfully and musically. 'O thou foolish flute,' I said, 'without these rifts and holes thou wouldst only be a mere stick, a bit of mere hard, black ebony, soon to be thrown away. Those rifts and holes have been the making of thee; they have made thee into a flute; they are thy life, thy character, thy music and melody, and thou wilt not now be cast aside with contempt, but touched by even the fingers of future generations.'"—*Sunday at Home.*

21-24. (21) **forty and one years**, he was therefore born one year before the accession of Solomon. A few MSS. read 21 instead of 41, and th. age wd. agree better with 1 Ki. xii. 8, 10, and 2 Chr. xiii. 7. **did choose**, *R. V.* "had chosen." **mother's name**, that she was a foreigner is stated partly to account for Rehoboam's wilfulness and idolatry.^b (22) **Judah**, for 3 yrs. Reh. did not fall into idolatry, but a large portion of the people delighted in idolatry, and led on the weak young king in his evil course. **jealousy**, comp. Ex. xx. 5; xxxiv. 14, 15. (23) **also**, as well as the northern kingdom. **images . . groves**, *R. V.* "pillars and Asherim." See note, vs. 15.

Idols may be of use. — When the English army had taken the city of Rangoon, the capital of Burmah, Havelock, who was then a lieutenant, sought out, as was his custom, a place for a prayer meeting. He secured a chamber in the temple, devoted to Boodh, with idols, sitting all around, their legs crossed and arms folded upon their laps. He caused a lamp to be put in the hands of each idol, to illumine the place, while he and his company read the Scriptures and prayed together. All idols, whether in heathendom or Christendom, would be in their proper place, if they were only used as creatures to hold light to guide us to the true God and Saviour. — *J. Bate.*

25-31. (25) **Shishak**, Sheshonk I., first of dynasty, XXI. of the Tanite-Bubastites. His accession is fixed to year 978 B. C., and he is supposed to

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which nothing can elude. Leaves are not enough; nor are blossoms enough; fruit is wanted. What right have trees, what right have men, to fall of the end for which they were made? Why should not one as much as the other fall before the axe? Fearful doom — from the vineyard to the fire!

death of Abijah and Jeroboam

a^a Taluza, 6 m. N. of Nablous." — *Robinson.*

Song Sol. vi. 4; 1 Ki. xvi. 23, 24.

"Poor George Somers had known what it was to be in sickness, and none to soothe — lonely and in prison, and none to visit him. He could not endure his mother from his sight. He would start from a feverish dream, and look anxiously up until he saw her bending over him and fall asleep with the tranquility of a child. In this way he died." — *W. Irving.*

Judah

Rehoboam

b "The queen mother had usually great influence with the kings of Judah." — *Wordsworth.*

2 Chr. xxii. 3.

Shishak

c Some account of this invasion has been found on the walls of the temple at Karnac.

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2 Chr. xii. 2.

a 2 Chr. xii. 15, 16.

The greatest man is he who chooses the right with the most invincible resolution, who resists the sorest temptation from within and without, who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully. — *Seneca*.

have reigned twenty-one years. (26) *treasures*, gathered by Solomon. (27) *brazen*, he was anxious not to appear degraded by their absence. (28) *bare* them, in the customary procession. (29) *chronicles*,^a comp. vs. 19. (30) *war*, as vs. 19. (31) *mother's name*, repeated as if some significance attached to her.

The invasion of Shishak (vs. 25).—Observe here—I. The retribution of Solomon's sin. 1. Of his greed and pride; 2. Of his idolatry; 3. Of his multiplication of horses; 4. Of his multiplication of wives. II. The punishment of Rehoboam's folly and sin. 1. Of his obstinacy; 2. Of his pride; 3. Of his infidelity. III. The recompense of Israel's idolatries.—*Joseph Hammond*.

Inscriptions at Karnak.—It is well known that a record of this expedition exists in the sculptures and inscriptions of the great temple at Karnak. The *bassi relievi* of the temple wall contain over 130 figures, representatives, as the names on the shields show, of so many conquered cities. Amongst these are found three of the "cities for defense" which Rehoboam had built, viz., Shoco, Adoraim, and Aijalon (2 Chron. xi. 7-10), while many other towns of Palestine, such as Gibeon, Taanach, Shunem, Megiddo, etc., are identified with more or less of probability. One feature in the list is remarkable, viz., the number of Levitical and Canaanite cities—cities of *Israel*—which Shishak is said to have conquered. The usual inference is that such cities, although in Jeroboam's dominions, had nevertheless held out against his rule—the former for religious reasons; the latter, perhaps, in the effort to recover their independence. Mr. Pool, however, (Dict. Bib., art. "Egypt"), accounts for the names on the supposition that Shishak directed his forces against the northern as well as the southern kingdom, and certainly this seems to agree better with the facts. The silence alike of our historian and of the chronicler as to the invasion of Israel is easily accounted for by the fact that Judah bore the brunt of the war.—*Pulp. Com.*

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CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

Abijam

1-5. (1) *Abijam*, name prob. Abijah.^b The change to *m* made to avoid pronouncing the name of God. (2) *three years*,^c really only a little over two years. Jews reckoned to a king the year in *any part of wh.* he reigned. *Maachah*, comp. 2 Chr. xi. 20-22; xiii. 2. *Abishalom*, prob. Absalom, then daughter must mean grand-daughter.^d (3) *not perfect*, or whole. (4) *Dav.'s sake*, "the stability of the family of David on the throne for nearly 400 years, amid all the changes and chances of that period, and whilst in Israel there were 'nine changes of dynasty within 250 years,' is, as Rawlinson remarks, very 'difficult to account for on mere grounds of human reason.'"—*Pulp. Com.* *lamp*,^e ch. xi. 36. *set up his son*, comp. judgment on Jeroboam; ch. xiv. 7-11. (5) *matter of Uriah*,^f Dav.'s only wilful and presumptuous sin. This clause omitted in most copies of the LXX, and may have been a clerical interpolation.

Beloved for the father's sake.—I. The story of a misused opportunity. Even in three years much might have been done. 1. The secret of failure. (1) He was content with things as he found them. (2) His love was not set upon God. 2. The opportunity was soon ended. II. A righteous life an undying power with God. III. Sin leaves its stain on the fair record of a righteous life.—*J. Urquhart*.

Possibilities.—

There's no one to whom's not given
Some little lineament of heaven,
Some partial symbol at the least, in sign
Of what should be, if it is not, within,
Reminding of the death of sin
And life of the Divine.

Though not inheritors as yet
Of all your own right royal things
Yet are ye angels in disguise—
Angels who have not found your wings.—*Sutton*.

6-10. (6) *war*, as ch. xiv. 30. (7) *written*, etc., 2 Chr. xiii. (8) *city of David*, in the royal sepulchre, as Rehoboam, ch. xiv. 31. (9) *Asa*, physician

Asa

"Heaven within the reed
Lists for the flute note; in the folded seed
It sees the bud, and in the will the deed."—*D. Greenwell*.

b 2 Chr. xiii. 1-22.

c He began in 18th year of Jeroboam, and his successor in the 20th year. See vs. 9.

d 2 Sa. xiv. 27.

e 2 Ki. viii. 19; 2 Chr. xxi. 7.

f 2 Sa. xi. 4; xii. 9.

a healing one. (10) forty and one years, during wh. he saw eight kings of Israel.* mother's name, should be grandmother's, vs. 2.

Mother and child (vs. 10).—Sir Walter Scott's mother was a superior woman, well educated, and a great lover of poetry and painting. Byron's mother was proud, ill-tempered, and violent. The mother of Napoleon Bonaparte was noted for her beauty and energy. Lord Bacon's mother was a woman of superior mind and deep piety. The mother of Nero was a murderer. The mother of Washington was pious, pure, and true. The mother of Patrick Henry was marked by her superior conversational powers. The mother of John Wesley was remarkable for her intelligence, piety and executive ability, so that she has been called "the mother of Methodism." It will be observed that in each of these examples the sons inherited the prominent traits of the mother.

11—15. (11) right,^b and therefore acceptable. The word indicates right-heartedness, as well as good actions. (12) sodomites, ch. xiv. 24. (13) his mother, grandmother, who occupied the position of queen-mother.* idol,^c lit. a horror, an object of terror. in a grove, as Asherah, or to Astarte, destroyed,* cut down; indic. that it was of wood. (14) high.. removed, comp. 2 Chr. xiv. 3; temporary removals may have been effected. "The explanation would seem to be, either that the idolatry was at one time put down, but crept back afterwards, or that, while Asa endeavored to sweep it wholly away, his subjects would not be controlled, but found a means of maintaining it in some places—not perhaps in the cities (see 2 Chr. xiv. 5), but in remote country districts, where the royal authority was weaker, and secrecy more practicable."—*Spk. Com.* perfect.. days, Eastern exaggeration, cf. 2 Chr. xvi. 7—12. (15) dedicated, or devoted;^f partially replacing those taken by Shishak.

Doing right (vs. 11).—I. Asa did what was right in the face of opposition. II. He did what was right in the sight of the Lord; though men might condemn. III. He did what was right according to the best model he had—David. IV. If we desire to do right we have a better model—Christ.

A God-fearing king.—At the coronation of his Majesty George III., after the anointing was over in the Abbey, and the crown put upon his head with great shouting, the two archbishops came to hand him down from the throne to receive the sacrament. His Majesty told them he would not go to the Lord's Supper, and partake of that ordinance with the crown upon his head; for he looked upon himself, when appearing before the King of kings, in no other character than in that of a humble Christian. The bishops replied, that although there was no precedent for this, it should be complied with. Immediately he put off his crown, and laid it aside: he then desired that the same should be done with respect to the Queen. It was answered, that her crown was so pinned on her head that it could not be easily taken off; to which the King replied, "Well, let it be reckoned a part of her dress, and in no other light." "When I saw and heard this," says the narrator, "it warmed my heart towards him; and I could not help thinking, that there would be something good found about him towards the Lord God of Israel."—*Whitecross*.

16—19. (16) war, petty border conflicts; Asa's first ten years were tolerably quiet. (17) built, fortified, made military post of. Ramah,^g now Er Ram (Jos. xviii. 25), on the high road fr. Bethel to Jerus., 5 miles fr. Jerus. 18. out or come in, ostensible reason to check the passing of the relig. people to worship at Jerus. (18) left, referring to the plundering by Shishak in the 5th yr. of Abijam. sent them, this was an act of sacrilege and distrust, see 2 Chr. xvi. 7. Benhadad, Son of the Sun: title of the Syrian kings. (19) is a league, or let there be a league bet. us, as there was bet. our fathers.

Hindrances to true worship (vs. 17).—I. Note the stronghold.—Ramah—of Baasha, built to prevent the going up to Jerusalem at the great religious festivals of the nation. II. The world still strives to erect its Ramah to hinder religious worship. 1. Infidelity; 2. Quasi-science; 3. Mammon.

Presents (vs. 19).—I will not push my remarks on the presents of the East any further here, excepting the making this single observation more, that the sending presents to princes to induce them to help the distressed has been practised in these countries in late times, as well as in the days of Asa, of whom we read, that he "took," etc. To us it appears strange that a present

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a Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Tibni, Omri, and Ahab.

Throughout the pages of history we are struck with the fact that our remarkable men possessed mothers of uncommon talents for good or bad, and great energy of character.

Asa destroys the idols

b Account given more fully in 2 Chr. xiv.—xvi.

c There is, in most cases, some one in the harem who, on one account or another, is recognized as the chief lady. The circumstances which usually fix that position are either high birth, priority of marriage, or giving birth to the heir of the throne."—*Kitto*.

d "Word only used here, and 2 Chr. xv. 16. An obscene figure,"—*Jamieson*.

e De. xiii. 6—11.

f Prob. the spoil taken by his father in his victory over Jeroboam, wh. is related in 2 Chr. xiii. 16."—*Wordsworth*.

Baasha builds Ramah Asa makes a league with Benhadad

g "It stood on an eminence, as the name implies, and commanded the direct route bet. the two cities. . . . If this conquest could have been maintained, it would have crippled Judah seriously and have almost

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compelled a transfer of the capital to Hebron."—*Spk. Com.*

1 Sa. vii. 17; Je. xxxi. 15.

Ramah destroyed

a "Stands picturesquely on the top of its steep, terraced hill, on the very edge of the great *Wady Suweinit* looking northwards to the opposite village wh. retains its old name of *Mich-mash*."—*Porter*.

b Je. xli. 9. Comp. Jos. xviii. 26; 1 Sa. vii. 5.

"Nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make defense."—*Shakespeare*.

"A man's antecedents are constantly coming up."—*Crowell*.

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Israel

Nadab, Baasha

c "It is curious to find Issachar furnishing a king. This tribe had never made, and could have no grounds for making, a claim to pre-eminence. Baasha owed his rise simply to his own audacity, and his known valor and skill as a soldier."—*Spk. Com.*

Comp. 2 Ki. xii. 20.

"The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together."—*Shakespeare*.

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war between Asa and Baasha

should be capable of inducing one person to break with another, and engage himself in war; but as it was anciently thought sufficient, so we find in the *Gesta Dei per Francos*, that an Eastern nobleman, that had the custody of a castle called *Hasarth*, quarreling with his master, the prince of *Aleppo*, and finding himself obliged to seek for foreign aid, sent presents to *Godfrey of Bouillon*, to induce him to assist him. What they were we are not told; but gold and silver, the things *Asa* sent *Benhadad*, were frequently sent in those times to the crusade princes, and might probably be sent on this occasion to *Godfrey*.—*Harmer*.

20—24. (20) *Ijon*, now *Tell Dibbin*, N. W. of site of *Dan*. *Dan*, Ju. xviii. 7. *Abel-beth-maachah*, 2 Sa. xx. 14. *Cinneroth*, the land of *Gennesareth*, Jos. xi. 2. (21) building, or fortifying. *Tirzah*, ch. xiv. 17. (22) proclamation, "the whole laboring population was gathered in on the king's requisition that the work might be completed while the pressure of the Syrians on the north was being sharply felt."—*Cam. B.* *Geba*,^a *Jeba*, farther north than *Ramah*, so better protection to the N. frontier. *Mizpah*,^b on the northern continuation of the Mt. of *Olives*. (23) cities, etc., 2 Chr. xiv. 6, 7. *old age*, *Asa* could not have been over 50 yrs. old. Expression means, "end of life." *diseased*, etc., 2 Chr. xvi. 12, gout. (24) *Jehoshaphat*, whom *Jehovah* judges, i. e. whose cause He sustains.

The strongholds of the world become the defenses of the Church (vs. 22).—I. This illustrated by the case of *Ramah*. II. It has been often observed since —1. The world's stronghold of science has been rifled by the Church for its defense: and the world defeated with its own weapons; 2. By the grace of God, men who were as *Ramah*—*Saul of Tarsus*, for example—have been made as the outworks of Christianity.

Pulling down to build better.—It is recorded of one of the *Wesleys* that when he heard anybody singing a nice tune on the streets, he used to loiter about until he got the melody thoroughly into his head, and then he went away and set divine words to the prostituted music. He said, "The devil has all the best tunes." Persons looking at *Wesley* standing listening to the street singer, would say, "What, is he caught by the song?" and they might have attributed wrong motives to his standing there, but he was pulling down *Ramah* that he might build *Geba* of *Benjamin* and *Mizpah*.—*People's Bible*.

25—30. (25) *Nadab*, ch. xiv. 20. (26) his sin, ch. xii. 28-33. (27) *Ahijah*, not the prophet, he was of *Shiloh* in *Ephraim*. *Gibbethon*, in the tribe of *Dan*, a Levitical city. Jos. xix. 44. (28) and reigned, by simple usurpation, for *Baasha* had no claim to the throne.^c (29) saying, etc., ch. xiv. 10-14. (30) provocation, such conduct aroused righteous Divine anger.

The punishment of Jeroboam's sin (vs. 29).—Retribution overtook—I. Himself. 1. The foreknowledge that (1) His kingdom would be overthrown; (2) His family would be destroyed and shamefully murdered; 2. Remorse and vexation; 3. An untimely end. II. His successors. 1. Their reigns were short; 2. They were often closed by revolution and assassination. III. The people. They suffered—1. Misgovernment; 2. Civil war; 3. Invasion; 4. Loss of territory; 5. Famine; 6. Captivity.—*Hammond*.

Bajazet.—*Tamerlane* the Great having made war on *Bajazet*, Emperor of the Turks, overthrew him in battle, and took him prisoner. The victor gave the captive monarch at first a very civil reception; and, entering in familiar conversation with him, said, "Now, king, tell me freely and truly what thou wouldst have done with me, had I fallen into thy power?" *Bajazet*, who was of a fierce and haughty spirit, is said to have thus replied: "Had the gods given unto me the victory, I would have enclosed thee in an iron cage, and carried thee about with me as a spectacle of derision to the world." *Tamerlane* wrathfully replied, "Then, proud man, as thou wouldst have done to me, even so shall I do unto thee." A strong iron cage was made, into which the fallen emperor was thrust; and thus exposed like a wild beast, he was carried along in the train of his conqueror. Nearly three years was passed by the once mighty *Bajazet* in this cruel state of endurance; and at last being told that he must be carried into *Tartary*, despairing of then obtaining his freedom, he struck his head with such violence against the bars of the cage as to put an end to his wretched life.—*Percy Anec.*

31—34. (31) in the book, etc., same previously referred to as vs. 23. (32) war, a state of war, rather than great expeditions. (34) way of *Jeroboam*,

maintained that rebellious and idolatrous attitude that Jer. had commenced.

The moral in history.—Kant, the philosopher, used to say that there were two things which overwhelmed him with awe as he thought of them. One was the star-sown deep of space, without limit and without end; the other was right and wrong. Right, the sacrifice of self to good; wrong, the sacrifice of good to self—not graduated objects of desire, to which we are determined by the degrees of our knowledge; but wide asunder as pole to pole; as light and darkness—one, the object of infinite love; the other, the object of infinite detestation and scorn. It is in this marvelous power in men to do wrong (it is an old story, but none the less true for that)—it is in this power to do wrong—wrong or right, as it lies somehow with ourselves to choose—that the impossibility stands of forming scientific calculations of what men will do before the fact, or scientific explanations of what they have done after the fact. If men were consistently selfish, you might analyze their motives; if they were consistently noble, they would express in their conduct the laws of the highest perfection. But so long as two natures are mixed together, and the strange creature which results from the combinations is now under one influence and now under another, so long you will make nothing of him except from the old moral, or, if you please, imaginative point of view.—*Froude's Short Studies.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1-7. (1) **Jehu**, comp. 2 Chr. xix. 2, 3; xx. 34. **Hanani**, also a prophet to Asa and Jehoshaphat, 2 Chr. xvi. 7-10. (2) **out of the dust**,^a fr. low position; Baasha was not even remotely connected with the royal houses. **my people**, God does not yet reject sinful and degenerate Israel. (3) **posterity**, this the worst punishment to a king, who longs to found a dynasty. (4) **that dieth, etc.**, comp. ch. xiv. 11. (5) **his might**, as a soldier; ch. xv. 17-21. (6) **Tirzah**, his capital; ch. xiv. 17. (7) **also**, a repetition of the prophecy to show that Baasha was punished for destroying Jeroboam's family, as well as for his own idolatry. **killed him**, R. V., "smote him," i. e. Jeroboam in his son, Nadab.

Jehu (vs. 1).—This prophet may remind us—I. That even bad men, as Baasha, do not perish without warning. II. That God's servants are not to be choosers of their own work. III. That God's word, whether of warning or promise, will certainly take effect.

Neglectful kings.—

When those whom Heaven distinguishes o'er millions,
Profusely gives them honors, riches, power,
Whate'er the expanded heart can wish; when they,
Accepting the reward, neglect the duty,
Or worse, pervert those gifts to deeds of ruin,
Is there a wretch they rule so mean as they,
Guilty at once of sacrilege to Heaven,
And of perfidious robbery to men?—*Mallet.*

8-10. (8) **Elah**, (vs. 6). *oak*, or *strength*. **two years**, parts only of two years. (9) **servant**, military officer. **Zimri**, renowned. From the occurrence of this name among those of the descendants of Jonathan (1 Chron. viii. 36), it has been supposed (*Stanley*) that this was a last effort of the house of Saul to regain the throne. **drunk**, his dissolute habits put him in the power of the conspirator. **steward**, comp. Ahishar's office in Sol.'s reign.^b (10) **went in**, to the royal presence.

A royal drunkard (vs. 9).—Besides the fact here incidentally proven that the wines of the East are of an intoxicating nature, the following points may be noted as among the results of drunkenness. I. Bad in any, it is worse in a king, on account of his great influence. II. The habit takes one into inferior society. The king and his steward. III. The condition, by rendering one helpless, exposes him to the assaults of his foes. IV. How many by the same habit have lost the crown of their manhood, their social position, their life, their souls!

A leak in the character.—A great merchant once said to me of a certain man in his employment, "I would to-morrow give that man a thousand a year to begin with, if he could do one thing, and that is, hold his tongue, but

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"O how hard it is to die, and not be able to leave the world any better for one's little life in it."—*Abraham Lincoln.*

"Man is the hero of the sternal epic composed by the Divine intelligence."—*Schelling.*

"Time creeps towards us with folded wings, but when 'tis past us, its wings seem to flap with speed."—*Lowth.*

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Jehu sent to warn Baasha

^a Comp. language of Ahijah to Jeroboam, 1 Ki. xiv. 7-11; also of Samuel to Saul, 1 Sa. xv. 17-19.

"Ill do you know the spectral forms that wait upon a king: care with his furrow'd brow, un-sleeping watchfulness, lone secrecy, attend his throne by day, his couch by night."—*Lord Russell.*

Elah, Zimri

^b 1 Ki. iv. 6.

"In Persia 'the steward of the household' acted sometimes as a sort of regent during the king's absence."—*Spk. Com.*

The least fault a king commits produces infinite mischief, for it diffuses misery through a whole people, and often for many generations.—*Swift's Thoughts.*

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he would no sooner get the appointment than he would go into an ale-house, and tell the whole company everything I am doing." There is the leak in the character, and it means ruin! It is astonishing what one leak will do. The leak may be very small, but it is fatal. Night and day it runs. Sleeping and waking it runs. Summer and winter it runs. And no cistern, no reservoir, can stand a perpetual leak. — *People's Bible*.

Zimri

a Je. viii. 19; x. 8, 14; Jon. ii. 8; 1 Cor. viii. 4.

"Princes have but their titles for their glories, an outward honor for an inward toil; and for unfelt imaginations, they often feel a world of restless cares." — *Shakespeare*.

11-14. (11) slew, *R. V.* "smote;" true Oriental fashion. kinsfolks, this word indicates exceptional severities. (12) according, etc., as *vss.* 3, 4. (13) vanities,^a idolatries and vices. by . . made, *R. V.* "wh. they sinned and wherewith they made," etc. (14) rest, etc., as *vs.* 5.

Way to lose an empire. — Cardinal Mazarin once observed to Don Luis de Haro, prime minister of Spain, that the humane and gentle conduct of the French government had prevented the troubles and revolts of that kingdom, and that the king had not lost a foot of land by them to that day; whereas the inflexible severity of the Spaniards was the occasion that the subjects of that monarchy, wherever they threw off the mask, never returned to their obedience but by the force of arms, as sufficiently appears in the example of the Hollanders, who are in the peaceable possession of many provinces that not many years before were the patrimony of the king of Spain. — *Percy Anec.*

Zimri, Omri

b Mi. vi. 16.

c Job xx. 5; Ps. ix. 16; xxxvii. 35, 36.

"The nation from whose heart rectitude is gone, in whose soul vice runs riot, has its throne built on moral gunpowder." — *Hom. Com.*

15-20. (15) seven days, a very short time, but filled full with bloodshedding. people, the army. Gibbethon, ch. xiv. 27. (16) heard say, the report soon reached them. all Israel, "the voice of the army being regarded as the voice of the nation." Omri, servant of Jehovah, he gave his name to a dynasty.^b (17) went up, fr. plain of Shephelah to the hill country of Israel, on the edge of which Tirzah stood. (18) palace, etc., either the harem, or a tower above the rest of the building. (19) doing evil,^c conspiring and murdering. (20) treason, i. e. the full account of it.

A terrible fate. — Zimri's desperate act has been repeated more than once in the world's history. That the last king of Assyria, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, thus destroyed himself, is about the only fact which we know concerning him. Herodotus gives a similar account of a contemporary of his, a certain Boges, a Persian general left by Xerxes to defend Eion when he retired from Europe after Salamis. He also relates that the Xanthians, when pressed by Harpagus, burnt their wives, their children, and their slaves in the Acropolis, and then threw themselves on the Persian swords. — *Hom. Com.*

Tibni, Omri**Samaria**

d "The factions that ensued occasioned a four years' duration of anarchy or civil war." — *Jamieson*.

e "According to LXX., a brother of Tibni, named Joram, suffered with him." — *Spl. Com.*

21-24. (21) followed Tibni,^d "the hereditary principle being overthrown, the crown appeared to be the legitimate prize of the strongest; and Tibni, who may have occupied a position of importance, resolved that Omri should not wear it without a contest." — *Pul. Com.* (22) prevailed, bec. most of the army were faithful to Omri. died, whether by natural or violent death is not indicated.^e (23) twelve years, reckoned fr. his being made king by the army. He only had peaceful possession of the throne for eight years. (24) hill Samaria, seven miles N. W. of Shechem. Modern *Sebastirjeh*. Very suitable site for new capital. Shemer, fr. him the place was called *Shimron*. two talents, about seven hundred pounds.

The Moabite stone. — In the summer of 1868, Dr. Klein, a German missionary, while traveling in what was once the land of Moab, east of the Jordan, discovered a most curious relic of antiquity among the ruins of Dhiban, the famous Moabite stone, now in the Museum of the Louvre in Paris. It is a stone of black basalt, two feet broad and nearly four feet high, rounded at the top, with an inscription of thirty-four lines running across it, by Mesha, king of Moab, during the reign of Omri and Ahab, and records his wars with them, mentioning Omri and his son (Ahab), and Israel, by name. On this stone he says, "Omri, King of Israel . . . oppressed Moab many days." And again, "I dug the canals for Khorkhah by means of the prisoners of Israel." — *Peloubet*.

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Omri

f 1 Ki. xx. 4; this, however, only hints at previous attacks by Syria.

25-28. (25) worse, prob. putting energy into the idolatrous worship, and "reducing calf-worship to a formal system." (26) way of, etc., the usual formula, *vss.* 13, 19, etc. (27) might, in war against Tibni, and against Syria.^f "It is clear that he was a sovereign of far greater eminence and importance than we might suppose from the meagreness of his annals as here preserved;

indeed, for thirty-four years after his accession the history of the Southern Kingdom becomes a mere appendix to that of the Northern."—*Farrar*. (28) Samaria, henceforth the capital city. Ahab, prob. meaning *God is friend*.

The power of a wicked life.—I. Is the more dangerous when associated with material prosperity. II. Transforms a king into a tyrant. III. Is the less excusable in a man of valor and capacity. IV. Is transmitted to succeeding generations.—*Hom. Com.*

Wasted gifts.—Some providences seem to be altogether thrown away, and we stand aghast at the destruction, saying, "Why was this waste made?" Great talents are made to serve the devil; great voices of song are never heard in the sanctuary: noble powers of speech are dumb when the righteous cause has to be pleaded. It has sometimes seemed as if the rain had fallen on the wilderness and missed the garden that would have returned a flower for every drop. We say, if this man had owned the money it would have been well spent; if that man had been entrusted with the power, it would have been beneficially exercised; instead of that, the wicked man keeps the bank, and the mischievous man lays down the law. There must be a time of rectification.—*Parker*.

29—33. (29) twenty and two, according to our mode of reckoning, *twenty-one*. (30) above all,^a "it is not difficult to see in what way Ahab's rule was worse even than Omri's. The latter had gone beyond his predecessors in the matter of the calf-worship. Under Ahab, however, positive idolatry was established and fostered—the worship of foreign and shameful deities."—*Pub. Com.* see vs. 33; ch. xxi. 25, (31) Jezebel, "the name is perhaps connected with *Baal-Zebul*. Jezebel was the aunt of Virgil's *Belus*, and great-aunt of *Pygmalion*, and of *Dido*, the famous foundress of Carthage. *Ethbaal*, with *Baal*,^b (32) altar, or pillar. house of, temple of. (33) grove, the *asherah*, or image of *Astarte*, the companion to the image of *Baal*.

Jezebel.—Jezebel united in herself the strongest intellectual powers, the fiercest passions, and the most fiery will, while her moral sense was hardened almost into insensibility. With her "I dare not" never waited on "I would," and no matter what stood in the way of the attainment of her designs, she would trample down every obstacle and press forward, even through a "mire of blood," to the object of her ambition. She may be regarded as the Lady Macbeth of history; only, it seems to me there was less of the milk of human kindness in her breast than the great dramatist has put into that of his striking creation; and Jezebel would not have come back, shivering, with the dry dagger in her hand, saying, "Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I'd done it." Without the least misgiving she would have plunged it into the sleeper to the hilt.—*W. M. Taylor*.

34. Hiel . . Jericho,^d "this seems to be adduced as a proof of the general impiety of Ahab's time. The curse of Joshua against the man who should rebuild Jericho (*Josh. vi. 26*) had hitherto been believed and respected. But now faith in the old religion had so decayed that Joshua's malediction—terrible as it was—no longer exercised a deterrent power!"—*Spk. Com.* laid, *etc.*, i. e. his firstborn son died on his laying the new foundations. gates, *etc.*, on this occasion the youngest died. We need not suppose that Jericho had been all this time uninhabited; the point is that it had been unprotected and unfortified.

Two sunsets on the hills of Jericho.—An epitaph on the gravestone of two children. Why have these two little lives been so prematurely taken? Jehovah here vindicates His own word and righteousness, in writing the household of this Beth-elite childless. Note the history and character of Hiel. He may have been an atheist, proud, conceited. May have had wrong views of God. Learn:—Beware of resisting God.—*J. R. Macduff*.

Loss of a child. —

Can I, who have for others oft compiled
The songs of death, forget my sweetest child?
We have this sign of joy, that many days
While on the earth his struggling spirit stays,
The name of Jesus in his mouth contains
His holy food, his sleep, his ease from pains.
Oh may that sound be rooted in my mind

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"As husbandmen make use of the very thorns and briars that grow in their fields to stop the gaps and strengthen the fences about them, so should we improve our very sins and failings to fence our souls, that we lie not open to the like temptations of the future."—*Hopkins*.

Ahab Jezebel

^a "The great sin of Ahab was his introduction of the worship of Baal, consequent upon his marriage with Jezebel, and his formal establishment of this gross and palpable idolatry as the religion of the state,"—*Spk. Com.*

^b "A priest of the Phœn. goddess *Astarte*, he rebelled against his brother, *Phœlex*, King of Tyre and Sidon, usurped his throne, and occupied it 32 years."—*Josaphus*.

^c 2 Ki. x. 27.

Jericho rebuilt

^d Jos. vi. 26.

^e 2 Sa. x. 5.

"In his days, prob. means under Ahab's direction."—*Keil*.

"A child mounted on the shoulder of a man may see further than himself; or a youth standing on the top of a hill may see more than a giant at its base; even so the little ones that Jesus has taken to Himself in heaven may

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know more of the things of God than the wise, the prudent, and the mighty, who live in this valley of mists and shadows." — *John Bate.*

Of which in him such strong effect I find !
Dear Lord, receive my son, whose winning love
To me was like a friendship far above
The course of nature, or his tender age ;
Whose looks could all my bitter griefs assuage ;
Let his pure soul — ordained seven years to be
In that frail body, which was part of me —
Remain my pledge in heaven, as sent to show
How to this port at every step I go. — *Beaumont.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

Elijah —
he hides
by Cherith

α "In forming to ourselves a conception of the great Israelite prophet, we must always bear in mind that the wild and mountainous Gilead, wh. bordered on Arabia, and was half Arab in customs, was the country wherein he grew up." — *Spk Com.*

β "Tradition points it out in a small winter torrent, a little below the ford at Bethshan." — *Jamieson.*

Ps. xxxi. 20.
lxxxi. 3 He. xl.
33; Re. xii. 6, 14.

c Pr. iii. 5; Jno.
xv. 14; Mat. vi. 31-33.

Sterne writes: "I asked a hermit once in Italy, how he could venture to live alone in a single cottage on the top of a mountain, a mile from any habitation. He replied that Providence was his very next-door neighbor."

he goes to
Zarephath

d Mat. x. 41, 42;
xxv. 35, 40.

Ob. 20; Mat. xv.
21-28; Lu. iv. 26.

"Elijah may have been sent to this place, so near the city of Jezebel's

1—7. (1) *Elijah, Jehovah He is God; or Jehovah is my God.* Probably assumed by the proph. as the meaning of his life. "His history is most probably drawn from some independent narrative of the work of the prophets, and introduced here abruptly as soon as it begins to touch upon the reign of Ahab. The schools of the prophets seem to have had their origin in Samuel's day, and were founded in various parts of the land, and in connection with them Elijah appears in Israel." — *Cam. B.* *Tishbite*, of Tishbe, a place in Gilead^a beyond the Jordan. *inhabitants*, *R. V.* "sojourners." said, this abrupt introduction is characteristic of the man. *Lord . . stand*, he gives his authority. The living Jehovah, not the mute and dumb. Baal is God of Israel. *dew, etc.*, a plague threatened by the law (De. xi. 16, 17) as punishment for idolatry. (2) *word, etc.*, usual way of describing Div. communic. to the prophets. (3) *Cherith*,^b cannot be identified. (4) *ravens*, some think this should be *Arabians*. The word rendered ravens (*Orebim*) only has that meaning if it be written with the vowel points. But the vowel points are confessedly not "inspired" in any sense, but are a late Massoretic invention. Without the change of a letter the word may equally well mean people of the city Orbo, or of the rock Oreb. (5) *went*,^c obediently, and trustingly. (6) *morning, etc.* the pastoral, semi-nomadic people of Gilead, having taken him under their protection, would make a point of visiting him regularly, not only to show him all possible honor, as a person endued with supernatural powers (*cf.* ch. xviii. 7, 13), but to afford him some measure of sympathy and companionship. — *Pul. Com.*

A childlike faith. — 1. Accepts the Word of God without questioning. 2. Flinches not in the presence of the severest demands. 3. Is not staggered by apparent improbabilities. 4. Is prompt in obedience. 5. Enjoys the fulfilment of the Divine promise. 6. Fails not when most severely tried.

Elijah. —

The Tishbite dread, Elijah, stood in Ahab's ivory hall;
His cloak, the skin of mountain-goat, his robe a mohair pall;
His garb around his sinewy loins a raw-hide belt confined;
His hair and beard, like raven plumes, streamed dark along the wind;
A strong acacia's spiky stem, scarce smoothed, was in his hand;
His feet were fleshless, callous, bare, and tawny as the sand;
His brow, a soaring crag, o'erhung his swart and craggy chest,
And 'neath its shades his eyes gleamed keen as eagles' from their nest.
Remote from courts, corruption, crime, in that high shepherd land,
With God alone his soul had grown to stature bold and grand.

— *G. L. Taylor.*

8—11. (9) *Zarephath*, Phoen. town midway bet. Tyre and Sidon; called in N. T. *Sarepta*; mod. village *Sarafend*. "He is sent among these Baal-worshippers to do them kindness, to receive kindness from them — perhaps to learn a wider tolerance, and to find that idolaters also are human beings, children like the orthodox, of the same heavenly Father." (10) *gathering of sticks*, an indic. of her extreme poverty. (11) *morsel of bread*,^d he was hungry after long traveling.

The food of the saints. — I. Bodily sustenance. 1. We must use the means at hand. 2. Then God will supply what is lacking. 3. God gives us our bread daily. 4. God guarantees us necessities, not luxuries. II. Spiritual food. 1. We must use the means of grace. 2. If we are debarred from the means of grace, God will give grace without means. 3. Supplies of grace are granted day by day. 4. Grace is given without measure. — *J. Hammond.*

Unexpected grace.—"Phenicia was the last place in the world to have found a worshipper of the Lord, the living God. It was also the last place in the world to have found an Elijah. And yet both are here—the one a lily among thorns, the other, in the quaint but fine thought of Lightfoot, the first apostle to the Gentiles." The rarest virtues are sometimes found in the most unexpected places. During the last journey of Livingstone, the veteran African traveler, he was compelled, in consequence of a tribal war, to change his route, and pass through a country where no rain had fallen, and the grass, mostly burnt off, left a surface covered with black ashes, from which the heat radiated as from a furnace. Yet, out of this hard, hot surface, *the flowers would persist in coming.* So amid the moral wastes of heathendom, where the soil is hard and black, and apparently unfertile, and where our missionaries have toiled so long with such earnestness and devotion, the delicate flowers of Christian virtues have pushed their way, displaying their modest beauty, and scattering their hallowing fragrance—foretokens of the coming period when the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose. — *Hom. Com.*

12—16. (12) Lord thy God, either she herself worshipped Jehovah, or she recognized in the prophet an Israelite. **cake**, Heb. *maogh*, a cake baked under ashes, round in shape. **oil**, olive oil. **eat it and die**, for the effects of the drought seem to have reached Phenicia." (13) little cake, this tried her faith in his word, whether she could trust the assurance of vs. 14. (14) waste, away, even by daily using from it. (15) days, prob. a year. (16) fail, cf. Mt. x. 41, 42.

The barrel of meal and the cruse of oil (vs. 16). — This miracle illustrates a principle in connection with—I. Economy. For what can so well define economy as making much out of little? Where it exists there will seldom be absent "the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil." II. Providence. As a rule, when economy may be vain, God's special care will insure for the good "the barrel of meal," etc. III. Piety. We never starve in spiritual life for lack of help. IV. Generosity. This woman gave and got. But let us remember that she gave unselfishly, and not in order to get. Moreover, she gave to her utmost. — *H. J. Martyn.*

Rich in giving. —

Is thy cruse of comfort failing?

Rise and share it with another,

And through all the years of famine

It shall serve thee and thy brother.

Love divine will fill thy storehouse,

Or thy handful still renew.

Scanty fare for one will often

Make a royal feast for two.

Numb and weary on the mountains,

Wouldst thou sleep amidst the snow?

Chafe that frozen form beside thee,

And together both shall glow.

Art thou stricken in life's battle?

Many wounded round thee moan;

Lavish on their wounds thy balsams,

And that balm shall heal thine own.

For the heart grows rich in giving:

All its wealth is living grain;

Seeds which mildew in the garner,

Scattered, fill with gold the plain.

Is thy burden hard and heavy?

Do thy steps drag wearily?

Help to bear thy brother's burden;

God will bear both it and thee. — *Mrs. Charles.*

17—19. (17) no breath, no spirit, no soul,^b comp. Ge. ii. 7. (18) what, etc., the expression of distress at the consequences of entertaining the prophet esp. the bringing down punishment upon her.^c "What have I done? Why

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father, as one where it was most unlikely that he would be searched for." — *Spk. Com.*

Faith really becomes faith in God when human means fail. The faith of Zarephath grows into the faith of Carmel by these great tests that are really growth. — *Bishop Warren.*

the widow's store

a "Josephus quotes a testimony fr. the Phoen. history of Menander, relating that a long drought prevailed in that country in the reign of Ethbaal, the father of Jezebel." — *Wordsworth.*

Self-denial is a virtue of the highest quality, and he who has it not and does not strive to acquire it, will never excel in anything. — *Bisho p Conybeare.*

"The opportunity of making happy is more scarce than we imagine; the punishment of missing it is, never to meet with it again; and the use we make of it leaves us an eternal sentiment of satisfaction or repentance." — *Rousseau.*

the widow's son dies

b Eccl. iii. 21.

c "As if the prophet's visit had

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drawn God's attention to her, and so to her sins, wh (she feels) deserve a judgment." — *Spk. Com.*

a "The mode of building and the custom of giving the upper room to the guests, was prob. the same in Elijah's time as now." — *Thomson.*

"The death we feared was but a gray eve 'twent two shining days." — *Alexander Smith.*

"Go, golden lily, bloom thou on the breast of everlasting sanctity." — *Bailey.*

Elijah restores him to life

Lord Rochester fled from Fenelon, crying, "If I stay here any longer, I shall become a Christian in spite of myself."

the drought

Ahab Obadiah

b Lu. iv. 25; Jas. v. 17.

c Corresponds to the Phoen. *Abdehim*, and the modern Arabic *Abdallah*.

d Ge. xxii. 12; xlii. 18.

e "It prob. was in revenge for Elijah's causing the drought, as she supposed, by magic power." — *Wordsworth.*

f Jos. x. 17; Ju. vi. 2; 1 Sa. xlii. 6; xli. 1; xxiv. 3; Je. xxxiii. 27; He. xi. 38.

g "Corn must have been imported fr.

hast thou not left me in peace?" my sin, "her idea evidently is that the prophet had become acquainted with her sinfulness, and had called it to the remembrance of the Almighty." — *Pulp. Com.* (19) loft, better the upper room, the part usually given to a guest.^a

Affliction and its fruits. — I. The discipline of trial. 1. It is no proof of God's anger; 2. God's blow may be very heavy. His plough sinks deep that His work may be rightly done. II. The fruits it yields. 1. It reveals our need; 2. It stirs up to prayer; 3. It leads to the vision of God's glory; 4. It deepens trust. — *J. Urquhart.*

A sleeping child. —

Oh, that my spirit's eye could see
Whence burst those gleams of ecstasy!
That light of dreaming soul appears
To play from thoughts beyond thy years.
Thou smil'st, as if thy soul were soaring
To heaven, and heaven's God adoring!
And who can tell what visions high
May bless an infant's sleeping eye!
What brighter throne can brightness find
To reign on than an infant's mind,
Ere sin destroy or errors dim
The glory of the Seraphim?

Oh, vision fair! that I could be
Again as young, as pure as thee!
Vain wish! the rainbow's radiant form
May view, but cannot brave the storm.
Years can bedim the gorgeous dyes
That paint the bird of Paradise.
And years, so fate has ordered, roll
Clouds o'er the summer of the soul. — *Wilson*

20-24. (20) brought evil, such it seemed, but Elijah felt sure of some purpose of mercy. (21) stretched, or measured; comp. 2 Ki. iv. 34. (22) soul . . again, obs. that death is figured as "giving up the ghost." (23) chamber, loft of vs. 19. (24) Now, *R. V.*, omits "by this." know, the miracle confirmed her faith; a fresh proof of his mission.

An intrepid faith. — I. May be sorely tried. II. Is sustained and strengthened by earnest prayer. III. Is honored by a signal display of Divine power. IV. Is the means of strengthening and confirming the weak. — *Hom. Com.*

Weaving our lives. — As I stood before one of the most famous of the Aubusson tapestries, I asked the attendant to show me the other side. It was a tangle of threads and thrums and ends, a confused mystery of colors, without order or meaning or beauty, and resembling the picture on the other side as little as the tuning of an organ resembles the oratorio of the Messiah. And yet the artist stands behind his web, on this reverse side, while he is making the picture. The pattern is before him. The materials are by his side. He weaves them in according to the pattern, but without seeing the charming picture that is coming into being. We are now weaving our lives on the reverse side; we cannot see their meaning; we see only the confused jumble of life's threads. But if we work in the threads God bids us and follow the pattern set us, at length He will show us the right side, the true picture our lives are making, full of blessing and glory. — *Peloubet.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH

1-6. (1) third year, of his sojourn at Zarephath: whole time of drought was 3½ years.^b shew . . Ahab, comp. ch. xvii. 1. (2) went, in the fearlessness of obedience. (3) Obadiah, *servant of Jehovah.*^c governor, as ch. xvi. 9. feared,^d etc., but secretly. (4) cut off, this persecution is not otherwise narrated.^e prophets, at Dan and Bethel; also the "sons of the prophets," those who belonged to the "schools of the prophets." cave,^f with natural caverns the limestone hills of Judea and Samaria abound. (5) find grass,^g in moist places. all the beasts, "All" is not in Heb. "that we may

not have to cut off a portion of." (6) **Ahab went, etc.**, such an occupation would in the E. be thought quite befitting a king.

Obadiah (vs. 8). — We see here that true religion — I. Is sometimes found in the most unlikely places. An ancient saint in the house of Ahab, and that person the governor of his house! II. May flourish under great external disadvantages. III. May reach the maturity of his growth amidst hindrances and persecutions. A living piety will make progress and find room to spread itself. IV. Secures the special protection, as well as the favor, of the Lord. They dwell safely whom the Lord keeps.

Drought in the East (vs. 5). — There had not been rain upon the earth for three years and six months; a circumstance which must have had a fatal effect on vegetation. Situated in a temperate climate, what would England be under such circumstances? In droughts in the East, which have lasted from six to ten months, how often have we seen men, like Obadiah, going along in marshy places, or by the sides of tanks, in search of grass for their cattle! See the poor fellow with a basket on his back, a little instrument (which works like a Dutch hoe) in his hand! He strolls from fountain to brook; and no sooner does he see a green patch of verdure than he runs with eagerness to the spot. Perhaps he meets another in search of the same thing, when each declares he had the first view. They set to work, snarling at each other, and dealing out all kinds or abuse, till they have completely cleared the place of every green blade. Wherever there is a stream or an artificial water-course, there the eye is refreshed with delightful verdure. But look a few yards from the place, and you see the withered herbage, which apparently is gone beyond recovery; but which, in a few hours, would start into fresh life, if visited by showers. The effect of rain operates like enchantment on the scene; and the English stranger is often reminded of the green fields of his own native land. — *Roberts*.

7-10. (7) **met him**, confronted him; appeared suddenly before him. **thou that, etc.**, or, art thou here? *R. V.*, "is it thou?" (8) **I am, R. V.**, "It is I." behold **Elijah**, only these two words were spoken, and these lose their force by any addition to them. (9) **sinned**, regarding the commission as certainly fatal (vs. 12), he thinks a judgment on himself must be intended. **servant, slave**. (10) **no nation, etc.**,^a not strictly true; references as to those nations over wh. Ahab had influence. The king regarded E. as the author of the drought. **took an oath**, made them solemnly swear.

The servant of the Lord. — I. He feared the Lord from his youth. II. He feared the Lord greatly. This is proved by his—1. Respect for the ambassador of God; 2. Kindness to the servants of God; 3. Faith in the power of God. III. He faithfully served his king; 1. God-fearing men make good citizens; 2. God preserves them in their faithfulness. — *J. A. Macdonald*.

The king and the informer. — Philip the Second of Spain having granted a general amnesty to a rebellious city, with the exception of certain persons, a courtier informed him of the place where a gentleman was hidden who was not included in the amnesty. "You would have done better," said the king, "to have gone and told him that I am here, than to come and tell me where he is." — *Laconics*.

11-16. (11) **behold, etc.**, as vs. 8. (12) **carry thee**,^b the sudden appearance and disappearance of Elijah had already impressed the people. Obad. did not fear his meeting Ahab so much as the effect of disappointing and seeming to delude the king. (13) **was it not, indic.** uncertainty of Elij.'s knowledge of the kindness of Obad. "It is to Ahab's credit that he retained such a man in office, though the touch of timidity which we trace in Obadiah may have concealed the full faithfulness of his personal allegiance to the old worship. Yet that such a man should still hold the post of chamberlain (*al-hab-baith*) furnishes a fresh proof that Ahab was not himself a worshipper of Baal." — *Exp. B.* (14) **thou sayest, i. e.** "is this to be the reward of my devotion?" (15) **surely**, this removed Obad.'s great fear. (16) **went**, turning in the direction of Ahab's search. The prophet and king prob. met near S. E. of Carmel.

The young admonished (vs. 12). — I. We shall consider youth as the most favorable season in which to commence a religious course. 1. It presents the fewest obstacles; 2. It is the most honorable period for this purpose; 3. It is the most profitable: at no other period can we begin so advantageously. II. The beneficial influence of early piety over the remainder of your days. It

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Egypt, etc., but fresh grass was needed for the cattle." — *Jamieson*.

"Prob. the command to hide at Cherith alone saved Elijah fr. being one of the victims." — *Spk. Com.*

Elijah meets Obadiah

^a "Ahab's purpose in seeking Elijah thus may have been to force him to revoke the magic spell by wh. they may have thought that the drought had been produced." — *Wordsworth*.

The holiest principles do not suffice; we must have God Himself. Apart from Him, the most powerful principles are no better than a sword in the hand of a little child or of a drunken man.

and sends Obadiah to Ahab

^b Comp. 2 Ki. ii. 13; Eze. iii. 12, 14, viii. 3; Ac. viii. 39.

"Peace does not dwell in outward things, but within the soul; we may preserve it in the midst of the bitterest pain, if our will remains firm and submissive. Peace in this life springs from acquiescence even

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in disagreeable things, not an exemption from suffering."—*Eñeolion*.

"Be penitent, for the world is broad and wide"—*Shakespeare*.

"Onward in faith, and leave the rest to Heaven."—*Southey*.

"Search others for their virtues, and thyself for thy vices."—*Fuller*.

Elijah meets Ahab and challenges the priests of Baal

a Jos. vii. 25.

b "In that hour of extreme despair the voice of Elijah sounded with an authority wh. it had never had before."—*Stanley*.

c "Forty miles before Tyre, and little more than half that distance W. of Nazareth, and forming the S. W. boundary towards the sea of the plain of Esdraelon, extends for several miles the mountain ridge of Carmel. Its beauty is celebrated in Scrip., and even in this day of desolation it sustains its ancient praise."—*Kitto*.

Carmel : Elijah and the priests of Baal

d Jos. xxiv. 15; 1 Sa. vii. 3; Mat. vi. 24; Lu. xvi. 13.

will have a good influence over your bodies, your secular concerns. It will secure from dangers to which you are exposed in a season of life the most perilous. It will be beneficial in forming connections and establishing plans for life. Its influence will be happy in your spiritual progress and pleasure. It will be of unspeakable advantage in the calamities of life. It will bless old age. III. The consequences of procrastination. Make two suppositions :— 1. That, after all your delay, you obtain repentance. Allowing the hope to be well founded, nothing can be more unreasonable than delay. There are four circumstances of peculiar aggravation in a late repentance : (1) Singular abuse of Divine goodness; (2) Multitude of evil to be reviewed; (3) Injury done to others; (4) The uncertainty attending it. 2. That—and this is far more probable—after delay you do not obtain it.—*W. Jay*.

Decision of a youth (vs. 12).—At Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, a child named Cyril, in a time of heavy persecution, called continually upon the name of Jesus Christ; and neither threats nor blows could divert him from it. Many children of his own age persecuted him, and his heathen father turned him out of doors. At last he was brought before the judge, who threatened him, and expostulated with him. With undaunted boldness he said, "I rejoice to bear your reproaches: God will receive me. I am glad that I am expelled out of our house: I shall have a better mansion. I fear not death, because it will introduce me to a better life." He was condemned to the flames, with a full expectation that he would recant and save his life. He remained firm, saying, "Your fire and your sword are insignificant: I go to a better house and more excellent riches; despatch me presently that I may enjoy them." He suffered, being burned to death amid a throng of wondering spectators.

17-20. (17) *art thou, etc., lit. Art thou here, O troubler of Israel!* Obs. the haughty and authoritative tone of the king's address. *troubleth*, the term applied only to Achan. (18) *thou*,^b "the cause of the drought was not the menace of Elijah, but the apostasy to Baalim." Baalim, Ju. ii. 11. R. V., "the Baalim." Baal was worshiped under different names as Baalzebub, Baal-peor, etc.; in compliance with the will of Jezebel, Ahab had admitted them all into Israel. (19) *all Israel*, "by representation," call the solemn assembly. *Carmel*,^c "on the S. E. end of it, looking towards Jezreel." *prophets, or priests*; teachers. *eat at*, are maintained by food from the court. (20) *children of Is.*, a national assembly was convened.

A false charge heroically answered (vss. 17, 18).—A time to speak and a time to be silent. There is a meekness—like that of Christ—that is silent before unjust accusation. There is also a meekness—like that of Moses, the meekest of men—that speaks in thunder. I. Ahab's insinuation. 1. Some truth in it: a good man, the Bible, and religion do trouble the ungodly; 2. Yet it was false in reality: the wicked ever try to shift the blame. II. Elijah's brave reply. 1. It was fearless; 2. It was faithful; 3. It was not without proof.

Heroic constancy.—The fear of God putteth out the fear of any mortal wight, as the sunbeams do the fire on the hearth. When Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, said to Dr. Taylor, the martyr—"Art thou come, thou villain? How darest thou look me in the face for shame? Knowest thou not who I am?" "Yes," quoth Taylor, "I know who you are; you are Dr. Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor, yet but a mortal man, I trow. But if I should be afraid of your lordly looks, why fear you not God, the Lord of us all? How dare you for shame look any Christian man in the face, seeing you have forsaken the truth, denied our Saviour Christ and His Word, and done contrary to your own word and writing?" Thus spake that valiant martyr, like another Elias.—*Trapp*.

21-24. (21) *came*, stood forth, full in view. As the caller of the assembly it rested on him to explain its object. *halt ye*,^d indic. that as yet the Baal worship was not generally accepted. *opinions*, thoughts. *the Lord*, better read *Jehovah*. *not a word*, partly through fear of the king; partly bec. they were inclined to join the Jehovah and the Baal worship together. (22) *I only*, in the exercise of prophetic office; or I only am here present. (23) *them choose*. Elij. removes all possible accusation of his deception. (24) *gods, R. V., "god."* *by fire*, as Baal was the Sun-god, this test gave them every advantage.

Religious indecision. — I. Its condition. 1. It implies some enlightenment on religious subjects. 2. It implies contradiction between theory and practice. 3. It implies dissatisfaction with present condition. II. Its causes. 1. Want of thoughtful consideration. 2. Deficiency of personal courage. 3. Tendency to procrastination. III. Its consequences. 1. Increase of difficulties. 2. Loss of opportunity. 3. Irreparable ruin. — A. Rowland.

The tests of results. — A friend of the writer was asked to enter on a public discussion with some secularists. He replied, "When you can find me twelve families who were once Christians, but by embracing your views have become more virtuous, useful, contented and happy, better and happier in this present life, according to your theory, I shall think it worth while to argue with you, and not before; for I can find you one hundred families who were once living only on your theory, and for this present world, but who, by Christianity, have become better husbands and wives, better parents and children, or better neighbors, and citizens, more virtuous, and sober, and happy." Yes, let religion be tested by its purifying power. "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God!" — Newman Hall, in *S. S. Times*.

25-29. (25) choose you, giving them every advantage. put no fire anxiety lest the prophets of Baal resort to subterfuge. (26) dressed it, for sacrifice. they leaped, etc.,^a working themselves up into a frenzy. (27) mocked them, one of the few cases of *irony* in Scrip.^b he is a god, surely you cannot be mistaken in that, he must be busy, or asleep, etc. (28) after their manner,^c supposing the gods pleased with human blood. lancets, spears, or lances; not our mod. medical instrument. (29) prophesied, this word is sometimes applied to religious ecstasy.^d evening sacrifice, toward this time, see vs. 36. Soon after midday.

The instructive example of Baal's priests (vss. 28, 29). — I. The priests of Baal served a god whom they invested with sanguinary attributes, and to whom, as they supposed it would be acceptable that they should lacerate their bodies while acting as worshipers. And they did not at all shrink from doing what their creed required them to do. Is our zeal thus great? II. They persevered in spite of the keen ridicule of Elijah. A lesson here on courage. III. They persisted in praying, though no answer was vouchsafed: a lesson on importunity. — H. Melvil.

Heathen fanaticism. — In this we have the exact picture of Oriental fanaticism, such as may still be seen in Eastern religions. As the Mussulman derishes work themselves into a frenzy by the invocation of "Allah! Allah!" until the words themselves are inarticulate gasps; as Eastern Christians will recite the "Kyrie Eleison," the "Gospidi Ponictou," in a hundred-fold repetition; as the pilgrims round the church of St. John at Samaria formerly, and round the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre now, race and run and tumble, in order to bring down the Divine fire into the midst of them — so the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal (for the prophets of Ashtaroth seem to have shrunk from the contest) performed their wild dances round their altar, or upon it, springing up or sinking down, with the fantastic gestures which Orientals alone can command, as if by an internal mechanism, and screaming with that sustained energy which believes that it will be heard from its much speaking, from morn till noon, "Hear us, O Baal, hear us!" . . . And like the dervishes, who eat glass, seize living snakes with their teeth, throw themselves prostrate for their mounted chiefs to ride over them; like the Corbantuan priests of Cybele; like the fakirs of India, — they now, in their frenzied state, tossed to and fro the swords and lances which formed part of their fantastic worship, and gashed themselves and each other, till they were smeared with blood, and mingled with their loud yells to the silent and sleeping divinity those ravings which formed the dark side of ancient prophecy. — Stanley.

30-35. (30) come, etc., by this directing the attention of the people away fr. the priests to himself. repaired, etc., an ancient altar, used before the temple was built. "This was an act of profound significance. It showed him as the restorer of the law and the true religion." — Pulp. Com. broken down, by Ahab, or during his reign.^e (31) twelve stones, therein asserting Jehovah's claim to His whole people.^f (32) in the name of, "by the authority and for the glory of Jehovah." trench,^g or ditch; to contain water, and prove there was no deception. measures, seahs, about 3 gallons

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"Lit., 'How long leap ye upon two branches?' a beautiful and poetical allusion to the restlessness of a bird, wh. remains not long in one position, but is continually hopping from branch to branch." — Kitto.

"How long will ye go lame upon tottering knees? that is, waver backwards and forwards unsteadily between truth and falsehood, Jahveh and Baal." — Ewald.

the priests cry in vain; Elijah derides Baal

a "The fanatic, big with pride and full of himself, rejects reason and takes the emotions of his own passions for those of grace; and, far from conducting himself with Christian modesty and love, he follows the reveries of his imaginations as if they were the inspirations of the Divine Spirit." — J. Fletcher.

b 1 Ki. xxii. 15; Job xii. 2; xxxviii. 5; Eze. xxxviii. 3, 4; Zec. xi. 13; 1 Cor. iv. 8.

c "The custom of inflicting gashes on their limbs, in their relig. exercises, was common among the Carians, the Syrians, and the Phrygians." — Spk. Com.

d 1 Sa. xviii. 10; 1 Ki. xxii. 12.

Elijah repairs the old altar

e 1 Ki. xix. 10.

f "By this action he calls to remembrance the number of the tribes, their real unity in God's sight, and the sin of their separation." — Keil.

g "It was like a furrow round the

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altar, of such a circumference that two measures of seed might be sown in it."—*Wordsworth*.

"Heaven's gates are not so highly arched as princes' palaces; they that enter there must go upon their knees."—*Webster*. "More things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of."—*Tennyson*.

Elijah's prayer —
priests of Baal destroyed

α Ex. iii. 6, 15, 16; iv. 5.

When some one said to Wendell Phillips that the religion of India is as good as Christianity, he replied, "The map of India is the answer." The map of the world is the proof of Christianity; for wherever is the most and purest Christianity, there are the most happiness, the highest morality, the fullest manhood and womanhood.—*Peloubet*.

Elijah runs before Ahab to Jezreel

β Also identified by some with the prophet Jonah.

α Jos. xix. 18.

each. **wood in order, etc.**, he obeyed, that is, all the injunctions of the law with respect to the offering of a burnt-sacrifice. (See Lev. i. 3-9). He thus publicly taught that all the ordinances of the law were binding upon the kingdom of Israel.—*Spk. Com.* (33) **fill, etc.**, this was addressed to attendants; the barrels were buckets, or pitchers. (34) **second time, etc.**, making assurance doubly sure. (35) **ran round**, quite flooding it.

The old altar repaired (vs. 30).—I The original erecters little thought of the good turn it would serve in the future. A hint for builders of sanctuaries, etc. II. The prophet repairing the old altar. A type of those who would restore to their primitive uses the buildings of the past. III. The whole a type of the certain restoration of the true and overthrow of the false.

Reclaiming what was abandoned.—At a recent county fair in New England there was a continual crowd around one agricultural exhibit, which excited a great deal of admiration, and was the occasion of many remarks. The exhibit was marked, "Raised on an abandoned farm." The articles shown were grown by a man who had formerly followed another occupation, upon a farm in a rough hill town, which its owner had found an undesirable piece of property, and had practically deserted. The exhibit included twenty-two varieties of potatoes, several varieties of wheat, oats, barley, rye and beans, onions, pumpkins, squashes, melons, beets, carrots, and turnips. The people kept the proprietor of the "abandoned farm" busy explaining how he produced such wonderful results. His reply was that he took delight in farming, and did the best he could. "Oh, yes," said one bystander, somewhat contemptuously, "he's farming for the love of it." "And I imagine," said another bystander, "that if the farmer who had the place before this man took it had farmed a little more for the love of it, he wouldn't have had any occasion to go off and leave it." There was sound philosophy in this remark.—*Youth's Companion*.

36—40. (36) **at the time**, three o'clock. **Abraham, etc.**, the most solemn form of address to God.* As such He is God of the promises. (37) **turned etc.**, used this scene to persuade them to return to Thee. (38) **the fire**, not mere lightning; the people saw it descend. Comp. fire on Sodom; fiery cloud: fire in holy of holies, etc. Its Div. and mirac. character is seen in its burning up everything. (39) **the Lord**, better Jehovah. "Elijah was the deliverer of his people from a hideous and polluted apostasy which, had he not prevailed that day, would have obliterated their name and their memory from the annals of the nations."—*Exp. B.* (40) **take**, seize: lay hands boldly on the deivers. **Kishon**, now called *Nahr Mukatta*, the torrent of slaughter.

Israel's conversion.—I. What it was. 1. A change of mind; 2. A change of affection; 3. A change of conduct. II. How it was brought about. 1. By the ministry of a prophet; 2. By a supernatural token; 3. After prayer to God; 4. It was the result of a sudden decision. III. Its results. 1. Obedience; 2. Watchfulness; 3. Blessing.—*J. Hammond*.

The trial of an idol.—Rufinus says that the Chaldeans, who adored fire, carried their god into several countries to try his power over the gods of other nations. He baffled the images of brass, gold, silver, wood, or of whatever other material they were formed, testifying his power by reducing them to dust, and thus his worship was almost everywhere established. But when he was brought to Egypt the priest of Canopus thought of a stratagem which succeeded in evincing the superiority of the god whom he served. The jars in which the Egyptians were wont to purify the water of the Nile, having been perforated on all sides with small imperceptible holes, he took one of them, stopped the holes with wax, and fitted to the jar's mouth the head of an idol. When the Chaldean priests applied their fire to this strange idol, the heat, of course, melted the wax, and the water, flowing out, extinguished the fire, giving Canopus the victory over the god of the Chaldeans.

41—46. (41) **up, eat**, the food wh. his attendants had provided for him sound, a change of wind. "The sound of the tread of rain." (42) **top**, to a point fr. whence the sea was visible. **face . . knees**, the "Oriental attitude of complete abstraction." (43) **servant**, poss. the widow of Zarephath's son.^β (44) **little cloud**, "such a cloud is often the forerunner of a violent storm." **hand, caph**, the palm of the hand. **stop thee**, after heavy rains the brook Kishon becomes an impassable swamp (45) **meanwhile, R. V.**, "in a little while. and wind, wh. drove the clouds. **Jezreel, Zerim**,^c poss. Ahab's

summer residence. (46) **girded**,^a so as to run freely. This done as sign of loyalty.

Effectual fervent prayer.—I. Its author. It was the prayer—1. Of a righteous man; 2. Of a man of like passions with us. II. Its qualities. It was—1. Fervent; 2. Persevering; 3. Touching God's kingdom; 4. Believing; 5. Humble; 6. In the Holy Ghost. III. Its efficacy. It availed—1. Much; 2. Immediately.—*Pulpit Com.*

Swift runners.—There is an old eastern tale of the swift Persian Shatirs. To one his sovereign had promised the hand of a princess if he accomplished in running a certain feat. Girt as tightly as possible, when to stoop was death, he ran for miles like a gazelle in front of the royal train. Alarmed at his success, and fearing the promise would have to be kept, the king dropped his whip; but, scarce pausing in his progress, the adroit, skilful runner picked it up with his foot. Next the monarch dropped his ring, and finding that *that* he could not recover with his foot, the runner exclaimed, "O King, you have broken your word, but I am true to the last"—stooped to the ground, picked up the ring with his finger, gave a deep groan of pain, fell down and expired.—*Howat.*

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1-4. (1) **told Jezebel**, this shows that she had taken no part in the Carmel scene. **slain, etc.**, ch. xviii. 40. (2) **saying**, Sept. inserts, "if thou art Elij. and I, Jezebel." so let, etc., this oath reveals the haughty spirit of the queen.^b By sending this message she may have intended to drive him from the kingdom.^c (3) **he saw**, Sept. and other ancient versions have "And he feared." "The awfulness which invested Elijah, and the supernatural powers on which he relied, when he was engaged in the battles of the Lord, belonged to him only in his public and prophetic capacity. As a man he was but a poor, feeble, lonely subject, whose blood might be shed at any moment."—*Exp. Bib.* **Beersheba**, Ge. xxi. 14, 95 miles fr. Jezreel. **left . . there**, "the prophet now desires solitude, and so dismisses him. In the need of spiritual communion with God no companion is desired. Even Jesus himself said to His disciples 'Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder' (Matt. xxvi. 36)."—*Cam. B.* (4) **juniper**, Heb. *rothem*, a species of broom. **requested, etc.**, the prayer of utter depression.^d **better**, any more able to recover the people: my work, too, is a failure. "In the apparently absolute failure, the seemingly final frustration of such men as these, there is something nobler than in the highest personal exaltations of ignobler souls."—*Exp. B.*

Elijah (vs. 4).—I. The cause of Elijah's despondency. 1. Relaxation of physical strength; 2. Want of sympathy; 3. Want of occupation; 4. Disappointment in the expectation of success. II. God's treatment of it. 1. He recruited Elijah's exhausted strength; 2. He calmed his stormy mind by the healing influence of Nature; 3. He made him feel the earnestness of life; 4. He assured him of victory.—*F. W. Robertson.*

Solitude helps to mature thought.—Whenever Michael Angelo, that "divine madman," as Richardson once wrote on the back of one of his drawings, was meditating on some great design, he closed himself up from the world. "Why do you lead such a solitary life?" asked a friend. "Art," replied the sublime artist, "is a jealous god; it requires the whole and entire man." During his mighty labor in the Sistine Chapel he refused to have any communication with any person, even at his own house.—*D'Israeli.*

5-8. (5) **slept**, in the exhaustion of mental strain and bodily fatigue. **eat**, this ans. to his prayer shows how much his depression was physical. (6) **cake baken**, not a fire and the cake baking, but a cake such as was usually baked among embers. **head**, Heb. *bolster*. (7) **journey**, wh. Elijah had designed, but failed as yet to accomplish. He was fleeing for safety to the desert district of Sinai. (8) **forty days**,^f etc., it did not take him this time to reach Horeb, but for this time he wandered about the granite hills. **Horeb**, Ex. iii. 1. **mount of God**, "so called because it was distinguished through God's manifestation of His power and glory."

Elijah: thoughts on life (vs. 8).—This incident suggests—I. An undesirable possibility in human life. Were men to continue here without food a disastrous inactivity would ensue. II. The supporting element of all life. The will of God kept Elijah alive. III. The Divine care of a godly life. That

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^a "In Persia it is at this day regarded as a piece of necessary state for the king and great nobles to have several men to run before and behind them as they ride out on horseback."—*Kitto.*

Ahab tells Jezebel; Elijah in the wilderness

^b "With one of those tremendous vows wh. mark the history of the Semitic race, both within and without the Jewish pale—the vow of Jephthah, the vow of Saul, the vow of Hannibal—she sent a messenger to Elijah."—*Stanley.*

1 Ki. xx. 10; 2 Ki. vi. 31.

^c "That he might not gain an ascendancy over Ahab."—*Wordsworth.*

^d Nu. xi. 15; Matt. xxvi. 39.

Elijah under the juniper

^e Ge. xxi. 15-19.

^f De. ix. 9, 18; Mat. iv. 2.

"God pledges Himself that there will not be one redundant thorn in the believer's chaplet of suffering. No burden too heavy will be laid on him, and no sacrifice too great exacted from

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him. Whenever the 'need be' has accomplished its end, then the rod is removed, the chastisement suspended, the furnace quenched."—*Macduff*.

the still
small voice

a "There is nothing to confirm, but there is nothing to contradict, the belief that it may have been in that secluded basin, wh. has been long pointed out as the spot, beneath the summit of what is called 'The Mount of Moses.'"—*Stanley*.

b "This is the first place, I believe, in the Bib. where any one is introduced as using the words, 'Lord God of Hosts.'"—*Wordsworth*.

Comp. 2. Sa. v. 10.

c "The acted parable is, in fact a condemnation of that zeal which Elijah had gloried in."—*Spk. Com.*

d Ex. iii. 6.

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Elijah is
sent to
anoint
Hazeal

e 2 Ki. x. 32, 33; xiii. 3.

f Ho. xlii. 2.

"We want more Christians like the Irishman who, when asked if he didn't tremble during a certain storm when he was standing out upon a rocky eminence, said, 'Yes, my legs trembled, but the rock didn't

God takes care of His people *individually* is—1. Accordant with reason; 2. Taught by Scripture; 3. Attested by the experience of the good.—*Thomas*.

The escape of Athanasius.—Athanasius, when he was being pursued on the Nile, took the opportunity of a bend of the river boldly to turn back his boat towards Alexandria. "Do you know where Athanasius is?" shouted the pursuers. "He is not far off!" answered the disguised Archbishop; and the emissaries of Constantius went on in the opposite direction from that in which he made his escape.—*Farrar*.

9-14. (9) a cave, the cave, one well known.* word . . him, in a night vision. doest thou, etc., "when it is remembered that the prophet had been sent to every other destination by the 'word of the Lord,' and that he had left Jezreel without any such word—left it in terror and bitter disappointment and sheer distrust of God—it does look as if the words conveyed a gentle reminder that he had deserted the post of duty, and had no right to be there."—*Pul. Com.* (10) very jealous,^b or earnest: this is said in tone of reproach that God had not followed his zeal and service with adequate success. Lord . . hosts, expression first used by Elij. ascribing to Jehovah the sovereignty claimed for the Baalim. (11) Lord . . wind, Elijah felt the terror of the scene, as the storm dislodged huge masses of the mountain granite, and sent them rolling and crashing down the hills. But it did not speak to his inmost heart."—*Exp. B.* (12) fire, as lightning. still small voice,^c a sound of soft stillness, gentle blowing, or soft murmur, a sign of the nearness of God. (13) mantle,^d Elij.'s characteristic garment. (14) he said, words same as in vs. 10, but tone different; at first Elij. is petulant, now he is humble, he begins to ques. the wisdom of his own violent measures.

A question from God (vs. 9).—We may consider this question as addressed to—I. The deceiver in the cave of hypocrisy. II. The notable sinner in the cave of supposed secrecy. III. The penitent sinner in the cave of despair. IV. The converted sinner in the cave of non-confession. V. The godly in the cave of luxurious retirement and easy seclusion. VI. The godly in the cave of misanthropy and disgust.—*S. Martin*.

Inspiration of the storm.—I was traveling at night in a mountain region, when a terrible storm came on. The rain poured in torrents; the thunder pealed among the rocks; flash after flash of lightning linked the hills together, as with chains of fire. A pall of blackness covered the sky from end to end. Hundreds of torrents poured down the heights into a lake, as if direct from the clouds; the sheen of their foam looked weird and ghastly in the illumination of the lightning, and their roar drowning the crash of the thunder; the sound of many waters, here, there, and everywhere, filling earth and sky. Amid all this appalling elemental war, I felt a strange excitement and uplifting of soul, which made me indifferent to danger, careless what became of me. Such moments reveal to us the greatness of our nature, and fill us with the intoxication of immortality. Death in such glorious circumstances seems an apotheosis. He comes to us as it were with the whirlwind and the chariot of fire, to lift us above the slow pain of dying, in the rapture of translation.—*H. Macmillan*.

15-18. (15) go, return, we are left to assume that the vision had humbled the soul of Elij., and prepared him to execute new prophetic commissions. Damaseus, Ge. xiv. 15. Where he would find shelter and be near Israel. anoint, "neither Hazeal, nor Jehu, so far as we have any record, was ever anointed by Elijah. All we can say is that the command was obeyed in the spirit, and no doubt in the best possible way. It is clear, therefore, that he understood the word to mean "appoint." And the root idea of anointing, it must be remembered, was the setting apart for the service of God."—*Pul. Com.* Hazeal, whom God beholds or cares for. (16) Jehu, Jehovah is he. son, i. e. descended, prob. grandson.—*Spk. Com.* Nimshi, drawn out, saved. Elisha, God is salvation. Shaphat, judge. Abel-meholah, Ju. vii. 22, "field of the dance." (17) sword of Hazeal, 2 Ki. viii. 28, 29, sword of Jehu, 2 Ki. ix. 24, 27, 33, x. 1-7, 18, 25. (18) I have left, R. V., "will I leave." kissed, idolaters did sometimes kiss the hands of their idols.

Luther's experience.—At one time I was sorely vexed and tried by my own sinfulness, by the wickedness of the world, and by the dangers that beset the church. One morning I saw my wife dressed in mourning. Surprised, I asked her who had died. "Do you not know?" she replied. "God in heaven

is dead." "How can you talk such nonsense, Katie?" I said. "How can God die? Why, He is immortal, and will live through all eternity." "Is that really true?" she asked. "Of course," I said, still not perceiving what she was aiming at, "how can you doubt it? As surely as there is a God in heaven, so sure is it that He can never die." "And yet," she said, "though you do not doubt that, yet you are so hopeless and discouraged." Then I observed what a wise woman my wife was, and mastered my sadness.—*Luther.*

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and because my feet were on the rock I felt safe." *Bib. Illus., D. L. Moody.*

19—21. (19) **plowing**, "Elisha's occupation is an indication of his character. He is emphatically a man of peace. He thus presents a strong contrast to the stern, harsh, rugged Gileadite, who is almost half an Arab, who seems to have no settled home, no quiet family circle, who avoids the haunts of men, and is content for months to dwell in a cavern instead of under a roof." — *Spk. Com.* **twelve yoke**, *i. e.*, twelve ploughs were working in the field each with its yoke of oxen.^a **passed by**, better crossed over to him. **cast his mantle**, "this is explained as constituting a species of adoption, bec. a father naturally clothes his children." (20) **go back**, "Go back; it is right, it is natural that thou shouldst thus bid a last farewell before leaving thy home. Thy coming to me must be purely voluntary; I have but cast my mantle over thee, nothing more. Thine own conscience alone can interpret the full meaning of the act, and God will make thy way clear before thy face." — *Exp. B.* (21) **gave . . . people**, "not only the servants or peasants who had been ploughing with him, but possibly his neighbors and friends. This was a farewell, not a religious feast. *Cf.* Luke v. 29, where Levi makes a "great feast" on the occasion of his call." — *Pul. Com.* **ministered**, Ex. xxiv. 13; Jos. i. 1; 2 Ki. iii. 11.

Elijah casts his mantle over Elisha

a "I have seen more than a dozen of them thus at work." — *Thomson.*

"Duty is the river that runs through life. Its tide is silvery to those who are on it, but threatening to those who approach it seldom." — *Royal Helps.*

Possibilities in men. — As the eye of the cunning lapidary detects in the rugged pebble, just digged from the mine, the polished diamond that shall sparkle in the diadem of a king; or as the sculptor in the rough block of marble, newly hewn from the quarry, beholds the statue of perfect grace and beauty that is latent there, and waiting but the touch of his hand, — so He who sees all, and the end from the beginning, sees oftentimes greater wonders than these. He sees the saint in the sinner, the saint that shall be in the sinner that is; the wheat in the tare; the shepherd feeding the sheep in the wolf tearing the sheep; Paul, the preacher of the faith, in Saul, the persecutor of the faith; Israel, a prince with God, in Jacob, the trickster and the supplanter; Matthew, the apostle, in Levi, the publican." — *Abp. Trench.*

"Leave not off praying to God: for either praying will make thee leave off sinning, or continuing in sin will make thee desist from praying." — *Fuller.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

1—6. (1) **and**, "In the LXX. chapters xx. and xxi. are transposed, apparently with a view of bringing the history in which Elijah plays a part into closer connection. **Ben-hadad**, "son of that Ben-hadad under whom the Aramæan kingdom had attained such power," *see vs.* 34. **kings**, feudal kings, not allies, *vs.* 24. (2) **messengers**, ambassadors offering peace on most insulting terms. (3) **mine**, within my power. (4) **I am thine**,^b intimating that he was willing to become tributary. (5) **again**,^c with a more arrogant message. (6) **pleasant**, desirable. Disappointed by Ahab's consent to an indignity which he had thought no monarch could submit to, and prevented by honor and custom from going back from his word, Ben-hadad proceeds to put a construction on his former demands, which at the first they were certainly not intended to bear. — *Spk. Com.* **thine eyes**, LXX., Syr. and Vulg. read *their eyes*.

Ben-hadad sends a message to Ahab

The folly of fear. —

Who would believe what strange bugbears
Mankind creates itself, of fears,
That spring like fern, that insect weed,
Equivocally, without seed,
And have no possible foundation,
But merely in th' imagination?
And yet can do more dreadful feats
Than hags, with all their imps and teats;

b "The ans. was beyond measure tame and submissive, even to abjectness — furnishing another illus. of the yielding temper of this king to any force put upon him from without." — *Kitto.*

c Ex. xv. 9; Is. x. 13, 14.

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Ahab's reply to Ben-hadad

a "They prob. signified their approval or disapproval by exclamations or murmurs; Jos. ix. 18.—*Spk. Com.*

b It also boasts of the vast numbers of his army.

a prophet is sent to Ahab

c 1 Ki. xxii. 8.

d "Their attendants, youths unaccustomed to war."—*Spk. Com.*

e Pr. xxxi. 4, 5; Ec x. 16, 17; Ho. iv. 11.

"Thirst teaches all animals to drink, but drunkenness belongs only to man."—*Fielding.*

"All the crimes on earth do not destroy so many of the human race, nor alienate so much property, as drunkenness."—*Bacon*

the defeat and flight of Ben-hadad

f 1 Sa. ii. 3, 4; Ec. ix. 11.

In the time of Oliver Cromwell, the magistrates in the north of England punished drunkenness by making them carry what is called the "Drunkard's cloak." This was a large barrel, with one head out, and

Make more bewitch and haunt themselves
Than all their nurseries of elves.
For fear does things so like a witch,
'Tis hard t' unriddle which is which." — *Butler.*

7-12. (7) **elders**, forming his council, Ex. iii. 16. Although the king was a despot, at such a crisis he would naturally call the people together. **seeketh mischief**, an occasion for sacking and plundering the town, wh. he could not do if Ahab submitted to his exactions. (8) **people**,^a who seem to have been present at the consultation. (9) **I may not**, left to himself he would have yielded this. (10) **dust**, etc.,^b of the city when reduced to ruins: a strong figure of the utter desolation he would bring on it. (11) **girdeth**, etc., a proverb, full of points for all boasters. (12) **pavilions**, booths, tents. **set**, etc., marg. *place the engines*.

God's predestination overruling man's presumption. — It is said that on the eve of Napoleon's departure on his Russian campaign he related his schemes in detail to a noble lady, with such arrogant positiveness, that she tried to check him, exclaiming, "Sire, man proposes, but God disposes." To which the emperor haughtily replied, "Madame, I propose and dispose also." We find how, but a few months later, the disastrous retreat from Moscow, and the loss of his crown, army and liberty vindicated the power of God. — *Bib. Ill.*

13-16. (13) **a prophet**, his name unknown. Rab. say Micaiah.^c **great multitude**, vs. 10. **and thou shalt know**, although Israel is not worthy of this wonderful delivery, God for his own name's sake will crush Syria, cf. vs. 28. (14) **young men**,^d or servants. "The agency by which the victory was won was purposely weak and feeble, in order that the work might be seen to be of God (cf. Judg. vii. 2). **princes**, etc., governors of districts. **order**, R. V., "begin." (15) **seven thousand**, not the whole army of Israel, but all then available. (16) "At that burning hour, under the intolerable glare and heat of the Syrian sun, it is almost impossible to bear the weight of armor, or to sit on horseback, or to endure the fierce heat of iron chariots. The first little army which issued from the gates of Samaria might rely on the effects of a surprise. Thousands of the Syrian soldiers, expecting nothing less than a battle would be unarmed, and taking their siesta. Their chariots and war steeds would be unharnessed and unprepared." — *Exp. B.* **drunk**,^e his boastful language befitted one who had lost self-control in drink.

Drunkenness. —

Man with raging drink inflamed
Is far more savage and untamed;
Supplies his loss of wit and sense
With barbarousness and insolence;
Believes himself, the less he's able,
The more heroic and formidable;
Lays by his reason in his bowls
As Turks are said to do their souls,
Until it has so often been
Shut out of its lodging, and let in,
At length it never can attain
To find the right way back again. — *Butler.*

17-21. (18) **alive**, supposing that was easy enough to do. (19) **army**, seven thousand of, vs. 15. (20) **they slew**, prob. only a few of the Syrians attempted to seize them: these being killed, a general panic ensued.^f **with the horsemen**, protected by them. (21) **went out**, with the reserve army.

Fashionable drinking. — At an Episcopal convention a discussion on temperance brought up the "wine question." An influential clergyman arose and made a vehement argument in favor of wine. When he had resumed his seat a layman said, "Mr. Moderator, it is not my purpose, in rising, to answer the learned argument you have just listened to. My object is more humble and, I hope, more practical. I once knew a father in moderate circumstances, who was at much inconvenience to educate a beloved son at college. Here this son became dissipated, but after he had graduated and returned to his father, the influence of home, acting upon a generous nature, actually reformed him. The father was overjoyed at the prospect that his cherished hopes of other days were still to be realized. Several years passed, when, the

young man having completed his professional study and being about to leave his father to establish himself in business, he was invited to dine with a neighboring clergyman distinguished for his hospitality and social qualities. At this dinner wine was introduced, and offered to this young man, who refused; pressed upon him, and again refused. This was repeated, and the young man ridiculed for his peculiar abstinence. The young man was strong enough to overcome appetite, but he could not resist ridicule. He drank and fell, and from that moment became a confirmed drunkard, and long since has found a drunkard's grave. Mr. Moderator," continued the old man, with streaming eyes, "I am that father; and it was at the table of the clergyman who has just taken his seat that his hospitality ruined the son I shall never cease to mourn."

22-27. (22) the prophet, same as vs. 13. strengthen thyself, prepare for another siege. return of year,^a usual season for military operations; from spring to autumn. (23) of the hills,^b Palestine being a hilly country. In fighting Israel kept to the hills, wh. made their foes' chariots and horses almost useless. (24) kings, who the year before had been first to flee, captains, who were likely to obey, and stand fast, bec. chosen for their valor and military skill. (25) in the plain, drawing them out to some chosen battleground. (26) Aphek,^c 1 Sa. xxviii. 4. Some think this is the mod. *Fik*, east of the Sea of Gennesareth. (27) present, victualled. kids, she-goats. Ewald thinks the "two flocks" points to an auxiliary force furnished by Jehoshaphat, fighting with Israel. He also thinks goats are mentioned to convey the exalted position of the camp upon the hills.

Silence and fulness of light.—There are those who recognize God in the valleys of trouble, but ignore Him on the hills of strength and joy. They call Him in professionally. He is kept for the hour of distress. They use religion as a night-bell which they can pull in times of exigency. They make a convenience of God, and they can quote Scripture for the sake of the uses to which they put Him. It is true that God is the God of the valleys. When the life-road suddenly dips into steep and perilous places, when it turns sharply into thick jungles where wild beasts roar and cruel birds scream in the hot wind; where it so narrows itself that only can one go forward at a time, and the kindest of strong friends must helplessly walk behind; when it terminates in the deep grave, without a singing bird in the air or a waft of summer flowers in the bitter wind; then God shines upon it mile by mile, and makes its end the starting point of an everlasting ascent. All this is true, but it is only part of the truth. God has to do as intimately with our prosperity as with our adversity. It is the very glory of religion in its most intelligent conception that it comprehends and blesses the whole life.—Parker.

28-30. (28) man of God, not the prophet of vs. 22. because, etc.,^d the triumph was to be not for Ahab's sake, but in vindication of God as the one living God of the whole earth. (29) battle was joined, the engagement took place. slew, may mean, they smote Syria, "a hundred thousand footmen;" referring not to the slain, but to the size of the annihilated army, 27,000 of wh. took refuge in Aphek. (30) a wall,^e prop. the wall of the town; no doubt by earthquake.

Boastfulness and credulity (vss. 10, 28).—The hero *does*; he never talks of what he will do. "Victory is to be achieved, not to be sworn." This vulgar fashion of calling upon God to do *oneself* some hurt, thus appears to be of great antiquity. But it always proceeds from those who have very little belief in God at all. The profane swearer is practically an infidel. so far as the gods he invokes are concerned. An Italian workman was once reproved in a Roman studio for the oaths which he swore by the sacred name of "Gesù." "Oh," said he, boldly, "I'm not afraid of him at all." Then, lowering his voice to a whisper, he added, "I'll tell you what I'm afraid of; it is His blessed mother." He never swore by the deity he believed in.—Joseph Hammond.

31-34. (31) sackcloth, etc., signs of humiliation: "in deep mourning and with fawning words." (32) yet alive, Ahab did not know but he may have fallen in the engagement. my brother, I will treat him as such. (33) observe,^f augured, took as an omen any favorable word. come . . chariot, a mark of great favor and reconciliation. (34) cities, these were Benhadad's own

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a hole in the other through which the offender was made to put his head, while his hands were drawn through two small holes, one each side. With this he was compelled to march along the public streets.

the prophet again sent to Ahab

a "When the vernal rains are over."
—Wordsworth.

b "The local power and influence of deities was a fixed principle of ancient polytheism."
—Jameson, *Spl. Com.* etc.

c 1 Sa. xxix. 1.

Promise and performance, hearing and doing, are indissolubly linked together; only thus do they secure the blessing. William Jay, of Bath, used quaintly to say that Christ's sheep were marked in the ear and the foot. "They hear My voice and follow Me."

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Ben-hadad is again defeated

d 2 Ki. xix. 34, 35.

e Is. xxiv. 18; Am. v. 19.

To cut off the top of the dock does no good; its root must be eradicated. Sin is the dock-root. "If," writes Adam, "I grapple with sin in my own strength, the devil knows he may go to sleep."

Ahab makes a covenant with Ben-hadad

f "By the Oriental law of *dahkeel*, if two enemies meet and exchange the

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shalam aleikum even by mistake, there is peace bet. them, and they will not fight. If a man be pursued by an enemy, or even be on the ground, he can save his life by calling out '*dakheel*.'—*Layard*.

the disobedient prophet

Oh! if you would suffer to please God, a quarter of the suffering you give yourself by resisting His uprooting of your self-love, how much happier you would be.—*Fénélon*.

the prophet's message to Ahab

α Comp. 2 Sa. xii. 1-4; xiv. 5-11.

b 'A few years after, Ahab met his death in battle with the very king whom he thus befriended, and under the orders of that king to his soldiers to aim their weapons exclusively against the life of the man who had spared his own.'—*Kitto*.

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Naboth refuses to sell Ahab his vineyard

c Fr. Heb. *nab.*, to sprout, germinate.—*Gesenius*.

d 'The palace was situated on the

conditions of peace. **streets**, an Israelite quarter, for carrying on trade. "Compare the *Lombard Streets*, and the *Jewries* in London and Paris."

The etiquette of submission. (vs. 31).—When Bagdad was taken by the Turks, in the year 1638, the governor's lieutenant and principal officer was sent to the grand vizier, with a scarf about his neck, and his sword wreathed in it, which is accounted by them a mark of deep humiliation and perfect submission, to beg for mercy in his own and his master's name. His request being granted, the governor came and was introduced to the grand seignior, and obtained, not only a confirmation of the promise of life that had been made him, but also various presents of considerable value.—*Paxton*.

35-38. (35) **neighbour**, companion: *R. V.* "fellow." in the word, etc., prophetically directed of God to act this parable. **refused**, "the great lesson this prophet had to convey, not to the king alone, but to the prophetic order and to the whole country, the lesson most necessary in that lawless age, was that of implicit, unquestioning obedience to the Divine law."—*Pul. Com.* (36) **voice of the Lord**, wh. as a fellow prophet he ought to have recognized. (37) **wounded**, seriously hurt him. (38) **waited**, with the appearance of a wounded soldier. **ashes**, more correctly, *with a head-band over his eyes*.

The Bath Kol (vs. 33).—In *rencontres* between Orientals everything depends on the first words which are exchanged. It is believed that superior powers wield the utterances of the tongue amid the chances which are really destiny, so that the most casual expression is caught up superstitiously as a sort of Bath Kol, or "the daughter of a voice," which not only indicates but even helps to bring about the purposes of Heaven. A chance friendly greeting may become the termination of a blood feud, because something more than chance is supposed to lie behind it! Once when a group of doomed gladiators gathered themselves under the imperial *podium* of the amphitheatre with their sublimely monotonous chant, "*Ave Cæsar, morituri te salutamus*," the half-dazed emperor inadvertently answered, "*Avete vos!*" "He has bidden us, 'Hail!'" shouted the gladiators: "the contest is remitted; we are free!" Had the Romans been Orientals the twenty thousand assembled spectators would have felt the force of the appeal. Even as it was the significance of the omen was felt to be so great that the gladiators threw down their arms, and it was only by whips and violence that they were finally driven to the combat in which they perished.—*Farrar*.

39-43. (39) **went out**, this story is not to be regarded as untrue: it is an apologue. **talent**, by the largeness of the fine "the prisoner is rep. to be a very important personage." (40) **so thy judgment**, as conditions fixed, vs. 39. (41) **he hasted**, *i. e.* made a hurried movement, showing himself to be a well-known prophet. (42) Ahab by this acted parable is self-judged. **appointed**, lit. *a man of my curse*. (43) **heavy**, etc., comp. ch. xxi. 4;^b not repentant, but sullen and angry.

Neglect of duty (vss. 39, 40).—Consider—I. The charge; strict, but plain and straightforward, involving a duty on the soldier to himself, and a duty to another. II. The excuse; slender, "busy here and there." III. The sentence: self-pronounced.—*J. M. Randall*.

Neglected duty.—Every now and then a conscience, among the men and women who live easy, thoughtless lives, is stirred; and some one looks up anxiously, holding up some of the pretty idleness in which such people spend their days and nights, and says: "Is this wrong? Is it wicked to do this? And when they get their answer, "No, certainly not wicked," then they go back and give their whole lives up to doing their innocent little piece of uselessness again. Ah! the question is not whether that is wicked, whether God will punish you for doing that. The question is whether that thing is keeping other and better things away from you, whether behind its little bulk the vast privilege and dignity of duty is hid from you, whether it stands between God and your soul.—*Bp. Brooks*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-4. (1) **Naboth**, *fruit produce*.^c **Jezreelite**, LXX. "the Israelite." Josephus says he was a man of illustrious family. **vineyard**, Samuel's predictions are being fulfilled, cf. 1 Sam. viii. 14. **Jezreel**,^d ch. xviii. 45, 46.

hard by, on the E. slope of the hill.^a (2) **garden of herbs**, as distinct from a park of trees. **money**, *lit. silver*, not meaning *coin*, but a weight of silver. (3) **the Lord**, Jehovah whom Naboth worshiped. He was not afraid to proclaim to Ahab his piety. **forbid**, appealing to the Mosaic law.^b (4) **heavy**, *etc.*, as ch. xx. 43. "The act which was held to have outweighed all his other crimes, and to have precipitated his final doom, was this isolated act of high-handed injustice to an ordinary citizen, Naboth, the Israelite of Jezreel."—*Exp. B.* **bed**, or couch. "Such traits of childish forwardness as these in Ahab show the moral weakness of his character."

One law for rich and poor.—In the reign of Frederick, king of Prussia, was a mill near Potsdam, which interfered with a view from the windows of Sans Souci. Annoyed by this inconvenience to his favorite residence, the king sent to inquire the price for which the mill would be sold by the owner. "For no price," was the reply of the sturdy Prussian; and, in a moment of anger, Frederick gave orders that the mill should be pulled down. "The king may do this," said the miller, quietly folding his arms, "but there are laws in Prussia;" and forthwith he commenced proceedings against the monarch, the result of which was that the court sentenced Frederick to rebuild the mill, and to pay besides a large sum of money as compensation for the injury he had done. The king was mortified, but had the magnanimity to say, addressing himself to his courtiers, "I am glad to find that just laws and upright judges exist in my kingdom."

5-10. (7) **dost thou**, *etc.*, intimating that as king he need have no scruples about taking what he wanted. **I will give thee**, let me manage the affair, I have no scruples, perhaps intimating that under her management he need not even buy the vineyard. (8) **his seal**, or signet ring, wh. he must have lent her for the purpose.^c **elders . . nobles**, the civic authorities of Jezreel.^d (9) **a fast**, as if some public calamity had happened. **On high**, "*lit.* 'at the head of the people.' He was to be put in a prominent place, as one who had hitherto held an honorable position. By thus, at the beginning of the process, treating Naboth with honor they would seem to make it plain that, but for the evidence against him, they would have been glad to think him innocent."—*Cam. B.* (10) **sons of Belial**, worthless men, De. xiii. 13. The law required two witnesses.^e **king**, as God's viceregent.

Sin's friendships.—I. The sinful find many helpers. II. The misuse of influence. 1. Jezebel's sympathy becomes fierce championship of wrong. 2. She goads him on to greater sin. 3. She bears him onward into crime. III. The evil wrought by time-servers.—*J. Urquhart.*

Oriental love of gardens.—People in England will scarcely be able to appreciate the value which the Orientals attach to a garden. The food of many of them consists of vegetables, roots, and fruits; many of their medicines, also, being indigenous, are produced in their gardens. Here they have their fine fruit trees, and constant shade; and here they have their wells and places for bathing. To part with such a place is, to the people of the East, like parting with life itself.—*Roberts.*

11-14. (11) **did as**, *etc.*, evidently currying favor with the queen or fearing to incur her anger. "Their fawning readiness to carry out her vile commands is the deadliest incidental proof of the corruption which she and her crew of alien idolaters had wrought in Israel." (13) **sat**, as witnesses Naboth was carried forth and stoned,^f acc. to the Law, Lev. xxiv. 16. This incident gives us a clear idea of the vital import of the commandment: "thou shalt not bear false witness." **died**, his children were stoned to death with him, 2 Ki. ix. 26, thus giving Ahab a clear legal title to the vineyard.

Jezebel's wicked deed.—"Big and black though the villany appear, the wicked queen resolved that Naboth should be executed for treason, and then his property, with the coveted vineyard included, would all revert to the crown as a criminal's possessions. While her poor fool of a husband, therefore, is sleeping off his wounded pride, she, never accustomed to stand upon trifles, commits the fourfold crime of forgery, false-witness, perjury, and murder. We are shocked when we read of the massacre of Glencoe in the very midst of the open-handed hospitality of the children of the mountains. Our whole soul shudders at the story of that Russian soldier who, during the Crimean war, solicited in his dying agonies a cup of cold water from an Eng-

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heights at the western extremity of Mt. Gilboa, on the E. borders of the plain of Esau's plain, and about twenty-five m. N. of Samaria.—*Kitto.*

a Comp. 2 Ki. ix. 30-37.

b Le. xxv. 23; Nu. xxxvi. 7; Eze. xlvi. 18.

Jezebel plots against Naboth's life

c Est. viii. 10; Da. vi. 17.

"In giving validity to documents, names were not in those days, nor are they now, in the E., signed by the hand in writing, but impressed by a seal on wh. the name is engraved."—*Kitto.*

d "They would in all likelihood be the creatures, and fit tools of Jezebel."—*Jameson.*

e Nu. xxv. 30; De xvii. 6; xix. 15.

"In Eastern lands they talk in flowers, and they tell in a garland their loves and their cares."—*Percival.*

Naboth is slain

f Comp. case of Stephen, Ac. vii. 54-60.

Fr. 2 Ki. ix. 26, it appears that Naboth's sons were put to death with him. This may have been necessary to remove all title to the inheritance.

"Small causes are sufficient to make a man uneasy, when great ones

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are not in the way; for want of a block, he will stumble at a straw."—*Swift*.

Elijah is sent to Ahab

a "The more detailed version of the LXX. tells us that immediately the pang of remorse shot through his heart. 'When he heard that Naboth was dead, he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth.'"—*Stanley*.

b Ps. ix. 12; Is. xxvi. 21.

c 1 Ki. xxii. 38; 2 Ki. ix. 23, 26.

the doom of Ahab and Jezebel

d 2 Ki. xvii. 17; Ro. vi. 16; vii. 14.

"The metaphor is taken fr. the practice of men's selling themselves into slavery, and so giving themselves up wholly to work the will of their master. This was a wide-spread custom in the ancient world."—*Spk. Com.*

Ahab's repentance

e Pr. xxii. 14; Eccl. vii. 26; Mk. vi. 17.

f Ge. xv. 16; 2 Ki. xxi. 11; Eze. xvi. 3; Am. ii. 9, 10.

g Comp. Jno. iii. 5.

h "As if he had no heart to go about any business."—*Patrick*.

Is. xxxviii. 15.

42 Ki. x. 1-7.

lish officer, and then pointed his pistol right at his benefactor's heart. And with kindred feelings we read of the horrible contradiction before us—an unoffending follower of God compelled to surrender his life, a victim to the machinations of a heathen queen, screening, but only in reality aggravating, her wickedness under the thin disguise of a new-born religious zeal."

15-19. (15) **take possession**, "the estate of Naboth has lapsed to the crown by his execution on the charge of treason, or cursing the king."—*Kitto*. **money**, "there is a proud, malicious triumph in these words, 'He refused, simple fool, to sell it. Now thou canst have it for nothing. I have discovered a better plan than buying it.'"—*Pul. Com.* (16) **heard**, how felt on receiving the tidings is not intimated. **go down**, Jezreel, and certainly the valley, was lower than Samaria. Jehu and Bidkar accompanied the king. (17-18) **in Samaria**, *i. e.* whose capital is, *etc.* **in the vineyard**,^b and there was to be met. (19) **dogs lick**, this had a twofold fulfilment.^c

Guilt and mercy (vss. 15-29). — I. To enjoy the fruits of sin is to take its guilt. II. What it means when a man finds the truth hateful. It is only to death that the truth is a savor of death. III. The riches of God's mercy. 1. The greatness of Ahab's sin. 2. The inadequacy of his repentance. 3. The fulness of the Divine compassion. — *J. Urquhart*.

A faithful servant. — In his stirring history of the civil war, Mr. Chambers mentions that Cumberland, accompanied by Wolfe, rode over the field during the massacre of the wounded. At a place where the latter lay more than usually thick a mutilated Highlander raised himself painfully on one arm, and gave the duke a smile of scorn and defiance. "Wolfe," cried His Highness, "shoot me that Highland scoundrel, who dares to look at us so insolently." "My commission is at the disposal of your Royal Highness," replied the gentle Wolfe, "but I cannot consent to become an executioner."

20-24. (20) **Ahab said**, he being the first to speak. **enemy**, bec. an arouser of conscience. **Elij.** was the last man Ahab would wish to see, and especially in that spot. **found me?** "Has thy vengeance overtaken me so soon?" **sold thyself**, not because I am thine enemy but bec. thou hast put thyself in the power of a tempter.^d (21) **shut up and left**, ch. xiv. 10. (22) **like the house**, *etc.*, ch. xv. 29. **Baasha**, ch. xvi. 3, 4, 11. (23) **Jezebel**, for fulfilment cf. 2 Ki. ix:36. **wall**, or ditch. (24) **dogs**, wh. prowl at night about the streets. **fowls**, birds of prey.

Faithful and fearless. — When Ahab came to the vineyard to take possession of it, there stood the prophet in his hairy garb. So had Moses stood before Pharaoh, and Samuel before Saul, and Nathan before David. So was Isaiah to stand hereafter before Ahaz, and Jeremiah before Jehoiachim, and John the Baptist before Herod, and Paul before Nero. Nor has it been at all otherwise in modern days. So did St. Ignatius confront Trajan, and St. Ambrose brave the Empress Justina, and St. Martin the usurper Maximus, and St. Chrysostom the fierce Eudoxia, and St. Basil the heretic Valens, and St. Columban the savage Thierry, and St. Dunstan our half-barbarous Edgar. So, too, in later days, Savonarola could speak the bare, bold truth to Lorenzo the Magnificent, and Knox to Mary, Queen of Scots, and Bishop Ken to Charles II. — *Farrar*.

25-29. (25) **stirred up**,^e incited, urged beyond even his own evil inclination. (26) **Amorites**, this term represents the old Canaanitish nations prob. bec. they were the most powerful of the races.^f (27) **rent**, *etc.*,^g signs of repentance and humiliation. Chiefly, however, incited by fear of consequences. **lay in sackcloth**, this was an unusual and extreme act. **went softly**,^h in apparent penitence. (28, 29) **in his days**, removal of penalty there could not be,ⁱ delay of it there might be. **son's days**, a condition sentence; if the son repented God would have gladly postponed the punishment. Fulfilled, however, in the death of Jehoram, 2 Ki. ix. 25.

The feigned repentance of Ahab (vss. 27, 29). — In speaking of Ahab's repentance we propose to show — I. What there was in it that was good. 1. A fear of God's judgments; 2. An acknowledgment of God's justice in inflicting them. II. Wherein it was defective. In — 1. Its principle; 2. Its measure; 3. Its end. III. What the honor which God put upon it was designed to teach us. 1. That God will not overlook the smallest things that are done for Him; 2. That He will surely receive every penitent. — *C. Simeon*.

The lion and the bowman.—A very skillful bowman went to the mountains in search of game. All the beasts of the forest fled at his approach. The lion alone challenged him to combat. The bowman immediately let fly an arrow, and said to the lion, "I send thee my messenger, that from him thou mayest learn what I myself shall be when I assail thee." The lion thus wounded rushed away in great fear, and on a fox exhorting him to be of good courage, and not to run away at the first attack, he said, "You counsel me in vain, for if he sends so fearful a messenger, how shall I abide the attack of the man himself?" If the warning admonitions of God's ministers fill the conscience with terror, what must it be to face the Lord himself? If one bolt of judgment bring a man into a cold sweat, what will it be to stand before an angry God in the last great day?—*Spurgeon.*

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I believe it will be found that the repentance of most men is not so much sorrow for sin as sin, or real hatred of it, as sullen sorrow that they are not allowed to sin. — *Adam's Private Thoughts.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

1-4. (1) **three years**, reckoning fr. the defeat of Ben-hadad, ch. xx. 29-31. They were not, however, three full years.^a (2) **Jehoshaphat**, ch. xv. 24. For occasion of this visit see 2 Ki. viii. 18; 2 Chr. xviii. 1, 2. First time the kings of Judah and Israel had met peaceably since the disruption. This visit was undoubtedly brought about thro. the marriage of Ahab's dau., Athaliah, to Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram. (3) **Ramoth in Gilead**, De. iv. 43, prob. taken by Ben-hadad's father from Omri.^b still, making no effort to regain it. (4) *I am, etc.*, Jehosh. feared the growing prestige of Syria and regarded this alliance as nec. for the security of Jerus. **horses**, "cavalry had been largely intro. into both kingdoms."

War.—We punish murders and massacres committed among private persons. What do we respecting the wars, and the glorious crime of murdering whole nations? Here avarice and cruelty know no bounds; barbarities are authorized by decrees of the senate and votes of the people; and enormities, forbidden in private persons, are ordered and sanctioned by legislators. Things which if men had done in their private capacity, they would have paid for with their lives, the very same things we extol to the skies, when they do them with their regimentals on their backs. — *Seneca.*

5-8. (5) **enquire**, as a pious king Jehosh. was unwilling to act without knowing the Div. will. **to-day**, at once, before any sort of action is taken. (6) **the prophets**, "these men were the prophets who served in the worship of the calves. They would use Jehovah's name just as constantly as the men who had not forsaken His commandment, and throughout the whole of Israel this number of them could no doubt be readily gathered, and these, though not his Baal-priests, Ahab would bring before Jehoshaphat."—*Cam. B.* **the Lord**, not the usual term Jehovah.^c (7) **of the Lord**, the prophets have spoken of *Adonai* and *Elohim*, but what does *Jehovah* say? Jehosh. may have wondered at the absence of *Elij.* on such an important occasion. The alliance meant more to him than to Ahab. "If Ahab was deceived and even carried away by the unwonted approval of so many messengers of Jehovah, Jehoshaphat was not. These four hundred prophets, who seemed superfluously sufficient to Ahab, by no means satisfied the King of Judah."—*Exp. B.* (8) **Micaiah**, poss. the prophet introduced in ch. xx. 41. **hate him**,^d thinking he prophesied against him fr. personal grudge, recalls the incident of Balak, Num. xxiii. 6, 17. "Ahab, as was universally the case in ancient days, thought that the prophet could practically prophesy as he liked, and not merely prophesy, but bring about his own vaticinations."—*Exp. B.*

Ambiguous prediction.—"The Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king." What king? "The king" may mean either Ahab or Ben-hadad. What? This is not clear; for the word "it" is supplied. Is it Ramoth-Gilead or something else that is to be delivered into the hand of the king (of Israel)? or is it the king of Israel or something else to be delivered into the hand of the king (of Syria)? The utterance of these prophets resembles those of the heathen oracles: "The Delphic oracle spoke thus of Cræsus, which he understood to his own destruction: '*Cræsus, Halym penetrans, magnam subvertet opum vim*;' which is to say, 'If you march against Cyrus, he will overthrow you,' or 'you will overthrow him.' He trusted in the latter, the former took place. He was deluded, yet the oracle maintained its credit. So in the following: '*Aio te, Æacida, Romanos vincere posse. Ibis redibis nunquam in bello*

alliance of Jehoshaphat and Ahab

a "We may conjecture that the pause, which is here noticed, in the war bet. Is. and Syria, was the result of a common danger, viz., the first great Assyrian expedition into these parts."—*Spk. Com.*

b 1 Ki. xx. 34.

"It is good discretion not to make too much of any man at the first; because one cannot hold out that proportion."—*Bacon.*

false and true prophets of Israel

c "They do not use the word *Jehovah*, but *Adonai* (they do in vs. 11, 12). In the parallel passage of Chron. it is *halelohim* (2 Chr. xviii. 5)." — *Wordsworth.*

d Pr. xv. 12; Am. v. 10; Jno. iii. 19, 20; vii. 7.

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Micaiah
is sent for
to Samaria

a "The two kings — an unprecedented sight — sit side by side, each on his throne, in full pomp, in the wide open space before the gateway of Samaria." — *Stanley*.

"The Oriental kings have portable thrones wh. they can take with them on their journeys." — *Layard*.

b Ru. iv. 1; 2 Sa. xv. 2; xlx. 8; Ps. cxxvii. 5 etc.

Micaiah
predicts
the defeat
of Israel

c Comp. Elijah's tone, ch. xviii. 27.

d "In the vision wh. he describes, we feel that we are gradually drawing nearer to the times of the later prophets. It is a vision wh. might rank amongst those of Isaiah, or of Ezekiel." — *Stanley*.

e Mat. ix 36.
Comp. 1 Ki. xxii. 36.

the lying
spirit among
the prophets

f Is. vi. 1; Eze. i. 26; Da. vii. 9; Ac. vii. 56; Re. iv. 2.

g Job i. 6; ii. 1; Ps. ciii. 20, 21; Da. vii. 10; Zec. i. 10; Mat. xviii. 10; He i. 7, 14

h "Not by any sudden stroke of vengeance, but by the very network of evil council wh. he has woven for himself, is the King of Israel to be led to his ruin." — *Stanley*.

i "Visions of the invisible world can

peribis. Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, understood by this that he should conquer the Romans, against whom he was making war; but the oracle could be thus translated: 'The Romans shall overcome thee.' He trusted in the former, made unsuccessful war, and was overcome; and yet the juggling priest saved his credit. The latter line is capable of two opposite meanings: 'Thou shalt go, thou shalt return, thou shalt never perish in war,' or, 'Thou shalt go, thou shalt never return, thou shalt perish in war.' — *J. A. Macdonald*.

9-14. (9) officer, *lit. eunuch*. Hasten, R. V., "fetch quickly." Micaiah was prob. in prison. (10) sat, etc., were sitting, having removed fr. the banquet.^a void place, empty or vacant, bec. used for court of justice and place of assembly.^b (11) made him, had made. He seems to have been leader of these false prophets. horns of iron, small projections, worn as military ornaments. The horn being the weapon of animals, symbolized their power. push, as an animal does. (12) the Lord, here and in vs. 11 the proper name of God, *Jehovah*, is used. (13) like the word, this was warning kindly meant. (14) that will I speak, as a true and faithful prophet.

The unfaithful minister. — A dying nobleman sent for the clergyman on whose ministry he had attended, and said to him, "Do you not know that my life has been licentious, and that I have violated the commandments of God? yet you never warned me of my danger." The clergyman was silent. When the nobleman repeated the question, he replied, 'Yes, my lord, your manner of living was not unknown to me, but your kindness and my fear of offending you deterred me from reproving you.' "How cruel! how wicked!" said the dying man. "The provision I made for you and your family ought to have induced care and fidelity. You have neglected to warn and instruct me, and now my soul will be lost." These were the last words of one whose situation, it is to be feared, has too many parallels.

15-18. (15) go, and prosper, the words are similar to those used by the false prophets, their tone was very different. Micaiah speaks in *irony*.^c (16) many times, suggesting that Micaiah was accustomed to use this mocking, ironical, manner. This vexed Ahab greatly. (17) I saw,^d as in prophetic vision. no master,^e plainly suggesting the death of the king. (18) no good, "instead of regarding the prophet as being merely the mouthpiece of Deity, he was believed in that age to have a supernatural influence with God, and to be entrusted with magical powers to shape the future, as well as to foretell it." — *Pulp. Com.*

Inevitable influence. — That which a man is, that sum-total made up of the items of his beliefs, purposes, affections, tastes, and habits, manifested in all he does and does not, is contagious in its tendency, and is ever photographing itself on other spirits. He himself may be as unconscious of this emanation of good or evil from his character, as he is of the contagion of disease from his body, or, if that were equally possible, of the contagion of good health; but the fact, nevertheless, is certain. If the light is in him, it must shine; if darkness reigns, it must shade; if he glows with love, it will radiate its warmth; if he is frozen with selfishness, the cold will chill the atmosphere around him; and if corrupt and vile, he will poison it. — *Macleod*.

19-23. (19) Hear, etc., *i. e.* since you will insist that my words are prompted by personal spite, listen to my authority. I saw the Lord,^f a second and loftier vision of Jehovah as the real King of Israel. host of heaven,^g as attendants on His throne. (20) persuade, R. V., "entice," with idea to deceive. Ahab's punishment was to come thro' a self-delusion, encouraged by the prophets.^h (21) a spirit,ⁱ "We are not to conclude that it was an evil spirit, or Satan, as some have suggested. Such spirits are not God's agents. The spirit which here wrought the evil did not foster the false notions which a long course of previous warnings had had no effect in driving away. Now, therefore, Ahab is given up to them." — *Cam. B.* Perhaps the whole passage is only an anthropomorphic way of saying to Ahab: "You wickedly desire to be guided by the false prophets, and God gives you up to your own heart's desire." (22) wherewith, or how do you propose to do it? his prophets, Ahab's calf-proph. not God's true proph. (23) Lord hath, etc., it is God's message, not my making up. "Micaiah justified himself by a daringly anthropomorphic apologue which startles us, but would not at all have startled those who regarded everything as coming from the immediate action of God." — *Exp. B.*

Seeing the Lord.—The man who sees the Lord. I. Can best understand life's mysteries. II. Can best perform life's duties. III. Can best endure life's sufferings. IV. Can best wait for life's rewards. — *Barlow*.

True prophets.—The greatest and truest prophets rose superior to the influences which tended to debase the vulgar herd of their followers, in days when prophecy grew into an institution and the world became content to side with a church which gave it no trouble and mainly spoke in its own tones. True prophecy cannot be made a matter of education, or "tamed out of its splendid passion." The greatest prophets, like Amos and Isaiah, did not come out of the schools of the prophets. Inspiration cannot be cultivated, or trained to grow up a wall. The man whom God has summoned forth to speak the true word or do the heroic deed, at the cost of all hatred, or of death itself, has normally to protest not only against priests, but against his fellow-prophets also when they immorally acquiesced in oppression and wrong which custom sanctioned. It was by such true prophets that the Hebrews, and through them the world, were taught the ideal of righteousness. Their greatest service was to uphold against idolatry, formalism, and worldliness, the simple standard of the moral law. — *Farrar*.

24—28. (24) *Zedekiah*, vs. 11. Prob. leader of the 400 prophets, who speaks and acts for them. smote Micaiah, who was prob. bound as coming fr. the prison. which way, etc.^a (25) to hide thyself, fr. the wrath of those who will put thee to death for leading Ahab to destruction by false counsels. (26) *back*, intimating that he was in custody before. *governor*, or chief of the garrison of the city. *king's son*, see 2 Chron. xviii. 30; poss. a state office is referred to. (27) *bread*, etc., a scanty diet, as if to compel him to bless Ahab's enterprise. (28) *return . . peace*,^b the result will testify wh. has spoken truly.

Retzsch's game of life.—Thus Huxley, in comparing life to a game of chess, says: "The chess-board is the world; the pieces are the phenomena of the universe; the rules are what we call the laws of nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that His play is always fair, just, and patient; but also we know, to our cost, that He never overlooks a mistake or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance. To the man who plays well the highest stakes are paid, and one who plays ill is checkmated, without haste, but without remorse. My metaphor will remind some of you of the famous picture in which Retzsch has depicted Satan playing at chess with man for his soul. Substitute for the mocking fiend in that picture a calm, strong angel, who is playing for love as we say and would rather lose than win, and I would accept it as an image of human life." — *Peloubet's Suggest. Illus.*

29—33. (29) and *Jehosh.*, who ought to have believed the warning.^c (30) *disguise myself*, evidently fearing the truth of the prophecy. It was usual in battles to try and secure the person of the king. *thy robes*, so as to appear the king. (31) *commanded*, had commanded. *fight*, etc., he only means, above everything, try to secure Ahab. (32) *cried out*, not in fear, but his peculiar battle-cry, which showed him to be only a confederate king. (33) *turned back*,^d in their anxiety to secure the right person.

War defined. —

If the stroke of war
Fell certain on the guilty head, none else —
If they that make the cause might taste the effect,
And drink themselves the bitter cup they mix.
Then might the bard, the child of peace, delight
To twine fresh wreaths around the conqueror's brow;
Or haply strike his high-toned harp to swell
The trumpet's martial sound, and bid them on
When justice arms for vengeance; but, alas!
That undistinguishing and deathful storm
Beats heaviest on the exposed and innocent;
And they that stir its fury, while it raves,
Safe and at distance send their mandates forth
Unto the mortal ministers that wait
To do their bidding! — *Crowe*.

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only be a sort of parables; revelations not of the truth as it actually is, but of so much of the truth as can be shown through such a medium." — *Spk. Com.*

Micaiah is insulted and imprisoned

^a "Josephus observes that when Ahab saw no evil followed to Zedekiah for striking Micaiah, he was emboldened to despise M.'s warning." — *Wordsworth*.

^b Nu. xvi. 29; De. xviii. 21. 22; Pr. xix. 21; Is. xlv. 25, 26.

"Life is so ordered in Providence, that what we call great deeds only occur now and then. If we are not doing good in the ordinary affairs of life, we are not the persons whom Jesus commends." — *J. W. Alexander*.

battle between the allied army and Syria

^c Comp. 2 Chr. xix. 2.

^d 2 Chr. xviii. 31.

"That which we acquire with most difficulty we retain the longest; as those who have earned a fortune are usually more careful of it than those who have inherited one." — *Colton*.

"War is the sink of all injustice." — *Fielding*.

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death
of Ahab

a The joints were probably pieces of armor wh. attached the breastplate to the helmet or to the greaves." *Spk. Com.*

b "His death was kingly, and became him better than his life. When mortally wounded, he directed his chariot to be quietly driven aside, that he might have his wounds dressed: and then returned to the battle, supported in his chariot until the evening, when he died." — *Kitto*; so *Ewald*.

"Let the gulled fool the tolls of war pursue, where bleed the many to enrich the few." — *Shenstone*.

reign of
Jehoshaphat

c *Comp.* 2 Chr. xiv. 2-5; xv. 8-17.

d Wars, 2 Kl. iii. 9-27; 2 Chr. xx. 1-27.

Might, 2 Chr. xvii. 12-19; xviii. 1; xx. 29, 30.

"None preaches better than the ant, and she says nothing." — *Franklin*.

Jehoshaphat's gold
fleet

34—40. (34) at a venture, not taking aim at the king. joints . . harness, *lit. bet. the joints and the breastplate.* hand, or hands, as the chariot-driver held the reins in both hands. (35) stayed up, supported by attendants. midst, the bosom or rounded front of the chariot. (36) proclamation, when Ahab was known to be dead. (38) pool of Samaria, large tank or reservoir just outside the walls. Josephus says the usual bathing-place of the Samaritan harlots. washed his armour, *R. V.*, " (Now the harlots washed themselves there)." "This fact is mentioned as a proof of the just judgment of God. Even if these harlots were not prostitutes devoted to the service of the Phœnician deities, whose cultus Ahab had sought to establish in Israel, still the result of his religious policy had been the spread of prostitution. It is a fine example of the *lex talionis*." — *Pulp. Com.* (39) ivory house, *Am. iii.* 15. cities, there is evidence that Ahab despite his irreligion was a vigorous and enterprising monarch, and a skilful general. The book of Kings estimates rulers exclusively from a religious point of view. (40) Ahaziah, a son of Jezebel's. Name signifies that the king had not wholly abandoned Jehovah.

Gospel archery (*vs.* 34). — I. The hearts of the unsaved are encased in harness. The harness of — 1. Indifference; 2. Pleasure; 3. Worldliness; 4. Religious formality. II. Having these harnessed hearts for a mark, the Gospel bow must be drawn. At some must be shot the arrows of — 1. Divine goodness; 2. Divine threatenings; 3. Divine love. — *R. Berry*.

A shot at a venture (*vs.* 34). — Early in the year 1816 the Rev. R. Knill visited Devonshire, his native county, prior to his embarkation as a missionary to Madras. In several towns of North Devon he gave his reasons for becoming a missionary, and his addresses created some excitement. On one of these occasions Aaron Buzacott was sitting with the choir in the gallery, behind the pulpit, when Mr. Knill, after relating how he himself had been led to say, "Lord, here am I; send me," turned round, and as if pointing directly to him, said, "There is a young man in that gallery who is now saying, 'Lord, here am I; send me.'" Our young friend had already secretly uttered this prayer, and when Mr. Knill made this appeal, he could scarcely refrain from uttering it aloud. It will be readily believed that this circumstance exerted no small influence upon his future career. Timidity, however, frustrated an attempt he made to see Mr. Knill, but the appeal was never forgotten. Through many a day, and through many a sleepless night, his heart was ever ejaculating "Lord, here am I; send me." He says, "In consequence of my youth, and conscious unfitness for such a work, shame prevented me from mentioning the subject to any earthly friend; but I did not soon give up the hope that God would some day hear and answer my prayer."

41—45. (41) Jehoshaphat, 2 Chr. xx. 31. (42) Azubah, forsaken ruins: a person not otherwise mentioned. The mother's names are given to assure purity of descent. (43) Asa, 1 Ki. xv. 11-15. high . . away, *comp.* 2 Chr. xvii. 6. (44) made peace, early in his reign. It is probable that the marriage of Jehoram and Athaliah was at once the fruit of, and was intended to cement, this good understanding. (45) might . . warred, of which account is given in *Chron.*^d

Irremediable influence. — When John Newton was on board *The Harwich*, he corrupted a young man, previously free from open vice, who soon arrived at maturity in guilt. Years after, they met. Newton was changed, and desired to rescue his former companion from the effects of which he had himself been the guilty cause. As he no longer felt infidelity to be tenable, he strove to undeceive his victim. His usual reply, however, was, that Newton was the first to give him an idea of his liberty, which he would not now forego. His efforts were vain; he got worse, spurned all restraints, gave loose to every passion. His excesses threw him into a malignant fever, of which he died; but not till he had appalled all those about him, and pronounced his own sad doom, without showing any symptom that he hoped or asked for mercy. — *Tweddle*.

46—50. (46) sodomites, ch. xiv. 24. took, exterminated. (47) no king, no independent king. a deputy, put to govern by Jehoshaphat, explains Jehosh.'s ability to build fleet at Ez-Geb. in Edom. (48) ships of Tharshish, ch. x. 22, *i. e.* merchant ships, like those used for the Phœnician trade between Tyre and Tartessus. Ophir, ch. ix. 28. broken, or wrecked. 2

Chr. xx. 37. **Ezion-geber**, ch. ix. 26. (49) would not, either bec. alliance with Ahab had already worked badly for him or bec. the destruction of the fleet showed God was against the undertaking.^a (50) **Jehoram**, whom *Jehovah has exalted*.

Jehoshaphat's gold fleet. — *Intro.* — Explain the words of text. (1) *Jehoshaphat*. Sketch his hist. (2 Chron. xvi.—xxi. A good king on the whole, yet he does some foolish things (as 2 Chron. xx. 35–37). (2) *Ships of Tharshish*. such were the ships called that sailed to T. (3) *Ophir*, a district in India. (4) *Ezion-geber*, a port at the N. end of the Red sea. I. *The object of the king*. — To get gold. This not wrong. If we had something in a locked room, there would be no harm in looking for the key. Gold is as a key. Dis. betw. seeking money for lawful purposes and in proper quantities and loving it for its own sake. “Love of money the root of all evil.” He sought it as a king, to support his court and country, and we, as plain people, for our families. He was not, so far as we know, influenced by covetousness or ambition. II. *The means he employed to secure that end.* — He made ships, etc. 1. It was the usual method. Solomon employed the same means, and his ships sailed fr. same port. He might be guided by past history, and be encouraged by past successes. 2. It was a prudent method. He built special vessels — large and strong, suited for the voyage. He had many of them. 3. It was a lawful method. Commerce, not conquest of other people, nor oppressive taxing at home. Men who work or trade and so pursue honest callings, use means that are usual, prudent, lawful. III. *The calamity that befell his fleet.* — They were broken, *i. e.* wrecked. 1. The source of it, God of Providence. He reigns over nature, and has often used the forces, etc., of nature to carry out His plans. He reigns over mind. From changes in opinion, wars, etc., arise many disasters to trade and labor. The reason of it (*see hist.*). He had formed worldly alliances, etc. Had not seen their wrongness, and repented of them. IV. *The effect that it produced on his own mind and conduct (vs. 49).* He broke off the alliance. His repentance was sincere — practical. — *Hive*.

51—53. (52) of his mother,^b *i. e.* he tried to crush out the worship of Jehovah by substituting Baal. (53) served Baal,^c by this expression a distinction is made bet. calf worship, wh. was a depraved Mossaism, and the active worship of foreign and heathen gods. These three verses should commence 2 Kings.

A parent's influence. — Sitting on the portico of the hotel at Long Branch, Admiral Farragut said to me, “Would you like to know how I was enabled to serve my country? It was all owing to a resolution I formed when I was ten years of age. My father was sent down to New Orleans with the little navy we then had, to look after the treason of Burr. I accompanied him as a cabin boy. I had some qualities that I thought made a man of me. I could swear like an old salt, could drink a stiff glass of grog as if I had doubled Cape Horn, and could smoke like a locomotive. I was great at cards, and was fond of gaming in every shape. At the close of dinner one day my father turned everybody out of the cabin, locked the door, and said to me, ‘David, what do you mean to be?’ ‘I mean to follow the sea.’ ‘Follow the sea! Yes, be a poor, miserable, drunken sailor before the mast, kicked and cuffed about the world, and die in some fever hospital in a foreign clime.’ ‘No,’ I said, ‘I’ll tread the quarter-deck and command as you do.’ ‘No, David, no boy ever trod the quarter-deck with such principles as you have, and such habits as you exhibit. You’ll have to change your whole course of life if you ever become a man.’ My father left me and went on deck. I was stunned by the rebuke, and overwhelmed with mortification. ‘A poor, miserable, drunken sailor before the mast, kicked and cuffed about the world, and to die in some fever hospital!’ That’s my fate, is it? I’ll change my life, and change it at once. I will never utter another oath, never drink another drop of intoxicating liquors; I will never gamble. And as God is my witness. I have kept those three vows to this hour. Shortly after I became a Christian. That act settled my temporal and settled my eternal destiny.” — *Leaves from the Tree of Life*.

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a Comp. 2 Chr. xx. 35–37.

“Midas longed for gold, and insulted the Olympians. He got gold, so that whatever he touched became gold, and he with his long ears, was little the better for it. Midas had insulted Apollo and the gods; the gods gave him his wish, and a pair of long ears, which also were a good appendage to it. What a truth in these old fables!” *Carlyle*.

“Gold is a wonderful clearer of the understanding; it dissipates every doubt and scruple in an instant; accommodates itself to the meanest capacities; silences the loud and clamorous, and brings over the most obstinate and inflexible.” — *Addison*.

Ahaziah, the son of Ahab

b 1 Kl. xvi. 31; xxvi. 25; 2 Kl. iii. 2.

c Ps. cvl. 28, 29; Is. lvi. 3; *Eze*. 3–17.

Bad parents. — Mother of Micah (Judg. xvii. 3); Eli (1 Sam. iii. 13); Saul (1 Sam. xx. 33); Athaliah (2 Chron. xxii. 3); Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii.); Herodias (Mark vi. 24).

“When thou art contemplating some base deed, forget not thy child’s tender years, but let the presence of thy infant son act as a check on thy headlong course to sin.” — *Juvenal*.

“The voice of parents is the voice of gods, for to their children they are Heaven’s lieutenants.” — *Shakespeare*.

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS.

68

[913]

Synopsis.

(According to, Bähr, in Lange.)

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CHAPTER THE FIRST.

B. C. cir. 851.

1-4. (1) **Then, R. V., "and."** The two books of Kings are but one; the division is arbitrary. 2 Ki. should properly begin with 1 Ki. xxii. 51, wh. relates the accession of Ahaziah. Vss. 1, 2 of 2 Ki. i: recount the divine judgments upon the king's sinful course. **Moab rebelled**, it had been subdued by Dav.^a The "Moabite Stone" discov. in 1869 gives full particulars of this successful revolt of the viceroy Masha. There can be no reasonable doubt that when we look at it we see before us the identical memorial of triumph which the Moabite emir erected in the days of Ahaziah on the *bamah* of Chemosh at Dibon, one of his chief towns. — *Exp. B.* (2) **Ahaziah**, "among the names of the judges and kings before Ahab in Israel, and Asa in Judah, scarcely a single instance occurs of names compounded with Jehovah; thenceforward they became the rule." — *Wellhausen.* **lattice**,^b windows are often closed with lattices of interlaced wood. wh. open outwards. **sick**, fatally injured by his fall. **Baal-zebub**, *lord of the fly*, or *fly-destroyer*, flies constituting one of the most terrible plagues of the East. **Ekron**, Jos. xiii. 3, now *Akir*. "To consult a foreign oracle is equivalent to saying that the voice of God is wholly silent in one's own land. This was going further in apostasy than Ahab had gone (see 1 Kings xxii. 6-9)." — *Pulp. Com.* (3) **angel**, or messenger. **meet**, so as to arrest their progress. **a God in Israel**, they had put away Jehovah, and now showed they had no faith in their chosen gods. (4) **surely die**, as a judgment for the insult of seeking other Gods.

Death-bed contrasts (comp. vss. 2-4, 16, 17, with 2 Ki. xx. 1-5). — These two royal sufferers being dead, speak to us. I. Notice the points of comparison and contrast. 1. Points of comparison. Both are—(1) Kings; (2) In the midst of manhood; (3) Dangerously ill; (4) Unwilling to die; (5) Told that death is near; (6) Uttered longings in prayer; 2. Points of contrast. (1) One impious, the other godly. (2) One prayed to idols, the other to God. (3) One recovered, the other soon died. II. Gather some lessons from these points:—(1) The chief events of life happen alike to all; (2) Great crises lead men to look for external help; (3) The sources to which men look for help are most opposite and unlike. — *U. R. Thomas.*

The timely warning. — The lighthouse reared on a sunken reef flings its lurid glare far through a stormy air and over a stormy sea, not to teach the mariner how to act with vigor when he is among the breakers, but to warn him back, so that he may never fall among the breakers at all. Even so the end of the lost is revealed in the Word of God, not to urge us to utter a very loud cry when the door is shut, but to compel us to enter now while the door is open. — *Arnot.*

5-8. (5) **turned back, R. V., "returned."** (6) **a man**, they did not know him, but were forced to yield to his authoritative tone. (7) **manner of man**, fr. his description he might guess who he was. (8) **hairy man**, either with long hair and beard, or clad in a hairy garment.^c **girdle, etc.**, sign of a poor man or an ascetic.

The comfort of fidelity. — Whitefield and a pious companion were much annoyed one night at a public-house by a set of gamblers in the room adjoining where they slept. Their noisy clamor and horrid blasphemy so excited Whitefield's abhorrence and pious sympathy that he could not rest. "I will go to them and reprove their wickedness," said he. His companion remonstrated in vain. He went. His words of reproof were apparently powerless upon them. Returning he lay down to sleep. His companion asked him, "What did you gain by it?" "A soft pillow," he said, and soon fell asleep.

9-12. (9) **sent**, to arrest the prophet. **top of a hill**, either that on wh. he had met the messengers, vs. 3; or Carmel, Elij.'s usual residence. **man of God**, designation of prophet; such Elij. was recognized to be. "In the first two addresses the title was given no doubt in mockery." (10) **let fire**, the symbol of God closely connected with Elij.^d This was not a mere securing of personal safety, but a public vindication of the honor of Jehovah, whom the king had insulted.^e Two reasons may be assigned for the chasm between the moral sense of the school of proph. and ours on such subjects—one was their amazing indifference to the sacredness of human life, and the other

Elijah predicts the death of Ahaziah

a Comp. Ju. iii. 12-14; 2 Sa. viii. 2.

b "The word rendered *lattice* may be a *rail*, wh. may suggest that in leaning against the rail, forming the inner fence of the house top, it gave way, and he fell into the court below."—*Kitto.*

When Socrates was told by a friend that his judges had sentenced him to death; "And has not nature," said he, "passed the same sentence upon them?"

Ahaziah's messengers return

c "The *Aba* or *Mesleh* of the Arabs is often made of black sackcloth, of goat's or camel's hair, very large, so that the owner wraps himself in it to sleep."—*Thomson.*

Comp. Matt. iii. 4; Mk. i. 6.

Elijah invokes fire from heaven

d 1 Ki. xviii; 2 Ki. ii. 11.

e "Not in his own defense could Elij. have been the death of so many;

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but God, by a peculiar instinct, made him an instrument of His just vengeance."—*Bp. Hall.*

Comp. Lu. ix. 54-55; 2 Th. i. 9; Heb. xii. 29; Re. xi. 5.

death of Ahaziah

a Ps. cii. 17; Mat. x. 28.

b "Prob. Jehoshaphat associated his son as co-regent with himself, in the seventeenth year of his reign."—*Wordsworth.*

"Good actions crown themselves with lasting days; who well deserves needs not another's praise."—*Heath.*

"Trust reposed in noble natures obliges them the more."—*Dryden.*

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Elisha cleaves to Elijah

c Comp. 2 Ki. iv. 30; Ru. i. 16.

"Living is death; dying is life. We are not what we appear to be. On this side of the grave we are exiles, on that citizens; on this side orphans, on that children; on this side captives, on that freemen; on this side disguised, unknown, on that disclosed and proclaimed as the sons of God!"—*H. W. Beecher.*

"Seas are the fields of combat for the winds; and when they sweep along some dowerly coast,

their invariable habit of regarding men in their corporate relations rather than in their individual capacity.—*Exp B.* Kitto supposes the fire was lightning. (11) *sent*, prob. the king was impatient at the delay, and had not heard the fate of the first company. *quickly*, at once, without further resistance. (12) *if I be, etc.*, clearly putting it as a vindication of his prophetic claim.

Danger in persecution.—In 1632 some soldiers came to break up a meeting where Mr. Browning, who had been ejected from Desborough, was, and to apprehend him. The constable of the place admonished them to be well advised in what they did—"For," said he, "when Sir —— was alive, he eagerly persecuted these meetings, and engaged eight soldiers of the country troop to assist him, whereof myself was one. Sir —— himself is dead; six of the soldiers are dead; some of them were hanged, and some of them broke their necks; and I myself fell off my horse, and broke my collar bone in the act of persecuting them. This has given me such a warning that I am resolved I will never meddle with them more."

13-18. (13) *fell on his knees*, in contrast with tone of previous captains: this the attitude of humble suppliant. *be precious*, 1 Sa. xxvi. 21. (14) *let my life, etc.*, he pleads that the former judgments might suffice to vindicate the prophet's honor. (15) *angel*, as vs. 3. Perhaps the usual form of speech among the sons of the prophets to give concrete expression to the "voice of inward inspiration." *afraid of him, i. e. Ahaziah.* (16) *is it not, etc.*, "was it not done in order to show that there is no God in Israel." (17) *Jehoram, Ahaziah's brother. because he, i. e. Ahaziah. second year,* comp. ch. iii. 1; viii. 16. (18) *acts, i. e. history. book, etc.*, as 1 Ki. xxii. 39.

A faithful servant.—When M. Barthelemy was sent, with several others, into banishment at Cayenne, his servant, Le Tellier, came running up, as he was getting into the carriage, with an order from the directory, permitting him to accompany his master. He delivered it to Augereau, who, having read it, said, "You are determined, then, to share the fate of these men, who are lost forever? Whatever events await them be assured they will never return." "My mind is made up," answered Le Tellier, "I shall be happy to share the misfortunes of my master." "Well, then," replied Augereau, "go, fanatic, and perish with him;" adding at the same time, "Soldiers, let this man be watched as closely as these miscreants." Le Tellier threw himself on his knees before his master, who felt exquisite pleasure at such a moment to press so affectionate a friend to his bosom. This valuable servant continued to show the same courage and attachment during the voyage, and after they arrived at Cayenne; and he was treated as an equal and companion, not only by his master, but by the companions of his exile.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

1-4. (1) *when, etc.*, this event prob. occurred several years later on. The composite char. of the records as compiled, renders it difficult to give the chron. order. *Elij.* appears to have lived until the reign of Jehoram of Judah. *whirlwind*, furious sweeping gale, generally coming from the E. *Elisha*, 1 Ki. xix. 16, 19-21. For ten yrs. or more *Elij.'s faithful servant. Gilgal*, some think the Gilgal by Jericho, as Jos. iv. 29; others think it cannot possibly be this, and identify with *Gilgilia*, S. W. of Shiloh. (2) *tarry*, as the prophet, wished to be alone in his departure. Perhaps, also, he was testing the fidelity of his servant. *Bethel*, Ge. xii. 8. "Perhaps it was a protest against the calf-worship that the 'sons of the prophets' made one of their centres in Bethel."—*Cam. B.* (3) *sons, etc.*, 1 Ki. xx. 35. (4) *hold . . peace*, "this is no subject for idle talk." *Jericho*, Jos. vi. 1-27, here, also, a school of the prophets.

God's time.—God knows when our work is done; sometimes we think it is done when it is not; we wonder what more there is to do to it, it seems so trifling, as if it were not worth while doing, reminding us of what the great sculptor said to some one who wondered that he was so long over his marble: "I know I am doing but a few things that look like trifles, but trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle." So with us: many a poor life we have seen seems to be doing nothing, and we wonder why it does not go forward into the eternal state. It seems to be just touching things here and there,

and to be doing so with a very feeble finger, and yet there is a Purpose that works out our last refinement, waiting about us to-day with the culmination and perfecting of our character and belongings. We shall not be here a day too long if we put our life into God's keeping. — *Parker*.

5-8. (5) *sons, etc.*,^a the prophets of Israel were, after the withdrawal of the priests and Levites (2 Chron. xi. 13, 14), the sole teachers of the people in true religion. (7) *to view*, from the heights around Jericho they could see much of the course of the river. (8) *mantle*, the characteristic of *Elij.*, as the rod was of Moses. *wrapped it*, so as to be like a rod. *smote*,^b the word indicates a vigorous blow: violently smote. The parallelism with the miraculous acts of Moses and Joshua (Josh. iii. 13) is obvious. It was intended that Israel should regard Elijah and Elisha as a second Moses and Joshua, and should therefore yield them a ready obedience. — *Pulp. Com.* *divided*, comp. Jos. iii. 16.

The approaching dissolution of the good. — I. While viewed with solemnity, creates no alarm. II. Does not interfere with the active duties of the hour. III. Gives a special significance to everything done for the Church of God. IV. Makes one anxious to catch and retain for the world's good the ennobling influence of their divinely-endowed lives. — *Barlow*.

The last days of life. — One day a lady asked John Wesley how he would spend that day if he knew it was to be his last. She doubtless expected some rules for pious meditation and seclusion. His answer was, "Just, madam, as I intend to spend it;" and then he proceeded to tell her what his busy programme of work was for the day. Oh, that we could all say *that* every day, that if it was to be our last we would spend it just as we intend to spend it! We ought to be able to say it, for *any* day may be our last. No doubt there are many whom God lays aside by age, or infirmity, or suffering for weeks, or months, or years before he calls them home. *They* cannot spend their closing hours in what is usually called work for Christ, though they may be really working for Him by their patience in suffering, by their faith and hope, by their words of counsel to others. But so long as God gives us health and strength to work for Him, then it is best to do as Elijah did — to live in harness to the last. — *C. H. Irwin*.

9-11. (9) *ask, etc.*, the subject wh. has been so long filling both hearts is at last mentioned. *Elij.* would test the char. of his faithful and devoted servant. *double portion*, comp. De. xxi. 17,^c the proper portion for *Elij.*'s first-born spiritual son. Not double the power of *Elij.*, but "heirship, succession to *Elij.* in his place as prophet in Israel." (10) *a hard thing*, not *Elij.*'s to give; there is no law of bequest regarding man's spirit: only God can endow with prophetic power. *see me*,^d wh. would be a final test of Elisha's faith and devotion. (11) *chariot*,^e this the form appearing to the watching Elisha. There was a storm, but we can attempt no *explanation* of the scene. It was of God's grace and as an assurance that Elisha should receive his petition, that his eyes were opened to behold the glory which carried away his master. Henceforth he was sure that that power was constantly near God's servants. The vision was a source of strength and encouragement in the labors which were before him with no master at his head. He learnt the source of his master's spirit. — *Cam. B.*

The translation of Elijah (vs. 11). — Consider — I. The event itself. 1. Elijah and Elisha still going on and talking; 2. The sudden and glorious appearing, on the plain beside them, of a chariot of fire and horses of fire; 3. The parting of Elijah and Elisha asunder by the chariot; 4. Elijah going up into heaven by a whirlwind; 5. Elijah's mantle falling from him as he went up. II. Its purposes and lessons. As they respect — 1. Elijah himself; 2. Elisha; 3. The church of those days; 4. The church of these days; 5. Ourselves individually. — *H. Angus*.

The prophet of fire. — In this inextricable interweaving of fact and figure, it is enough to mark how fitly such an act closes such a life. "My father, my father," Elisha cried, "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." So Elijah has stood a sure defense to his country against all the chariots and horsemen that were ever pouring in upon them from the surrounding nations. So he now seemed when he passed away, lost in the flames of the steeds and the car that swept him from the earth, as in the fire of his own unquenchable spirit — in the fire that had thrice blazed around him in his passage through

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their wings move mildly, and their rage is lost." — *Dryden*.

Elijah divides the river

a "The young men in these colleges seem, like the Jews in later periods of their history, to have been instructed in mechanics, husbandry, and other useful arts of life." — *Macduff*.

b Comp. Ex. vii. 20; viii. 17; xiv. 10, 21; Nu. xx. 11.

"Friendship is no plant of hasty growth; though planted in a steep's deep-fix'd soil, the gradual culture of kind intercourse must bring it to perfection." — *Joanna Baillie*.

Elijah ascends to heaven

c "The phrase employed in De. xxi. 17, to denote the amount of a father's goods, wh. were the right and token of a first-born son is literally, 'a mouth of two,' a double mouthful. Thus the gift of the 'double portion' of *Elij.*'s spirit was but the legitimate conclusion of the act of adoption, wh. began with the casting off the mantle at Abelmeholah years before." — *Smith's Bib. Dict.*

d "If permitted to see the miraculous ascension, he may accept this as a pledge and assurance, on God's part, that the farewell request is not denied." — *Macduff*.

e 2 Ki. vi. 17.

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Elijah's mantle is taken by Elisha

a "Meaning, as is generally understood, that he regarded Israel as bereft of its strength, its chariot and its horsemen, by the departure of this great prophet." — *Kitto*.

"Elisha addresses him as the true defense of Israel, better than either chariots and horsemen." — *Spk. Com.*

2 Ki. xiii. 14.

b Jos. iii. 7; Is. xi 2; 1 Pe. iv. 14.

"Christ honors the draft of a working faith." — *Beecher*.

the body of Elijah is sought for

"Oh! just and mighty death! What none hast dared, thou hast done; thou hast drawn together all the greatness, all the cruelty and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet*!" — *Raleigh*.

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Elisha heals the fountain

c Ge xxxi. 38; Ex. xxiii; 26; Jos. vi. 26.

d "Elijah for the most part worked miracles without means, Elisha with means." — *Wordsworth*.

his troubled earthly career. The ascension or assumption of Elijah stands out alone in the Jewish history as the highest representation of the end of a great and good career; of death as seen under its noblest aspect; as the completion and crown of the life which had preceded it; as the mysterious shrouding of the departed within the invisible world. — *Stanley*.

12-15. (12) **saw**, as condition, vs. 10. **my father, etc.**,^a in figure expressing Elisha's confidence in, and admiration for, Elij. **rent them**, showing his deep grief, cf. Job i. 20; ii. 12. (13) **took up**, as the pledge of the transference of the prophetic office to himself. (14) **smote, etc.**, vs. 8. Putting to the proof at once his prophetic power: and showing the firmness of his faith. **parted**, God gave Elisha evidence of His presence; the fulfilment of Elij.'s promise. (15) **to view**, R. V., "wh. were at J. over ag. him saw him." vs. 7. **bowed**, acknowledging his authority and office.^b

The beginning of Elisha's work. — I. Divine power tested. 1. The best way to prove the power of Divine grace is to exercise the gifts we have. We shall not accomplish much in the world if we stand gazing up into heaven; 2. All effort should be accompanied by prayer. If we would succeed in our business we must look for the Divine guidance, help, and blessing. II. The Divine presence manifested. If we had faith to undertake great things for God, then we might expect great things from God. — *C. H. Irwin*.

He who watches sees. — It is God's law that the watching man gets everything, the man who is nearest and looks keenest gets all and sees all — and it is right. The mountain gets the first gleam of the sun, and then the light gets down into the valleys by-and-by. Have you ever seen that beautiful sight of the mountain getting the first kiss, the first glance, the first visitation? The sun is nowhere visible in himself, but a light is there, and I have seen that light brightening over the white snowy peaks, like camps of giants that have been sleeping there all night: and down yonder, night, dying night, lingering night, solemn night — fog and cloud and raw damp, and up there heaven. And then down, down, down — all these bits and beams of rays of light shooting into the fog and cloud, and chasing them away, and last of all the little town yonder waking up and saying, "It is morning." Morning? Poor little hamlet, it has been morning an hour or more up there. Aye, the mountains first and the chimneys a long way off; the high peaks first and then your little hamlets by and by. — *Parker*.

16-18. (16) **seek, etc.**, no doubt they imagined they should find somewhere the dead body of Elij. (17) **ashamed**, to seem so stubborn. (18) **go not**, Elisha knew too well that it was Elij.'s *passing thro'* to God.

Eastern whirlwinds. — The effects of one of these whirlwinds, confined probably to a small circumference, was witnessed once in India. A roofing of palm branches and grass was laid on the ground, ready to be supported on poles for the front of a bungalow. It was heavy, several yards long and broad, and it had taken eight men to lift and carry. Suddenly, and without warning, for the day had been excessively hot, and there appeared not a breath of air, this roof was moved to and fro, and after flapping a moment or two was raised aloft, and carried upwards with speed, whirling round and round as it went up, till at last it became but a speck in the distance, and was soon lost to sight. In countries where whirlwinds are of frequent occurrence it is not surprising that the sons of the prophets, seeing Elijah go up by a whirlwind into heaven, should have urged Elisha to send and seek after him, lest, as they said, he might be taken up, and cast "upon some mountain or into some valley."

19-22. (19) **city, i.e. Jericho**. **pleasant**, situated in a broad plain, watered by an abundant river, and shaded by groves of palm trees, etc. **naught**, bad. **barren, lit.** causing abortion: 'apt to miscarry. (20) **new cruse**, wh. having never been used was unsoiled, so symbol of purity. **salt**, a cleansing or purifying agent, so further symbol of mirac. power Elisha exerted.^d (21) **spring, Ain-es-Sultan**, now called Elisha's fountain. **thence, i. e. fr. the waters.** (22) **healed**, or sweetened, permanently.

Elisha's fountain. — It was quite dark when we reached our camping-ground, about 200 yards from Ain Sultan, called by Europeans Elisha's fountain; and as the only other fountain of any size, Ain Dük, has always borne the same name, there can be but little doubt that this is the spring whose waters were

healed by Elisha, and that the stone-hewn mounds and fragments of pottery which cover the soil are the remains of ancient Israelitish Jericho.—*Tristram*.

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23-25. (23) **Bethel**, where was a school of prophets, *vs.* 2. **little children**, the word used sometimes means *young men*. **mocked him**, prob. contrasting his youth with the venerable Elij., and prob. they were young idolaters set on thus to mock the prophet of the Lord.^a **bald head**, epithet of contempt in the E. (24) **cursed them** "the only occasion on wh. we find Elis. the minister of vengeance." Very hard to justify E., but one "must keep steadily in mind the fact that the places which are mentioned in this incident had become as Sodom and Gomorrah, in the sense of spiritual alienation and spiritual contempt for everything associated with the name of the living God. When Elisha, therefore, wrought this deed of violence, his action must be regarded as typical, and as strictly in keeping with the necessities of the occasion. Only this kind of miracle could have been understood by the people amongst whom it was worked." *People's B.* (25) **Carmel**, wh. was closely associated with Elij.'s life. **Samaria**, Elisha lives far more than Elijah in cities and amid the ordinary surroundings of civilized life. The honor with which he was treated was the honor of respect and admiration for his kindness. He plays his part in no stupendous scenes like those at Carmel and at Horeb, and nearly all his miracles were miracles of mercy.—*Exp. B.*

Jealousy for God.—The servant of God may patiently endure the scoffs and frowns and persecution of the world when they refer to himself only; but when the character of his God is maligned and His grandest work derided, the meekest become bold in vindicating the Divine glory. When Terantius, captain to the emperor Adrian, presented a petition that the Christians might have a temple to themselves in which to worship God apart from the Arians, the emperor tore the petition in pieces and threw it away, bidding the soldier to ask something for himself and it should be granted. Terantius modestly gathered up the fragments of the discarded petition, and said, with true nobility of mind, "If I cannot be heard in God's cause, I will never ask anything for myself."—*Barlow*.

the Bethelites
mock Elisha

a "The idolatrous or infidel young men of the place, who affected to disbelieve the report of his master's translation, and sarcastically urged him to follow in the glorious career."—*Jamieson*.

b Pr. xvii. 5; xxx. 7; Ho. xiii. 8.

"The guilt of eulogizing or apologizing for wicked actions is second only to that of committing them."—*Southey*.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

B. C. 855.

1-5. (1) **Jehoram**, comp. ch. i. 17. The apparent discrepancy bet. the chron. of ch. i. and ch. iii. is explained by supposing that Jehosh. in his 17th yr. associated his son Jehoram with him. Then the 18th yr. of Jehosh. would be also the 2d yr. of Jehoram's regency. **eighteenth**, 1 Ki. xxii. 41, 51. (2) **not . . father**, Ahab and Jezebel. **put away, etc.**, the removal of the statue meant abolishing the worship, prob. some special pillar wh. was erected near the palace for the royal worship. Jehu found pillars and a house of Baal to destroy. (3) **sins of Jer.**, he did not abolish the worship of Jehovah under the cherubic symbol of the calves; no king of Israel thought of doing that, and so far as we know neither Elijah, nor Elisha, nor Jonah, nor Micaiah, protested against that worship.—*Exp. B.* (4) **sheep-master**,^a *lit.* **naked**, a marker, prob. sheep were marked to distinguish both the flocks and the different breeds. **rendered, etc.**, R. V., "rendered . . the wool of an hundred thou. lambs and of an hund. thou. rams." (5) **rebelled**, by refusing tribute and asserting independence.

Out-and-Out.—"When I was here in 1867, there was a merchant who came over from Dublin, and was talking with this business man in London; and, as I happened to look in, this business man in London introduced me to the man from Dublin. The Dublin man said to the London man, alluding to me, 'Is this young man all O. O?' 'What do you mean by O. O?' inquired the London man. 'Is he Out-and-Out for Christ?' was the answer. I tell you it burned down into my soul."—*Dwight L. Moody*.

6-10. (6) **the same time**, on occasion of the refusal to render the 1st tribute. **numbered**, or called out a levy; mustered them for the expedition. (7) **sent, etc.**, the alliance bet. the royal houses being maintained. I will go, here Jehosh. seems to decide without seeking the Div. will. (8) **which way**, across the north end, or the south end, of the Dead Sea. **Edom**,^c Jehosh. chose the S. way bec. Edom was at the time dependent on him. (9) **compass**,

Jehoram and
Mesha, the
sheep-master

c "He began his reign by a formal abolition of the Phœnician state religion introduced by Ahab, and a re-establishment of the old worship of the kingdom as arranged by its founder, Jeroboam."—*Spk. Com.*

d "The name of Mesha occurs on the Moabite stone."—*Rep. Pal. Explor. Fund.*

a thirsty
land where
no water is

e "One object of taking this route was, most likely,

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to effect a junction with the forces of Edom. Another may have been to come upon the Moabites un-awares." — *Spk. Com.*

a Nu. xxi. 4, 5.

b Pr. xix. 3; Is viii. 71.

Elisha
is sent for

c "After the meals, the *ibrick* and *tusht* (pitcher and ewer) are brought, and the servant, with a napkin over his shoulder, pours on your hands." — *Thomson.*

Jno. xiii. 5, etc.

the valley
dug full
of ditches

d Ex. xv. 20; 1 Sa. x. 5; 1 Chron. xxv. 1-3.

e "Rather ye will smite — in your cruelty and rage; this is a prophecy rather than a command." — *Wordsworth.*

"Many do with opportunities as children do at the seashore: they fill their little hands with sand, and let the grains fall through, one by one, till all are gone." — *T. Jones.*

etc., R. V., "made a circuit," a difficult journey^a by "Jerus. Hebron, Malatha, and Thamara, to the N., Edomite country." (10) Lord . . called, pure assumption on Jehoram's part, no one had consulted Jehovah's will regarding the expedition. **three kings**, including that of Edom.^b

The rocky way. — There were several reasons why the king of Israel preferred that way, rocky as it was; but the chief reason was to surprise the enemy, and get to the least defended part of Moab; an illustration of which we have in the account of Napoleon I. crossing the Alps. He wanted to surprise the Austrians, and prevent the Swiss from rising; and for this purpose he proceeded to cross the great St. Bernard itself, so lofty and difficult that it was considered almost an impossibility. Yet he made the attempt with an army of 30,000 men, their baggage, their ammunition, and forty pieces of cannon; and very soon the Austrians were filled with wonder, and were quite panic-stricken, in seeing the French army pouring down the sides of the inaccessible Alps.

11-14. (11) **Jehosaphat**, by whose advice the route was taken. **the Lord**, better *Jehovah*, the great contrast betw. the kingdom of Isr. and the kingdom of Judah is at once made clear. **Elisha**, who seems to have followed the army. **poured water**, as servant.^c (12) **word, etc.**, recognizing the true prophetic character. (13) **with thee**, who hast refused, and dost dishonor, my God. **prophets . . father**, *i. e.* calf-prophets at Dan. and Bethel. **prophets . . mother**, *i. e.* Baal-prophets. **the Lord**, *i. e.* we see Jehovah's hand in our present trouble. (14) **as the Lord, etc.**, 1 Ki. xvii. 1; 2 Ki. v. 16.

Washing of hands. — I sought in the manners and the customs of the people among whom I moved remnants of the manners and customs of Scriptural stamp. . . It was, then, with such feelings and for such a purpose that I sat in an upper room in my host's house, and there with him dipped my hand in the dish, for there was only one; after which, water was poured upon my hands first, then upon his, and we rose from the table, or rather from the ground, in no wise hindered from following our journey at once by the length or the nature of our meal. — *Three Months in the Holy Land.*

15-20. (15) **minstrel**,^d to compose his mind with music. From the result described here, viz. that the hand (that is, the influence and spirit) of the Lord came upon him, we may conclude that this was what Elisha wished for, and we may suppose that while the music went on his thoughts took shape, and found vent in prayer; till at length he was prompted inwardly what to say. A striking instance of the power of music. — *Cam. B.* (16) **valley**, broad wady. **ditches**, or pits, to keep the water that came. (17) **not see wind**, wh. usually came before storm. **rain**, the torrent down the middle of the valley would be in flood, and fill the pits. The incident itself is highly instructive. It throws light both upon the general accuracy of the ancient narrative, and on the fact that events to which a directly supernatural coloring is given are, in many instances, not so much supernatural as providential. The deliverance of Israel was due, not to a portent wrought by Elisha, but to the pure wisdom which he derived from the inspiration of God. — *Exp. B.* (18) **light thing**, only an illus. of what He will do for you. (19) **smite, etc.**, this *vs.* describes a general devastation of the country. **good tree**, *i. e.* fruit tree. De. xx. 19, does not apply to the land of Moab, or to an invasion like the present. (20) **when . . offer d**, about sunrise. An unbloody oblation of fine flour, oil and frankincense. *cf.* Lev. ii. 1.

The valley filled with water (vss. 16, 17). — The armies of the three kings were famishing for want of water: God was about to send it, and in these words the prophet announced the coming blessing. I. Here was a case of human helplessness: not a drop of water to be had. II. Still the people were to make a believing preparation for the Divine blessing: they were to dig the trenches in which the precious liquid would be held. The Church must, by her varied agencies, efforts, and prayers, make herself ready to be blessed; she must make the pools, and the Lord will fill them. III. By and by there was a singular bestowal of the needed boon. Not as in Elijah's case did the shower pour from the clouds, but in a silent and mysterious manner the pools were filled. IV. We must also notice the remarkable abundance of the supply: there was enough for the need of all. And so it is in the Gospel blessing; all wants shall be met by Divine power in answer to prayer. — *Spurgeon.*

21-25. (21) put on armour, Heb. *gird on a girdle*; collecting even young recruits. *border*, edge of their territory, overlooking the wady in wh. the hosts of Israel were. (22) *sun shone*, showing up the color of the waters tinged with the red earth of Edom.^a (23) *this is blood*, as there had been no rain they could not otherwise account for the pools. (24) *came*, expecting no enemy, only to take the spoil left behind. (25) *stone, etc.*, doing wilful damage to the country. Kir-haraseth, Is. xvi. 7, 11, the mod. *Kerak*.

Deceptive appearances.—The Slavonians have a legend that a certain river was infested with a water-demon who had the power of assuming the shape of a cluster of red flowers waving and spreading themselves out in graceful and attractive forms on the surface of the water; but if the passer-by was tempted to put forth his hand to pluck one of the fragile blossoms, he was at once seized by invisible hands, dragged beneath the surface, and suffocated in the treacherous stream. It is perilous to trust to false appearances; it may lead to irreparable disaster. Many who have plucked the flower of pleasure have found it to contain a fatal sting.—*Barlow*.

26-27. (25) that drew swords, or with drawn swords. unto . . Edom, whose protection he might hope to gain; or he made his attack on the part of the forces under the king of Edom. (27) *his eldest son*, his own. offered him, to propitiate his god, and, if possible, secure deliverance for his country, by the awful sacrifice.^b upon the wall, to overawe the besiegers. indignation,^c or judgment. If "wrath" here has the unusual sense of human indignation, the clause can only imply that the armies of Judah and Edom were roused to anger by the un pitying spirit which Israel had displayed. The horrible tragedy enacted upon the wall of Kirharaseth awoke their consciences to the sense of human compassion.—*Exp. B.* They pressed the war too ruthlessly if it drove their enemy to such desperation. departed, i. e., fr. the Kg. of Moab. in horror at what had taken place.

Human sacrifice.—Diodorus Siculus relates that when Agathocles was going to besiege Carthage, the people, seeing the extremities to which they were reduced, ascribed their misfortune to the anger of their God, in that they had latterly spared to offer him children nobly born, and had fraudulently put him off with the children of slaves and foreigners. To make an atonement for this crime, two hundred children of the best families in Carthage were at once offered in sacrifice, and no less than three hundred of the citizens voluntarily sacrificed themselves.—*Wheeldon*. One for all.—During a plague in Marseilles, the physicians decided that nothing could be done to save the people, unless a victim could be dissected, and the nature of the disease learned. But who would do this? Dr. Guyon rose and said he would do it. He wrote his will, bade his family farewell, entered the hospital, made the dissection and examination, wrote out the results, and in a few hours was dead. But now the physicians could treat the disease, and the plague was stayed.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

1-7. (1) certain woman, Josephus says, *Obadiah's wife*. "It appears fr. this that the members of the colleges of Prophets did not withdraw themselves fr. common domestic life altogether."—*Cam. B.* did fear, comp. 1 Ki. xviii. 12. to take,^d as Le.xxv. 39-41. bondmen, servants. (2) I do, Elisha had no means of paying the debt, and no interest with the king to use for her sake. pot of oil,^e olive oil, an "anointing of oil." (3) vessels, for what purpose she could not guess, but in faith she obeyed.^f (4) shut the door,^g to be undisturbed. If known Elisha would have been overrun with calls for help. We see in the records of Elisha, as in the biographies—so rich in prodigies—of fourth-century hermits and mediæval saints, how little impressive in itself is the exercise of abnormal powers; how it derives its sole grandeur from the accompaniment of great moral lessons and spiritual revelations.—*Exp. B.* (5) went, again showing a simple obedience. (6) stayed,^h only bec. lack of vessels to contain it (7) man of God, usual name of the prophet.

A poor and honest woman.—A poor old woman in a house of industry, or poor-house, applied to a collector of a tract association for the tract called "To-day." She wished to pay for it, but money she had none; however, one source remained. The inmates of this house were permitted to raise small

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the Moabites defeated

a "The river Leantes, in Lebanon, becomes red at a certain time of the year, fr. its stream then washing or passing over beds of coloring earth."—*Kitto*.

"An optimist is as blind as a pessimist, the difference being that he is blind of the other eye."—*Pounds*.

Mesha offers his eldest son

b Mic. vi. 7.

c "God showed his wrath against Israel (not Judah) by some judgment upon them for this act of the king of Moab."—*Wordsworth*.

"There is no action of man in this life which is not the beginning of so long a chain of consequences, as that no human providence is high enough to give us a prospect to the end."—*Thomas of Malmesbury*.

"Heart - chilling superstitious! thou canst glaze even pity's eye with her own frozen tear."—*Coleridge*.

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Elisha multiplies the widow's oil

d Ne. v. 2-5.

e "It is indeed remarkable that poor people in Israel who are reduced to the last extremities generally have a little oil left."—*Kitto*.

f Obs. that our Lord required faith from those for whom He wrought miracles.

g Lu. viii. 51-54; Jno. vii. 3, 4; Ac. x 41.

h "So the supply of the oil of God's

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grace is never stunted by itself, but the stint is in our hearts." — Wordsworth.
2 Cor. vi 12.

Elisha is the guest of the Shunammite

a 1 Sa. xxv. 2.

"Judge not of actions by their mere effect; dive to the center, and the cause detect. Great deeds from meanest springs may take their course, and small est virtues from a mighty source." — Pope.

"A woman's heart is just like a lithographer's stone — what is once written upon it cannot be rubbed out." — Thackeray.

Elisha promises her a son

b Ge. xvii. 17; xviii. 12; Lu. i. 20.
"We should practice all things at two several times, the one when the mind is best disposed, the other when it is worst disposed; that by the one you may gain a great step; by the other you may work out the knots and stones of the mind." — Bacon.

"Even the most refined and polished of men seldom conceal any of the sacrifices they make, or what it costs to make them. This is reserved for women, and it is one of the many proofs they give of their superiority in matters of affection and delicacy." — Willmott.

"All the reasonings of men are not worth one sentiment of women." — Voltaire.

plants, such as geraniums, and others of a similar description, which they sold for a few pence, and this trifle enabled them to purchase some extra indulgences. "I have no money," said the poor old woman, "but I will bring you a geranium for it." The plant was accordingly brought. A short time afterwards she called again, and said, "I thank you heartily for that tract. Oh, let me have some more. I will gladly pay for them, and I have one other geranium."

8-11. (8) and . . day, *i. e.*, and the day came when. Shunem, 1 Ki. i. 3. Showing that Elisha was an itinerant prophet, spending much of his time teaching in the various colleges of the prophets. **great woman**, *i. e.*, rich.^a **constrained**, marg. laid hold on him. (9) **holy man** more than a prophet. She perceived that Elisha was unlike the common run of prophetic teachers. (10) **make**, make ready, prepare. **on the wall**, so an upper chamber. **stool**, or chair; this with the table indic. that the room was to be used for study as well as sleeping. (11) **on a day**, poss. the first, after the arrangement was completed, that Elisha called.

The evolution of a chair. — At work in the primeval forest felling trees and clearing the ground, man may first have experienced the comfort of a raised seat by placing himself on the stump of a tree. But, however eligible this support might be in other respects, it labored under the disadvantage of being immovable; but blocks could be sawed off so as to be movable. A brilliant thought! no sooner conceived than acted upon; and perhaps several generations passed before some great genius hit upon the idea of obviating the cumbersomeness of these heavy solid blocks, by fastening a piece of plank on three supporters, and producing a three-legged stool. Here was progress; but still something was wanted. The aged hunter or shepherd returned from the weary chase or pasture ground. He placed his stool so that, seated upon it, he could lean against the wall of his hut; he fell into deep contemplation. Suddenly his fatigue left him under the excitement of a new conception. He had found it — the Eureka! — the *ne plus ultra*! He seized his mallet and pegs, affixed an upright back to his stool, and behold a chair! — *Temple Bar*.

12-17. (12) Gehazi, *valley of vision*. stood, in attitude of reverence, him, *i. e.* Gehazi. He told Gehazi to summon the Shunammite lady. In the deep humility of Eastern womanhood she came and stood in his presence. Even then he did not address her. So downtrodden was the position of women in the East that any dignified person, much more a great prophet, could not converse with a woman without compromising his dignity. — *Exp. B.* (13) **for us**, indic. that the prophet's servant shared their kindness. **be spoken**, *etc.*, on this Rp. Hall remarks: "It is a good hearing that an Elisha is in such grace at the court, that he can promise himself access to the king, in a friend's suit. It was not ever thus. The time was when his master heard, 'Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?' Now the late miracle which Elisha wrought, in gratifying the three kings with water and victory, hath endeared him to the king of Israel; and now, Who but Elisha?" I dwell, *etc.*, she had no quarrel to settle, and is content with her lot. (14) **no child**, and this was the greatest of all griefs to an Israelitish woman. (15) **call her**, for she had left while Elis. and Gehazi conferred together. (16) **about**, *etc.*, Ge. xviii. 10. **lie**,^b what was promised seemed to her impossible. (17) **that season**, vs. 16. The event was exactly as promised.

A spirit of contentment. — I. Finds its happiness in its immediate surroundings. II. Is not allured by offers of greater worldly distinction. III. Is not involved in troubles involving the interference of the great and powerful. IV. Does not show kindness to others, with the design of securing any advantage or receiving anything in return. — *Hom. Com.*

Preferment refused. — Joe Martin, an Indian chief now residing in New Brunswick, was interrogated a short time ago, by a professional gentleman who holds an important office under government, whether he would accept the commission of captain among the Indians, which, he observed, it was in his power to procure for him; to which the Indian made the following reply: "Now Joe Martin love God, pray to God: now Joe Martin humble; certain not good to make Indian proud; when Indian proud, him forget God; for this reason Joe Martin never must be captain!" He accordingly declined it.

18-22. (18) **grown**, to be a lad of 4 or 5 yrs. (19) **my head**, being smitten with sunstroke. ^a a **lad**, the one attending the child. (21) **bed**, "to conceal the death until she had seen what the prophet could do for her." (22) **called**, prob. fr. the house, the field lay very near. The husband, knowing her anxiety about the boy, would at once have met her wish, but he did not think of the child. **to the man, etc.**, whose abode she seemed to know.

Great trials. — I. Often spring from great mercies. This woman would sooner have parted with all her property than lose this dear boy of hers. II. Should be patiently endured. Our great Example when overwhelmed with immeasurable distress, said, "Not my will, but Thine be done." III. May have a blessed end. — *D. Thomas.*

Sunstroke (vs. 19). — This was doubtless what is called a "stroke of the sun." The sun of Palestine is strong enough to produce this effect, according to the testimony of various travelers. This is particularly the case in the plains, such as those of Jericho and Esdraelon. In or on the borders of the latter Shunem was situated, and in a battle which was fought by the army of Baldwin IV., near Tiberias, on its eastern border, William of Tyre relates that more soldiers were slain by the sun than by the sword.

23-26. (23) **wherefore**, not realizing the serious illness of the child, and supposing she wanted to attend some religious service. **well, peace!** don't trouble me just now with inquiries, (24) **drive**, the lad ran by the side. ^b **slack . . riding**, better *delay me not in my riding*. (25) **Carmel**, a ride of five or six hours. Probably from previous visits both the Shunammite and her servant were familiar with the road; for the whole narrative gives the impression that on Carmel there was a centre of prophetic teaching and religious worship, and that the family from Shunem were among the frequenters thereof. — *Cam. B.* (26) **it is well**, partly the usual salutation, partly keeping her message to deliver to the prophet himself.

Transformed trials. — In one of the German picture galleries is a painting called "Cloud-land." It hangs at the end of a long gallery, and at first sight it looks like a huge, repulsive daub of confused color, without form or comeliness. As you walk toward it, the picture begins to take shape. It proves to be a mass of exquisite little cherub faces, like those at the head of the canvas in Raphael's "Madonna San Sisto." If you come close to the picture, you see only an innumerable company of little angels and cherubim. How often the soul that is frightened by trial sees nothing but a confused and repulsive mass of broken expectations and confused hopes! But if that soul, instead of fleeing away into unbelief and despair, would only draw up near to God, it would soon discover that the cloud was full of angels of mercy. — *Cuyler.*

Compensation. —

For rapture of love is linked with the pain or fear of loss,
And the hand that takes the crown must ache with many a cross;
Yet he who hath never a conflict hath never a victor's palm,
And only the toilers know the sweetness of rest and calm.

Who would dare the choice, *neither* or *both* to know,
The finest quiver of joy or the agony-thrill of woe?
Never the exquisite pain, then never the exquisite bliss,
For the heart that is dull to that can never be strung to this.

Hush, oh hush! for the Father whose ways are true and just,
Knoweth and careth and loveth, and waits for thy perfect trust;
The cup He is slowly filling shall soon be filled to the brim,
And infinite compensations forever be found in Him. — *Havergal.*

27-31. (27) **caught, etc.**, "to lay hold on the knees or feet has always been thought in the E. to add force to supplication." ^c **thrust, etc.**, the servant felt that his master's dignity was suffering from seeming familiarity. **vexed**, bitter with some great sorrow. **Lord hath hid**, showing his dependence on immediate inspiration. (28) **a son**, this question reveals her trouble. (29) **my staff**, an official rod. The reason for sending it has been variously presented. ^d **salute him not**, as Lu. x. 4, *i. e.* haste, tarry not for conventionalities. (30) **leave thee**, she wanted his presence in the chamber of the dead. (31) **hearing, marg. attention. awaked**, death rep. as a sound sleep.

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on the death
of her son
she goes to
Elisha

^a For sunstroke comp. Ps. cxli. 6; Is. xlix. 10.

^b "I have learned a new way to spell disappointments, beginning with an *h* instead of a *d*, *Hisappointments*." — *Dulles.*

^c "Night brings out stars, as sorrows show us truths." — *Bailev.*

Gehazi is
sent to meet
her

^b It is usual for women to ride on asses accompanied by a servant, who walks behind and drives the beast with his stick, goading the animal at the speed required by his mistress." — *Jamieson.*

^c "I cried, 'Lord, spare my child!' He did, but not as I meant. He snatched it from danger, and took it to His home." — *Cecil.*

^d "Flowers never emit so sweet and strong a fragrance as before a storm. Beauteous soul! when a storm approaches thee, be as fragrant as a sweet-smelling flower." — *Richter.*

^e "To feel, to love, to suffer, to devote herself, will always be the text of the life of woman." — *Bulzac.*

^f "Women are never stronger than when they arm themselves with their weakness." — *Madame du Defand.*

Elijah re-
turns with
her, Gehazi
preceding

^c Comp. Mat. xviii. 29; Mk. v. 22; vii. 25; Lu. viii. 41; Jno. xi. 32.

^d Some think he expected the lay-

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ing of the staff to restore the life. Some think he intended to show that God only could restore to life, and expected the failure of the staff.

Elisha restores her son to life

a Ja. v. 16.

b 1 Ki. xvii. 23; Lu. vii. 15.

"No true work since the world began was ever wasted; no true life since the world began has ever failed."—S. S. Harris

"Sorrow seems sent for our instruction, as we darken the cages of birds when we would teach them to sing."—Richter.

the poisoned pottage healed

c 2 Ki. viii. 1.

d "As it is most likely that the Jewish would resemble the Egyptian 'great pot,' it is seen by the monumental paintings to have been a large goblet, with two long legs, which stood over the fire on the floor."—Jamieson.

e "It was not only nauseous but noxious."—Wordsworth.

"Are the wages of sin preferable to those of virtue? Is death more eligible than life, or is hell preferable to heaven? Are the pleasures of sense more desirable than the sweets of innocence, than the love and favor of God, than the

Salutations in the East (vs. 29).—With us a brief wayside salutation does not hinder, but in the East it does. As we were turning in by a narrow, dark, arched lane, my donkey-man suddenly sprung aside, with a loud shout of delight, and left me. Of course I halted, not knowing my way. Some donkeys were coming on in front, and my driver had seen in the foremost of the riders a brother or friend, who was returning from a journey. My donkey-man was on foot, but this mattered not. In a moment he leaped up and seized his friend round the neck, hugging him most strenuously, and kissing him first on one side of the face and then on the other. This mutual operation being over they inquired after each other's health, and then went on their way.—Bonar.

32-37. (32) his bed, vs. 10, 21. (33) shut the door, as vs. 4, to secure uninterrupted. prayed,^a 1 Ki. xvii. 21. (34) lay, etc., apparently exerting himself to restore breath. stretched, prostrated himself; coming close to communicate living warmth. (36) take up thy son, now alive again.^b (37) fell, etc., in overwhelming gratitude.

Personal responsibility.—No other man can do your work. There may be men as good as you, who can do their work better than you could do it; but no man can do your particular kind of work, no man can offer up your particular prayer. Every man has his own calling of God in this as in other matters. We do not all work in the same way. The good man may not be what is termed a powerful, eloquent, or effective preacher, but he will speak healingly, lovingly, tenderly, and with sweet persuasiveness, and he will get hold of some who might be terrified by another style, and flee away from it, as men would seek to hide themselves from a threatening thunder-storm. No man can give away your tract; no other man can pay your visit to your sick friend. He knows you. A greater man would not be received. In some respects a better man would not be understood; but he knows you—every tone in your voice, every motion of your hand within his, every look of your eye, every variation of your countenance, and a word from you has an effect which it would not have from any other living creature.—Parker.

38-41. (38) Gilgal, ch. ii. 1. dearth,^c Ge. xli. 54. sitting, receiving instructions. servant, not Gehazi, one of the sons of the prophet set apart to attend him. great pot,^d the only one in the house. (39) herbs, growing wild, such as mallow, asparagus, etc. wild vine, not real vine, but the *Colocynth*, or the *echalium elaterium*, or squirting cucumber. lap full, or shawl full. knew them not, as to their poisonous quality. (40) death, etc.,^e the taste was so bitter, they feared poisoning. (41) meal, not without a miracle competent to change the quality of the ingredients.

The poisoned pottage (vs. 39).—Consider this miracle—I. In itself. 1. It was remarkably well-timed; 2. It was of a discriminating description; 3. It was a real miracle, a true sign. No ordinary man could have cured the poisoned pottage by a handful of mere meal. II. An illustrative of God's ways, whether in providence or in grace. God is pleased, as a rule, to effect great results by small means. We see here also the timeliness and discrimination of God's help, its completeness, and we have an illustration of the great reflex benefits of the Gospel. Elisha came as a guest; but became the true host.—Homilist.

Wild vine (vs. 39).—The word for "wild vine" is used here as it is vernacularly, especially in the Western Hemisphere, for any creeping plant having tendrils and vine-shaped leaves. If we admit this Gilgal to be the Gilgal by Jordan, between Jericho and the Dead Sea, where Joshua and the children of Israel first halted, we shall see that the prophet and his party had come down from the upper country of Benjamin, near Bethel, to the low-lying sandy plain near the Jordan, where the vegetation is extremely different from that of the central hills of the Holy Land. Here it resembles that of tropical deserts: there it is the ordinary flora of Syria. Now there is a species of wild gourd or melon, *Cucumis prophetarum*, which is common in the hill country, and which when green is sliced and boiled as a vegetable, but which is not found in the lower plains. But here its place is taken by a plant extremely similar in appearance, but very different in its qualities, the colocynth (*Citrullus colocynthis*), a native of the Sahara and the Scinde deserts, and frequently found on all the sandy salt plains near the sea in the Levant. This plant I found in great profusion both near Gilgal and by the shores of the

Dead Sea, at Engedi, and at the south end. Here we have the mistake at once explained. The prophet's attendant, a native of the hill country, probably of Samaria, was of course ignorant of the plants of the Dead Sea. He finds the colocynth growing just in the very spot where it still flourishes: mistaking it for the wholesome gourd of his own hills, he gathers it for the pottage; and no wonder that the people, when they tasted the bitter and nauseous medicine, exclaim, "O man of God, there is death in the pot." — *Tristram*.

42-44. (42) Baal-shalisha, 1 Sa. ix. 4. first fruits, the pious remnant in Israel, looked upon the prophets as the successors of the Lev. priesthood. full ears, etc., *R. V.*, "fresh." "A few ears of the same corn as that whereof the bread was made," *cf.* Lev. ii. 14; xxiii. 14. — *Pulp. Com.* in the husk, better in his bag or scrip. (43) servitor, or attendant Gehazi. hundred men, comp. our Lord's feeding five thousand. (44) and left, after being fully satisfied. A miraculous increase.

Relief from want. —

Take this purse, thou whom the heaven's plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heavens deal so still,
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see,
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. — *Shakespeare*.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

1-3. (1) Naaman, *pleasant*. Benhadad, who had been wont in his youth and middle age to lead his armies into the field in person, seems now in his old age to have found it necessary to entrust the command to a general, and to have made Naaman captain of his host. — *Pulp. Com.* honourable, or honored, highly valued. deliverance, no account of this is found in Scrip.¹ leper, not, however, so bad as to require to be isolated, but a source of constant apprehension. Poss. too the Israelite law of leprosy did not apply in Syria. (2) by companies, little parties making raids for the sake of plunder and slaves. maid, prob. little more than a child. (3) recover him, heal him; cleanse away this disease.

Naaman a type of the heathen. — Like Naaman, the heathen. I. Enjoys many worldly advantages. II. Is suffering from a deadly disease. III. Hears, often through insignificant agencies, of the possibility of cure. IV. Is intensely in earnest in seeking the means of deliverance. V. Is offended at the method prescribed for obtaining the needed cure. VI. When complying with the prescribed conditions, is cured of his deadly malady. VII. Gratefully acknowledges and adores the power and goodness of God. — *Hom. Com.*

A captive child (vs. 2). — As Dr. Cornelius was riding through a wilderness in the West, he met a party of Indian warriors, just returning from one of their excursions of fire and blood. One of these warriors, of fierce and fiend-like aspect, led a child of five years of age, whom they had taken captive. "Where are the parents of the child?" said Dr. Cornelius. "Here they are," replied the savage warrior, as with one hand he exhibited the bloody scalps of a man and a woman, and with the other brandished his tomahawk in all the exultation of gratified revenge. That same warrior became a disciple of Jesus Christ, a humble man of piety and of prayer. His tomahawk was laid aside, and was never again crimsoned with the blood of his fellow-men. His wife became a member of the same church with himself, and their united prayers ascended, morning and evening, from the family altar. Their daughters were amiable and humble, and devoted followers of the blessed Redeemer, trained up under the influence of a father's and a mother's prayers, for the society of angels and saints.

4-7. (4) his lord, the king of Syria. (5) go to, go, set out at once, an index of the king's regard. letter, at once a certificate and a request. ten talents, value about \$15,000. six thousand, etc., value uncertain. changes, etc., in the E. usual gifts of honor.⁴ (6) letter . . king, Benhadad was not

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rivers of pleasure at His right hand, the crown of life, the eternal weight of glory?" — *Wogan*.

a hundred men miraculously fed

a Mat. xiv. 19-21. Jno. vi. 9-13.

"Men little care in this short journey to the silent grave; and the poor peasant, bless'd with peace and health, I envy more than Croesus with his wealth." — *H. K. White*.

Naaman

the little maid

b "The Assyrian monarch had pushed his conquests as far as Syria exactly at this period, bringing into subjection all the kings of these parts. But his conquest was not permanent. Syria revolted after a few years, and made herself independent. It was prob. in this war of independence that Naaman had distinguished himself." — *Spk. Com.*

c Le. xlii. 2-46.

"The helpful souls who are most lovingly remembered and the longest missed are those who have been mindful of small opportunities." — *N. Y. Observer*.

the king of Syria's letter to the king of Israel

d Ge. xli. 42, xlv. 22; Ex. vi. 8; Da. v. 7.

B. C. 851-842.

a Comp 2 Sa. xiii. 19, xv. 32; Ezr. ix. 3; 2 Chr. xxxiv. 27; Jer. xxxvi. 24.

"Pride is a vice which cleaveth so fast unto the hearts of men, that if we were to strip ourselves of all faults one by one we should undoubtedly find it the very last and hardest to put off." — Hooker.

Naaman is told by Elisha to wash in Jordan

b Marg., move his hand up and down over the place. This indicates that the leprosy was local.

"Pride is the most pernicious of all vices: for whereas any single vice is opposite to its contrary virtue—uncleanness expels chastity; covetousness, liberality—pride, like an infectious disease, taints the sound parts, corrupts the actions of every virtue, and deprives them of their true grace and glory." — Bates.

Naaman washes and is healed

c "Rises in the Antilibanus, flows westward fr. its foot, and forms the oasis within which Damascus is placed." — Spk. Com.

d Job xxxiii. 25; Lu. iv. 27.

"Faintly trust?" Nay! I will trust not faintly; I will trust fully, freely,

acquainted with the status of a prophet in Israel: supposing him to be subject to the king's command, he addressed his letter to Jehoram. **saying**, this was the part of the letter concerning Naaman. (7) **rent his clothes**, in excitement and annoyance.^a **to kill . . . alive**, signifies omnipotence. The king had not heard much about the miracles of Elis. and would not think of him. **a quarrel**, ground on wh. to make a quarrel that may give occasion for war.

Little voices. — God teaches us by "little voices" oftener than we think, and ministers to us by little hands that we seldom associate with the almightiness of God. All our little children are His messengers, and out of their mouths He wishes to ordain strength. "Little voices" call us home, as well as "God's all animating voice," or rather God calls us by them. Just as the man whose child was lost in a mist that came suddenly down on one of the American rivers heard the little one calling, "This way, Father!" was led at last to hear the dead child's call as from heaven, whither, in that night of mist and sorrow, she had gone; so God leads many home by these angels in the clouds, these little ones, dead for a while to us, but who are ever living unto God. — C. W. P.

8—11. (8) **to me**, Elisha sets himself forth as vindicating the honor of Jehovah, the true God of Israel. (9) **with his horses, etc.**, in great state, as if to make a profound impression. (10) **sent a messenger**, to humble Naaman and make him willing to receive healing as a gift of grace, not a purchase of his grandeur or his gifts. **go, etc.**, comp. Jno. ix. 7. **seven times**, a number held sacred among the Jews. In this instance it was a severe test of Naaman's faith. (11) **wrath**, at the slight offered him.

strike, or wave.^b
Pride overcoming want (vs. 11). — Consider—I. What in this man's eye was a fault; what to clearer vision is a glory; the utter indifference of the Gospel to all distinctions among men. Naaman wanted to be treated as a great man that happened to be a leper; Elisha treated him as a leper that happened to be a great man. II. The naked simplicity of God's Gospel. It was very like a *man* to long for something visible and tangible for his wavering confidence to lay hold upon. It was very like *God* to contradict the desire and to give him instead only a promise to grasp and a command to obey. The like apparent antagonism between men's wishes and God's ways meets us in the Gospel; and the like correspondence between God's ways and men's real wants. III. The utter rejection by the Gospel of all our co-operation in our own cleansing. The Gospel rejects our co-operation just because it demands our faith. — A. Maclaren.

Display of pride. — Goldsmith tells of a mandarin who appeared with jewels on every part of his robe. He was once accosted by a sly old fellow, who, following him through several streets, bowed often to the ground, and thanked him for his jewels. "What does the man mean?" cried the mandarin: "I never gave you any of my jewels." "No," replied the other; "but you have let me look at them, and that is all the use you can make of them yourself; so the only difference between us is, that you have the trouble of watching them; and that is an employment I don't much desire."

12—14, (12) **Abana** or **Amana**, the Barada.^c **Pharpar**, the *Away*, *Awaaj*, or *Awodsch*, wh. flows thro' the plain at the S. of Damascus. **better**, not as having healing virtue, but as "brighter, clearer, and colder." (13) **came near**, watching for their opportunity. **my father**, special term of reverence. **great thing**, wh. would have required painful effort, if you could have trusted him then, why not trust him now? (14) **went he down**, he listened to the advice of his servants and took the 25 mile journey to the Jordan, where he obeyed completely the commands of Elis. **flesh . . . clean**, the skin disease was wholly gone.^d

If slaves, still men (vs. 13). — I. Naaman's admirable servants. Had these servants been sycophants they would have applauded his indignation — had they been cowards, they would have feared to interpose — had they been callous, they would have let Naaman take his course. But they were wise and generous men. They risk all consequences, and practically rebuke his folly. II. Their irresistible logic. Do we not share Naaman's folly, and need the rebuke he received? Let us be content with God's way. If it does seem

to us even puerile, at least it answers its end. A raven bore the prophet's meal as successfully as an archangel could have done. III. Their success. Through them Naaman's proud will is bent. Their words prevail. Conclusion:—1. In giving the word of exhortation, let us remember our own frailty: not as an oracle, but as a friend, let us chide; 2. In receiving it, let us be meek; at the time we may think it hard and uncalled for, but by and by we may see its fitness.—*R. A. Griffin.*

Leprosy.—The leprosy exhibits itself on the surface of the skin, but it infects at the same time the marrow and the bones; so much so that the extreme joints and parts of the system gradually lose their power, and some drop from the body and give it a mutilated and dreadful appearance. From these circumstances there can be no doubt that the disease originates and spreads its ravages internally before it makes its appearance on the external parts of the body. Indeed, we have reason to believe that it is a long time concealed in the system; for instance, in infants until they arrive at the age of puberty; and in adults, as many as three or four years, till at last it gives the fearful indications on the skin of having already gained a deep-rooted and permanent existence.—*Jahn.*

15-19. (15) **returned**, humble and grateful. This involved a journey of 50 miles, but Naaman is devoted to Jehovah, and desires to show his gratitude. **came, stood**, quite dif. fr. his first approach. Naaman now is glad to enter the humble house and wait upon the prophet of Jehovah. **now I know, etc.**,^a this acknowledgment of Jehovah the prophet would look for first. **a blessing**, a present as testimony of gratitude. (16) **none**, the servant of God would be wholly free from the charge of using the power of God for his own personal advantage. (17) **burden of earth**, so he thought to turn Syria at least for himself into Jehovah's land.^b (18) **Rimmon**, poss. the sun, the chief object of worship to the Syrians.^c It is from this circumstance that the phrase "to bow in the house of Rimmon" has become proverbial to indicate a dangerous and dishonest compromise.—*Exp. B.* **leaneth on my hand**, ch. vii. 2, 17. Naaman is not prepared to be a martyr for his religion. On returning to Damascus, it will be among his civil duties to accompany his master to the national temples, and to prostrate himself before the images of the national deities. If he declines, it may cost him his life; it will certainly cost him his court favor. For such a sacrifice he is not prepared.—*Pul. Com.* (19) **in peace**. We are not to consider this answer as implying that service of God and service of Rimmon might be combined without any incongruity. The prophet appears rather to be willing to leave the good seed already sown to bear fruit in due season. Being sown of God it must fructify, and peace would be the result of its further development.—*Cam. B.*

Elisha's benediction (vs. 19).—Keil remarks that the older theologians mostly found in these words an approval of the course Naaman intended to follow. and as it was not to be supposed that a prophet would sanction participation in idolatrous ceremonies, they devised two explanations. By the first of these it was attempted to show that his words were retrospective, referring only to what he had done, not to what he was about to do. By the other, an imagined distinction was drawn between "actual worship" and bowing for "state convenience." But the answer was really only the usual form of leave-taking. For Elisha had no special commission to the heathen nations around Judæa. He was appointed to convert Israel from idolatry, and bring them back to the worship of the true God. As a parting benediction, he wished that Jehovah's peace might rest on the Syrian general, and thus committed him to the Divine guidance without answering his closing words.

20-24. (20) **this Syrian**, Gehazi argues that Elis. might have taken advantage of a heathen. **as the Lord liveth**, this had been a favorite appeal of Elijah and Elisha, and the use of it by Gehazi shows how utterly meaningless and how very dangerous such solemn words become when they are degraded into formulæ.—*Exp. B.* **take somewhat**, secure something for myself.^d (21) **lighted down**, stepped fr. his chariot; this for so great a man was an act of singular courtesy. (22) **sent me**, a deliberate lie. The fact that Gehazi's conduct thus inevitably compromised his master, and undid the effects of his example, is part of the measure of the man's apostasy.^e **from mount Ephraim**, where were two schools of prophets, Bethel and Gilgal. (23) **two talents**, this extra gift showed Naaman's anxiety to prove his gratitude. (24) **tower, R. V.**, "hill," where Elisha dwelt.

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strongly. It must be all trust here, no sight, not even a ray of light. To trust is hard. But if one can trust at all, why is it not as easy to trust perfectly as to trust faintly.—*M. E. Case.*

Naaman offers a gift to Elisha

a Da. ii. 47; iii. 29; vi. 26, 27.

b Obs. the notion that gods belonged to particular territories I Ki. xxii. 23.

c "Worshipped with the symbol of the pomegranate (rimmon) the emblem of fruitfulness. The name seems to be abbreviated fr. Hadad-rimmon."—*Wordsworth.*

"Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self. It is no humility for a man to think less of himself than he ought, though it might rather puzzle him to do that."—*Spurgeon.*

Gehazi follows Naaman and by falsehood obtains a gift

d 1 Ti. vi. 10.

e "The well-known hill by Elisha's house."—*Keil.*

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"We may conjecture that the hill wh. must have lain bet. Elisha's house and the place where Gehazi overtook Naaman, interrupted the view in this direction, and that Gehazi d's missed Naaman's servants at this point lest they should be seen from his master's residence." — *Spk. Com.*

Gehazi punished

a Trans., "Went not out my beloved when some one (viz Naaman) turned from his lofty chariot to meet thee?" — *Ewald.*

b Ex. iv. 6; Nu. xii. 10; 2 Ki. xv. 5.

the borrowed axe

c "Before the principal temple of the Lamassery at Kounboun, there is a large square court. In this enclosure the Lamas assemble at the lecture-hour, here they sit upon the bare stones, in winter, the cold, the snow, and the sun, and in summer, the rain, and the sun's heat. The professors only are under shelter; they sit upon a platform, covered with a tent." — *Hue's Travels.*

d De. xxxiv. 3; Ju. i. 16; iii. 13.

e "The Jews prob. acquired a knowledge of the smelting process in Egypt, where iron was employed at least from the time of the third Ramesses." — *Spk. Com.*

f *Thenius* suggests that Elisha saw

Gehazi. — I. If contact with excellence fail to raise us, it will sink us in the moral scale. II. One sin leads on to another by a sequence that is almost inevitable. — *G. Rawlinson.*

Falsehood (vs. 22). — Falsehood is like a house built of wretchedly bad materials. It may stand for a time, with care and attention; but at last, down it comes, probably burying its inmates in the ruins. He who tells a lie to gain some fancied present benefit, is like a very poor man who borrows a shilling on Monday, under the utterly irredeemable promise to pay ten shillings for the loan on Saturday. Gold-fish swimming about in a glass bowl, or bees in a glass beehive, may as easily screen themselves from observation by the bystanders, as our inward thoughts and sins can hide themselves from the sight of God. *Receiving gifts.* — When great presents were sent to Epaminondas, the celebrated Theban general, he used to observe: "If the thing you desire be good, I will do it without any bribe, even because it is good; if it be not honest, I will not do it for all the goods in the world." He was so great a contemner of riches that when he died he left not enough to discharge the expenses of his funeral.

25-27. (25) *went in, etc.*, attending to his duty as if nothing had happened. Servants remained in the presence of their master when not sent on errands by him. *whence*, a sharp, abrupt question. *no whither*, Heb. not hither or thither. (26) *mine heart*, my beloved, *a. i. e.* was I not with thee in spirit? *a time, etc.* "Was this the time, when so many hypocrites pretend to be prophets from selfishness and avarice, and bring the prophetic office into contempt with unbelievers, for a servant of the true God to take money and goods from a non-Israelite . . . that he might acquire property and luxury for himself?" — *Keil.* (27) *for ever*, through distant generations. *white as snow*, severe form of leprosy.^b

The prophet's regard for the times. — I. Elisha regarded this as a time for Israel to humble herself before the Lord, not to feast. II. He regarded it as a time in which the mercy of God should be manifested to a heathen: not a time for making a profit out of a heathen.

An unprofitable exchange. — It is a woful exchange that Gehazi hath made with Naaman; Naaman came a leper, returned a disciple. Gehazi came a disciple, returned a leper. Naaman left behind both his disease and his money; Gehazi takes up both his money and his disease. Now shall Gehazi never look upon himself but he shall think of Naaman, whose skin is transferred upon him with those talents, and shall wear out the rest of his days in shame, in pain, and sorrow. His tears may wash off the guilt of his sin, but shall not, like another Jordan, wash off his leprosy; that shall ever remain as a hereditary monument of Divine severity. Happy was it for him if, while his skin was snow white with leprosy, his humbled soul was washed white as snow with the water of true repentance. — *Bp. Hall.*

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

1-7. (1) *sons, etc.*, connect with ch. iv. 44. *dwell with thee, lit.* sit before thee. The attitude of scholars before a master.^c The place was prob. Jericho, bec. of its proximity to Jordan (vs. 4). *too strait*, limited for the number of scholars, indicates the great activity of the prophetic settlements during life of Elis. (2) *beam*, the valley of Jordan was well wooded.^d *make . . . there, i. e.* change the location of the college fr. Jericho to the River Jordan. (3) *be content*, or willing, prob. anxious to have Elis. select the new location and advise them in ref. to their new buildings. (4) *to Jordan, i. e.* the banks of Jor. (5) *ax head, lit. the iron.*^e (6) *did swim*, we cannot doubt that a miracle is intended.^f As to literal historic accuracy, those must make positive affirmation who feel that they can do so in accordance alike with adequate authority and with the sacredness of truth. — *Exp. B.* (7) "The whole community would be encouraged when by this act Elis. made clear to them that they had God's blessing on their new undertaking." — *Cam. B.*

The raising of the axe. — I. We are taught in what seasons we may expect Divine interposition. In seasons of — 1. Legitimate anxiety; 2. Legitimate labor. II. The persons who assuredly enjoy God's special providence. 1. His own people; 2. Especially the earnest and devoted. III. The manner of Divine interposition. 1. God gave Elisha power to befriend the disconsolate

youth; 2. Though the help was miraculous, the means were very simple; 3. Though the help was miraculous, the young man had to put forth his own effort. IV. The issue of the event. The axe was restored. — *R. A. Griffin.*

Honesty in borrowing (vs. 25). — The Rothschild family, whose purse has maintained war and brought about peace, owes all its greatness to one act of extraordinary honesty under trust. When the prince of Hesse Cassel fled through Frankfort in the time of the French Revolution, he requested Moses Rothschild — a Jewish banker, of limited means but good reputation — to take charge of his money and jewels. The Jew accepted the trust, but would give no receipt, as he would not answer for their safety in such dangerous times. Presently the French entered Frankfort and took Mr. Rothschild's money, but did not discover the property of the prince of Cassel — worth several hundred thousand pounds — which Mr. Rothschild had buried in his garden. On their leaving the town, the money was dug up, and a small portion of it was used. The banker prospered, gained much wealth of his own, and a few years after informed the prince that his money was safe, and offered to pay him five per cent. interest upon it. Impressed with his fidelity, and to mark his gratitude, he recommended the honest Jew to various European sovereigns as a money-lender.

8-12. (8) **king of Syria**, prob. Ben-hadad. Then, *R. V.* "now," whether before or after Naaman's cure is impossible to establish. **servants**, *i. e.* his chief officers, his "council of war." (9) **pass not**, neglect not; do not omit to guard; or beware of the ambush set in such a place. (10) **sent, etc.**, a few scouts to verify Elis.' predictions. **not once nor twice**, *i. e.* frequently. (11) **this thing**, the failure of his secret schemes. **which of us**, suspecting treachery in some member of his council. (12) **none**, Heb. *no*, *not so*. **bedechamber**, fig. for the utmost secrecy.

God's knowledge of the wicked used for the advantage of the good (vs. 12). — I. The secret counsel: king of Syria's counsel with his servants (vs. 8). 1. Secret: thought no one knew; 2. Aim: to invade Israel, waste the country, *etc.*; 3. Plan; place of camp, point of attack, *etc.* II. The Unseen Listener — God. He hears every idle word that men speak; no place exempt from His presence; even the secrets of his private chamber told Elisha by inspiration: the prophet could not know otherwise; even had it been possible for them to kill Elisha, God could easily raise up and instruct another prophet; foolish to fight against God. Learn: — God knows all that the wicked are doing; He will employ this knowledge for the benefit of the good. — *Hive.*

13-18. (13) **Dothan**, Ge. xxxvii. 17, now Tel-Dothaim: on a hill S. W. of Jenin. (14) That he could thus besiege a town so near the capital (about 12 miles north), shows the helplessness to which Israel had been now reduced. **by night**, in hope of taking the prophet at unawares. (15) **servant**, not Gehazi. **early**, to his duties. **alas**, anticipating death or capture, and not familiar with Elis.' great power, he gives way to his grief. (16) **fear not, etc.**, Elisha saw the defense, and foresaw the issue. (17) **mountain . . . Elisha**, encamped between Elisha and the Syrian host. **fire**, "glowed with a strange, unearthly brightness." — *Pul. Com.* (18) **and when . . . him**, as the words stand, "they" must refer to the Syrian troops, and to understand the sentence we must suppose that Elisha and his servant, the latter encouraged by the heavenly vision, had come forth from the city and been able to pass the gate. After this the Syrians followed them, and on their approach Elisha prayed that they might be smitten with blindness. — *Cam. B.* **blindness**, as Ge. xix. 11, not physical blindness, but a dazing effect, "an illusion wh. prevented them fr. seeing correctly what was before them."

Dothan. —

Hark! the ramparts are scaled, all rush to the gate;
'Tis the moment of terror, the moment of fate!
And men tore their garments and women their hair;
But Elisha came forth from the chamber of prayer.
Like thunder his voice o'er the multitude rolled:
"Jehovah, arise! Pour Thy light on our eyes;
And show Israel the shepherds who watch o'er Thy fold."

The mountain horizon was burning with light;
On its brow stood the Syrian in glory and might;

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the axe-head at the bottom of the water, and reached it with a long stick.

the king of Israel warned by Elisha

"I could write down twenty cases," says a pious man, "when I wished God had done otherwise than He did; but which I now see, had I my own will, would have led to extensive mischief."

Elisha's celestial body-guard

Dothan means *two wells*, or the *double fountain*.

a 2 Chr. xxxii. 7; Ps. lv. 18; xlvii. 7; Ro. viii. 31.

Ps. lxxviii. 17; xci. 11; Mat. xxvi. 63.

"God bath a thousand hands to chastise; a thousand darts of punition, a thousand bowes made in diverse wise, a thousand arblasts bent in his dungeon." — *Warton.*

"The wheels of a watch or clock move contrary one to another; some

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one way, some another; yet all serve the intent of the workman, to show the time, or to make the clock to strike. So in the world, the providence of God may seem to run cross to His promises — one man takes this way, another runs that way; good men go one way, wicked men another; yet all in conclusion accomplish His will, and centre in the purpose of God, the Great Creator of all things." — *Stbbs.*

Elisha's treatment of blind prisoners

a "Untruth has been held by all moralists to be justifiable towards a public enemy. Where we have a right to kill, much more have we a right to deceive by stratagem." — *Spk. Com.*

b "In China the mandarin is addressed 'my father and my mother.'" — *Huc.*

'The Lord smites with blindness those who fight against him, not that they may remain blind, but that they may truly see, after they shall have observed how far they have strayed.' — *Barlow.*

B. C. *cir.* 800.

the siege of Samaria

Proud waved to the sunset the banner's rich fold;
Proud blazed the gemmed turbans, and corselets of gold.
And loud rose the taunt of the infidel's tongue;

"Ho! Israelite slaves, this night sees your graves;
And first from your walls shall Elisha be flung!"

At the word stooped a cloud from the crown of the sky!
In its splendors the sun seemed to vanish and die.
From its depths poured a host upon mountain and plain;
There was seen the starred helm, and the sky-tinctured vane,
And the armor of fire, and the seraph's bright wing;
But no eyeball dared gaze on the pomp of the blaze,
As their banner unfolded the name of their king!

But where are the foe? Like a forest o'erblown,
In their ranks as they stood, their squadrons are strown!
No banner is lifted, no chariot is wheeled;
On earth lies the turban, on earth lies the shield.
There is terror before them and terror behind,

Now, proud homicide, thou art smote in thy pride,
The Syrian is captive, his hosts are struck blind! — *Croly.*

19-23. (19) not the way, *etc.*, this deception must be treated as part of a stratagem, justifiable in war and defense of life. (20) **Samaria**, so in the power of their enemy, and liable to be cut down by the Israelite soldiers. (21) **my father**,^b term of highest respect; called forth by Jehoram's delight in seeing the predicament of his enemies. (22) **not smite**, *bec.* Elisha intended that they should produce a fear of Jehovah, and His prophet, by the report they took back. **wouldest thou . . . bow?** "wouldest thou in smiting these persons, be smiting those whom thou hadst made prisoners in war, so as to be able to justify thy conduct by Deut. xx. 13? No; thou wouldest *not*. Therefore thou shalt not smite them." — *Pulp. Com.* **set, etc.**, treat them as guests, not as prisoners. (23) **bands**, predatory bands. What was the effect? "The bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel." This is the true revenge. This is the great miracle. — *People's B.*

On the treatment of enemies (vs. 22). — I. Common method. Retaliation; paying off old scores, "eye for an eye," *etc.* II. Right method. Forgive; practical forgiveness, doing good to them that hate, *etc.* 1. Best policy; coals of fire on head of foe will melt his heart, change him to friend; otherwise his animosity will continue; an enemy conquered by kindness is a friend won; the bands of Syria came no more, if injured they would have come in vengeance; 2. Most Christ like; He forgave His enemies; while we were enemies, Christ — what? — punished? — no; He died for us. — *Hive.*

Returning good for evil. — Arcadius, an Argive, was incessantly railing at Philip of Macedon. Venturing once into the dominions of Philip, the courtiers reminded their prince that he had now an opportunity to punish Arcadius for his past insolences, and to put it out of his power to repeat them. The king, however, instead of seizing the hostile stranger and putting him to death, dismissed him loaded with courtesies and kindnesses. Some time after Arcadius's departure from Macedon, word was brought that the king's old enemy was become one of his warmest friends, and did nothing but diffuse his praises wherever he went. On hearing this, Philip turned to his courtiers, and asked, with a smile, "Am not I a better physician than you." *Clemency (vs. 22)* — Clemency is not only the privilege, the honor, and the duty of a prince, but it is also his security, and better than all his garrisons, forts, and guards to preserve himself and his dominions in safety. It is the brightest jewel in a monarch's crown. As meekness moderates anger, so clemency moderates punishment. That prince is truly royal who masters himself; looks upon all injuries as below him; and governs by equity and reason, not by passion. Clemency is profitable for all; mischiefs contained, lose their force. — *L. M. Stretch.*

24-29. (24) **after this**, some years after. The Black Obelisk, discovered by Mr. Layard at Nineveh, and placed in the British Museum, and the bronze gates of one of Shalmaneser's palaces, discovered in 1878, and also sent to the British Museum, both contain records of wars of Assyria against Syria under

Ben-hadad. (25) **ass's head**, the most worthless part of an unclean animal. The price was about 25 dollars.^b **cab**, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ quarts, 18 cabs made 1 ephah. **dove's dung**, a kind of pulse, even now called by the name, wh. is parched and dried, and used upon long journeys. (26) **passing by**, on his rounds of inspection. (27) *If, etc.*, or *Nay, let Jehovah help thee, I cannot*. Jehoram thought that this was but one of the appeals which sprang from the clamorous mendacity of famine with which he had grown so painfully familiar. "The Lord curse you!" he exclaimed impatiently. "How can I help you? Every barn-floor is bare, every wine-press drained." — *Exp. B.* (28) **what alleth thee?** perceiving hers was not mere cry for food, but an appeal to the king for judgment. (29) **hid,** *etc.*, Le. xxvi. 29; De. xxviii. 53.

Soul-hunger. —

Father, I cry to Thee for bread,
With hungered longing, eager prayer.
Thou hear'st, and givest me instead
More hunger and a half despair.

O Lord, how long? My days decline;
My youth is lapped in memories old;
I need not bread alone, but wine —
See cup and hand to Thee I hold.

And yet Thou givest; thanks, O Lord,
That still my heart with hunger faints;
The day will come when at Thy board
I sit forgetting all my plaints. — *George Macdonald.*

30—33. (30) **rent, etc.**, in horror, not in grief, or in humiliation. **sackcloth**, the outward sign of humiliation, to avert the danger fr. the city.^d I find his sorrow, I find not his repentance. The worst man may grieve for his smart, only the good heart grieves for his offense. — *Bp. Hall.* (31) **God . . day**, showing no sign of real *penitence*. The man who had warned, who had prophesied, who so far during this siege had not raised his finger to help — the man who was believed to be able to wield the powers of heaven, and had wrought no deliverance for his people, but suffered them to sink unaided into these depths of abjectness — should he be permitted to live? If Jehovah would not help, of what use was Elisha? — *Exp. B.* (32) **elders**, of the city. **son of a murderer**, by this bloodthirstiness Jehoram proves himself a worthy successor of his father, Ahab. **shut, etc.**, *i. e.* they were to detain the executioner until the king himself arrived. (33) **and he said**, *i. e.* the king, who burst into the prophet's presence. **wait for**, obey thee in expecting Div. deliverance. A blasphemy against Jehovah.

The calmness of goodness. — I. It was not the calmness of servile submission. II. It was not the calmness of irresolution. III. It was the calmness that conquers. — *Thomas.*

Sound of the master's feet (*vs* 32). — This form of speech is used to denote the rapid approach of a person. When boys at school are making a great noise or doing anything which they ought not, some one will say, "I hear the sound of the master's feet." Are people preparing triumphal arches, made of leaves, or cleaning the rest-house of a great man, some of them keep saying, "Quick, quick, I hear the sound of his feet." "Alas, alas! how long you have been! do we not hear even the sound of the judge's feet?" — *Roberts.*

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

1, 2. (1) **said**, to Jehoram, as a reply to his foolish speech, ch. vi. 33. **measure**, about a peck, *lit. a seah* = six cabs; and a third part of ephah. **shekel**, this was not in Elisha's time a coin, but a fixed quantity.^e (2) **a lord**, *R. V.*, "the captain," (the same change is made in *vss* 17, 19); one of the chief officers of the court. **leaned,** *ch. v. 18.* **windows**, openings so as to pour down the food out of heaven. This is the language of scornful incredulity. **see it**, comp. *vss* 17–20.

The unbelieving lord. — I. Unbelief may have reason, apparently, on its side. 1. This courtier might have disputed the prophet's right to speak in the

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a Le. xi. 3.

b "In Plutarch's *Life of Artaxerxes* an instance occurs of the Persian army being reduced to such distress that they had to eat their beasts of burden: and even that kind of food became so scarce that an ass's head would be sold for 60 silver drachms." — *Kitto.*

c Sam. iv. 10.

Comp. Josephus' account of the famine at taking of Jerusalem by Titus.

the king of Israel would behead Elisha

d 1 Ki. xxi. 27; Jon. iii. 6.

"Jehoram had sackcloth on his loins, but not on his heart; . . . instead of being penitent towards God, he is furious against God's prophet." — *Wordsworth.*

No honey is so sweet as that which drops from a promise. The promises are the support of faith — the springs of joy — the saint's royal charter.

Elisha predicts an end of famine

e "This may be estimated at a peck of fine flour for two shillings and sixpence, and two pecks of barley for the same price." — *Jamieson.*

f "When an Eastern king walks or

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stands abroad in the open air, he always supports himself on the arm of the highest courtier present." — *Jamieson*.

the four
lepers at
the gate

Comp. for Mosaic law concerning lepers and the camp., Le. xiii. 46; Nu. v. 3.

Comp. Ju. vii. 23; 1 Sa. xiv. 20; 2 Ki. xix. 7.

the lepers
report the
abandoned
camp

a "The word has a collective form, like our word *guard*." — *Spl. Com.*

"You may say, 'I wish to send this ball so as to kill the lion crouching yonder, ready to spring upon me. My wishes are all right, and I hope Providence will direct the ball.' Providence won't. You must do it, and, if you do not, you are a dead man." — *Beecher*.

Elisha's
prediction
fulfilled

b Comp. Jos. viii. 3-19.

c "The chariots may have been

name of God. 2. He might have said, "The thing is utterly incredible." II. Our reason is no test of possibility. 1. The impossibilities of to-day turn out to be the possibilities of tomorrow. 2. There are infinite resources in the hand of him who rules the world. III. Unbelief is dangerous. — *C. H. Irwin*.

Opposition to Carey. — The opposition Carey met in his desires to Christianize the heathen seem to us wonderful and incredible. Indeed the greater portion of Carey's ministerial friends were themselves either opposed or doubtful. Mr. Fuller was so startled by the novelty and the magnitude of the proposal, that he described his feelings as resembling those of the unbelieving Israelite, "If the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such things be?"

3-7. (3) **entering . . . gate**, "perhaps in a separate dwelling there." (4) **fall unto**, fall away, desert. (5) **twilight**, choosing this time that they might not be observed. **uttermost, etc.**, *R. V.*, "outermost" meaning the extreme advance of the enemy's camp towards the city. **no man**, the camp was deserted. (6) **noise**, "deceived by a sound in the air;" either an illusion of the sense of hearing (comp. illusion of sight, vi. 19, 20), or some objective reality of sound. **Hittites**, Ge. xxiii. 7; 1 Ki. x. 29. (7) **fled**, in helpless panic.

The conduct of the lepers. — This illustrates varying phases in human experience. They are — 1. Desperate in extremity; 2. Forgetful and selfish in sudden prosperity; 3. The subjects of reflection and of humane and generous impulses. — *Barlow*.

Christ or death. — "It is just a year this day," says Mrs. Judson, "since I entertained a hope in Christ. About this time in the evening, when reflecting on the words of the lepers, 'If we enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there, and if we sit still here, we die also,' and felt that if I returned to the world, I should surely perish; if I stayed where I then was, I should perish, and I could but perish, if I threw myself on the mercy of Christ; then came light, and relief, and comfort, such as I never knew before."

8-11. (8) **came again**, not at first realizing the desolation of the camp. **hid it**, bec. they had no right to appropriate the spoil. (9) **mischief**, better, *punishment will fall upon us*. (10) **porter**,^a or night watchmen; comp. *vs.* 11. (11) **they**, i. e. the porters.

Christian privilege and duty (*vs.* 9). — This passage sets before us — I. The blessedness of Gospel times: "a day of good tidings." Consider — 1. The goodness of these tidings; 2. Their newness. II. The evil of selfishly enjoying these Gospel times: "we do not well." 1. We show a want of common benevolence if we simply receive the Gospel and make no effort to diffuse it; 2. There is a want of loving obedience in this; 3. We thus rob ourselves of the highest enjoyment of the Gospel. — *F. Tucker*.

The better part. — The good-will and affectionate regard of our fellow-men are far more valuable than a large revenue. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold." This proverb is inscribed in the cupola which lights the Manchester (England) Exchange. It is a good skylight, but apparently too high up for the busy merchants on the floor of the Exchange to see without more effort than is to be expected of them. — *R. F. Horton*.

The blessedness of sharing. —

The heart grows rich in giving;
All its wealth is golden grain,
Seeds which mildew in the garden,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy?
Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear another's burden —
God will bear both it and thee.

12-16. (12) **servants**, attendants, court officers. **to hide themselves**, in ambush, so enticing Israel outside the city walls.^b (13) **five**, comp. *two* in *vs.* 14. **as all, etc.**, "they will fare neither better nor worse than we shall." (14) **two, etc., lit.** two chariots of horses, i. e. chariots with their complement of horses.^c (15) **to Jordan**, wh. the Syr. would cross at Jisr Mejania, 35 m. N. E. of Samaria. **haste**, or fright. (16) **went out**, feeling quite secure.

The return of cheapness and plenty (vs. 16). — I. It was as predicted vs. 1. II. It was in spite of all scoffing to the contrary. III. It was procured from a strange source: the quarter of danger becomes the fountain of supply.

The suspected stratagem (vs. 12). — In the history of the revolt of Ali Bey we have an account of a transaction very similar to the stratagem supposed to have been practiced by the Syrians. The Pacha of Damascus having approached the sea of Tiberias, found Sheik Daher encamped there; but the sheik, deferring the engagement till the next morning, during the night divided his army into three parts, and left the camp with great fires blazing, all sorts of provisions, and a large quantity of spirituous liquors, giving strict orders not to hinder the enemy from taking possession of the camp, but to come down and attack just before the dawn of day. In the middle of the night the pacha thought to surprise Sheik Daher, and marched in silence to the camp, which, to his great astonishment, he found entirely abandoned, and imagined the sheik had fled with so much precipitation that he could not carry off the baggage and stores. The pacha thought proper to stop in the camp and refresh his soldiers. They soon fell to plunder, and drank so freely of the liquors that, overcome with the fatigue of the day's march and the fumes of the spirits, they were not long ere they sunk into a profound sleep. At that time two sheiks, who were watching the enemy, came silently to the camp, and Daher having repassed the sea of Tiberias, meeting them, they all rushed into the camp, and fell upon the sleeping foe, eight thousand of whom they butchered on the spot; and the pacha, with the remainder of the troops, escaped with much difficulty to Damascus, leaving all their baggage in the hands of the victorious Daher. — *Parton*.

17-20. (17) the lord, vs. 2. trode upon him, so great was the crush of those going out of the gate for spoil, and of others bringing back food for their famishing families. (18) man . . . king, vs. 1. (19) answered, vs. 2. (20) fell out, came to pass. What seemed a strange prophecy found a very natural fulfilment.

The market in the gate (vs. 18). — We had a market in front of one of the principal gates of the town. Slaves, sheep, and bullocks, the latter in great numbers, were the principal live stock for sale. There were at least fifteen thousand persons gathered together, some of them coming from places two or three days distant. Wheat, rice and gussub were abundant; tamarinds in the pod, ground nuts, ban beans, ochre, and indigo. . . . Leather was in great quantities: and the skins of the large snake, and pieces of the skin of the crocodile, used as an ornament for the scabbards of their daggers, were also brought to me for sale. — *Denham and Clapperton's Travels in Africa*.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

1-6. (1) spake Elisha, R. V., "Elis. had spoken." The time referred to is not indicated, but was long anterior to the siege of Samaria. woman, as the husband is nowhere mentioned in this incident, it may be that he, being already old when the son was restored to life, had in the meantime died. son, etc., ch. iv. 35. canst sojourn, findest thou canst get shelter and food, called for, or brought about. (2) land of Phil., situate on S. seacoast of Palestine, rich with corn-growing plains. (3) to cry, etc., for restoration of her land, wh. had been seized in her absence. (4) Gehazi, 2 Ki. iv. 27. As it is unlikely that he would converse long with a leper, and as Gehazi is still called "the servant of the man of God," the incident may here be narrated out of order. — *Exp. B.* (5) cried, the cry actually interrupting Gehazi. (6) officer, eunuch. fruits, etc., she was also to have "the mesne profits" — i. e. the full value of all that the land had produced beyond the expense of cultivation during the seven years of her absence. — *Pulp. Com.*

Philistia (vs. 2). — The most striking and characteristic feature of Philistia is its immense plain of corn fields, stretching from the edge of the sandy tract right up to the very walls of the hills of Judah, which look down its whole length from north to south. These rich fields must have been the great source at once of the power and value of Philistia, the cause of its frequent aggressions on Israel, and of the unceasing efforts of Israel to master the territory. It was in fact a "little Egypt." As in earlier ages the tribes of Palestine, when pressed by famine, went down to the valley of the Nile, so in later ages,

B. c. cir. 800.

sent to enable the scouts to bring back samples of the spoil." — *Wordsworth*.

A very simple stratagem, which could not succeed if strict military discipline were preserved.

One thing is clear to me, that no indulgence of passion destroys the spiritual nature so much as respectable selfishness. — *Macdonald*.

"A prolix way of saying that the horsemen will incur no greater danger by going to reconnoitre than the rest of their countrymen by remaining in the city, since all are perishing." — *Keil*.

the death of the scornful noble

vs. 20. "His corpse became a bloody seal upon the word of Jehovah, and the prophet." — *Krummacher*.

the king, Gehazi, and the Shunammite

a Comp. Eze. xxxvi. 28; also Ps. cv. 16; Hag. i. 11.

b "It is still common for even petty sheiks to confiscate the property of any person who is exiled for a time, or who moves away temporarily fr. his district. Esp. is this true of widows and orphans, and small is the chance of such having their property restored, unless they can secure the mediation of some one more influential than themselves." — *Thomson*.

c 2 Ki. ix. 32; 1 Chr. xxviii. 1; Is. lvi. 3, 4.

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Elisha weeps at the sight of Hazael

a "The most trusty of all Ben-hadad's attendants." — *Josephus*.

b 2 Ki. v. 15, 16, 26.

c "The Orientals are fond of display, and would, ostentatiously, lay upon forty beasts what might very easily have been borne by four." — *Kiel, Jamieson, etc.*

d "There is prob. in this sentence a confusion between the Heb. words for *not*, and *to him*, wh. are nearly alike."

Hazael murders the king

e 2 Ki. x. 32; xii. 17; xiii. 3.

f So reads *Sept.*, *Vulg.*, *Syr.*, and *Arabic*.

Comp. for term *dog*, 1 Sa. xvii. 43; xxiv. 14; 2 Sa. iii. 8; ix. 8, xvi. 9.

Comp. for general idea of passage, Je. xvii. 9; Mat. xxvi. 33, 34.

g "Some article usually found in a sick room." — *Spk. Com.*

"The usual idea is that Hazael murdered him." — *Wordsworth, Porter, Spk. Com.*

"It has been truly said that the human heart is like a mill-stone, which if there be wheat beneath it, will grind to purposes of health; if not, will grind still, at the will of the wild wind, but on itself." — *F. W. Robertson*.

when there was a famine in the hills of Samaria and the plain of Esdraelon, the Shunammite went with her household "and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years." In that plain of corn and those walls of rocks lies the junction of Philistine and Israelite history, which is the peculiarity of the tribe of Dan. This region is what the kings of Sidon regarded as "the rock of Dan." These are the fields of "standing corn," with "vineyards and olives" amongst them, into which the Danite hero sent down "three hundred jackals" (Judges xv. 4). — *Stanley*.

7-11. (7) *came*, not necessarily in accordance with the command of 1 Ki. xix. 15. E. does not anoint Hazael. (8) *Hazael*,^a *whom God beholds*, or *cares for*. *a present*, this it is not said Elisha accepted.^b (9) *forty camels' burden*, not that each was burdened to its full capacity.^c *thy son*, the expression of reverence for Elisha, comp. ch. vi. 21. (10) *mayest*,^d *etc.*, "go, follow the bent which I know you *will* follow; go, carry back to your master the lying message that I said he would recover. But that is *not my* message. My message, whether it suits your courtier instincts or not, is that Jehovah has warned me that he shall surely die." — *Exp. B.* (11) *steadfastly*, on Hazael, as if reading his guilty purpose. *he was ashamed*, *i. e.* Hazael blushed with embarrassment.

Heart reading. — We believe the man lives not, and never did live, who could stand such inspection without quailing before it. Is there one who can affirm that he could stand with unblanched cheek before the man whom he believed to be viewing his naked soul, divested of all the purple and fine linen which cover its littleness — its foulness — its deformities — its soreness from the outer world? Is there one who could endure, without confusion of face — without a quivering frame — the keen dissection of his character, his conduct, his spirit, by even the most friendly hand in the world? Yet, while we shrink with such instinctive dread from the too near survey of fellow-sinners, we manage to get on very quietly, with small trouble of mind, in the perfect knowledge that One who cannot be mistaken has a sleepless eye fixed with unceasing vigilance upon our hearts. — *Kitto*.

12-15. *evil, etc.*, the things mentioned in this *vs.* were the usual accompaniments of battle and siege in those older days; not peculiar to Hazael. (13) *what . . thing*, *R. V.*, "what is thy servant, wh. is but a dog, th. he shd. do this great thing?"^f "How could a person of such low condition have such high influence upon the fate of nations?" *king*, the courtier will mount the Syrian throne. (13) *recover*, comp. *vs.* 10. (15) *thick cloth*,^g coverlet, bath-cloth. Now that Hazael's secret is discovered, he does not tarry in executing his treachery.

The unknown depths of depravity (*vs.* 13). — I. Hazael knew that he was a wicked man, and that his tendencies were wicked. II. Though consciously guilty he did not know how wicked he was, and to what lengths of crime the evil tendencies would carry him. III. Though honest in his recoil from the predicted atrocities, yet, as the event proved, he was capable of doing all, and more than all, that the prophet had said. — *A. Van Zandt*.

The growth of sin. — One of the early Christians, on being asked by a friend to accompany him to the amphitheatre, to witness the gladiatorial combats with wild beasts, expressed his utmost abhorrence of the sport, and refused to witness a scene condemned alike by humanity and Christianity. Overcome at length by the continued and pressing solicitations of his friend, whom he did not wish to disoblige, he consented to go; but determined that he would close his eyes as soon as he had taken his seat, and keep them closed during the whole time that he was in the amphitheatre. At some particular display of strength and skill by one of the combatants, a loud shout of applause was raised by the spectators, when the Christian almost involuntarily opened his eyes. Being once open, he found it difficult to close them again; he became interested in the fate of the gladiator, who was then engaged with a lion. He returned home, professing to dislike, as his principles required him to do, these cruel games; but still his imagination ever and anon reverted to the scenes he had unintentionally witnessed. He was again solicited by his friend, who perceived the conquest that had been made, to see the sport. He found less difficulty now than before in consenting. He went, sat with his eyes open, and enjoyed the spectacle. Again and again he took his seat with the pagan crowd; till at length he became a constant attendant at the

amphitheatre, abandoned his Christian principles, relapsed to idolatry, died a heathen, and left a fatal proof of the deceitfulness of sin.

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16-19. (16) **began**, *etc.*, ch. iii. 1. This statement does not seem to accord with ch. i. 17. But Jehoram's reign was sometimes counted from the seventeenth year of his father, when he was given the royal title, sometimes from his father's twenty-third year, when he was associated, and sometimes from his father's death in his twenty-fifth year, when he became sole king." — *Pulp. Com.* (17) **eight**, six only after his father's death. (18) **way**, *etc.*, *i. e.* he introduced Baal worship. The blight of the Jezebel marriage and the curse of Baal worship lay down both kingdoms. **evil**, *see* 2 Chr. xxi. 4. (19) **a light**,^a lamp. So bad was Jehoram's conduct that the historian can only attribute his non-destruction to the "covenant of salt" which God had made with David, to "give him a lamp for his children always." 2 Sam. vii. 12-16. — *Exp. B.*

The poison of sin. — It is the custom of hunters in Africa, when they have killed a poisonous snake, to cut off his head, and carefully bury it in the ground, well knowing that if a naked foot trod on one of these fangs it would be fatally wounded; the venom is as deadly after the snake is dead. But sin is a venomous snake which no human hunter can slay; it insinuates itself everywhere, and everywhere spreads its deadly virus. — *Barlow.*

20-24. (20) **Edom**,^b Ge. xxvii. 40. God honored his covenant with Dav., but sent many disasters upon the wicked Jehoram. (21) **Zair**, either *Zoar* or *Seir*, is intended, prob. the latter. **rose**, *etc.*, Jehoram was surrounded by the hosts of Edom and was worsted; but by a sudden sally in the night time he valorously cut his way through the enemy in spite of their reserve of chariots. **people**, *i. e.* the army of Jehoram made the best of this escape to their homes. (22) **yet**, *R. V.*, "So": — by reason of this disaster to the army of Judah Edom gained final independence. **Libnah**, Jos. xv. 42. Shows the intensity of Jehoram's punishment. His kingdom was stripped of two large territories. (23) **written**, 2 Chr. xxi. (24) **Ahaziah**, called *Jehoahaz*, 2 Chr. xxi. 17; xxii. 1-6.

Mercy seen in our lives. — What a rugged, precipitous, ungainly pass is that Col d'Obbia! It was shrewd common sense and true humanity which suggested the erection of that poor little hospice at the summit. Never was a shelter more opportune, a refuge more welcome. One could not have expected to find a retreat in so desolate a region, but there it was, and we were received into it with cordiality. The great Lord of pilgrims has taken care that in the hardest parts of our road to the Celestial City there should be blessed resting-places, where, beneath the shade of promises, weary ones may repose within the shelter of love. God's hospice may be confidently looked for whenever the way is more than ordinarily difficult. — *Spurgeon.*

25-29. (25, 26) **two and twenty**, comp. 2 Chr. xxii. 2. **daughter**, grand-daughter. (27) **in the way**, comp. vs. 18, for his mother was his counselor. **son-in-law**, so connected with the house of Ahab by a double tie of mother and wife. (28) **Ramoth-gilead**, 1 Ki. xxii. 3-36. (29) **Jezreel**, Jos. xix. 18. **Ramah**, same as Ramoth of vs. 28. **sick**, wounded.

Deceitfulness of sickness. — In King Edward's days, as long as the heat of the plague lasted, there was crying out, "Peccavi, mercy; good Lord, mercy, mercy!" Then lords and ladies, and people of the best sort, cried out to the ministers, "For God's sake tell us what we shall do to avoid the wrath of God. Take these bags; pay so much to such a one whom I deceived; so much to restore unto another, whom, in bargaining, I overreached; to give so much to the poor, so much to pious uses, *etc.*" But after the sickness was over, they were just the same men as they were before. — *Bp. Reynolds.*

the reign of
Jehoram

a Ki. xl. 36; xv. 4;
2 Chr. xxi. 7.

"The sun is the eye of the world, and he brings blessing alike to the negro or the cold Russians; to them that dwell under the line, and them that stand near the tropics—the scalded Indians, or the poor boy that shakes at the foot of the Riphean hills; so is the mercy of God." — *Bp. Taylor.*

revolt
of Edom,
and death
of Joram

b Comp. for orig. inhab. of this country, *etc.*, Ge. xiv. 6; xxxvi. 20; De. ii. 4, 2, 12.

For the later history, 2 Sa. viii. 14; 1 Ki. xl. 14, 16; 2 Ki. iii. 8-26.

Each part of the Scripture is to be read with the same spirit wherewith it was written." — *Thomas à Kempis.*

reign of
Ahaziah

"Little doth a man think what plague he may bring on his posterity by joining himself with an ill house or stock." — *Bp. Sanderson.*

Our very misery gives God an occasion to bestow upon us His mercy.

B. C. 842.

Elisha
sends to
anoint Jehu

c 1 Sa. x. 1.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

1-4. (1) **children**, or *sons*, 1 Ki. xx. 35. **gird**, *etc.*, *i. e.* make thyself ready to undertake a journey wh. might be attended with great danger and peril. The moment has come to execute God's vengeance against the house of Ahab. The king's conduct has prepared the army for a revolt. **box**, vial or horn.^c **oil**, the anointing oil. (2) **Jehu**, who was left in charge there

B. C. 842.

"Sweet pillows, sweetest bed; a chamber deaf to noise, and blind to light; a rosy garland, and a weary head."—*Sir Philip Sidney.*

Jehu
anointed,
doom of
house
of Ahab
foretold

a 1 Ki. xxi. 15.

b 1 Ki. xxi. 23; 2 Ki. ix. 36, 37.

"The Abbé Poirer in his travels through Barbary, tells us that the severest punishment among the Arabs is to be cut to pieces and thrown to the dogs."

Jehu
proclaimed
king

c Fr. Heb. *shāga*, to be in a state of frenzy or fanaticism.

d Mat. xxi. 8.

"Seated on these steps Jehu would be visible to the soldiery and people."—*Wordsworth.*

the driving of
Jehu

e "There was usually in ancient times a watch tower over the royal residence, where a man was always stationed, night and day, to keep a good look out in all directions, but esp. in that direction from which any sort of tidings might be expected."—*Kitt.*

when the wounded king retired, ch. viii. 29. brethren, brother-officers. carry him, induce him to retire into a private chamber with thee. This secrecy was designed to avoid a long and bloody civil war. (3) say, comp. vs. 6-10. flee, so as not to be questioned.

Alabaster boxes (vs. 1).—Theophrastus and Pliny speak of very precious unguents as kept in vessels of alabaster, for their better preservation; but sometimes the vessels or boxes employed for this use were of gold, silver, glass, stone, or even wood. The vessels were of small size, and appear to have borne a form similar to that of our oil flasks, with long and narrow necks.

5-10. (5) captains, chief officers, they may have been in Jehu's tent, or in the open space outside it. (6) into the house, so as to receive the private message. Thus saith . . . Israel, "thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel." Jehovah's name is rendered emphatic in contrast with that of Baal. people, etc., in spite of the nation's apostasy. Israel is still the chosen people of Jehovah. (7) blood, etc., 1 Ki. xviii. 4. all the servants, this indicates a general persecution in Ahab's reign, not one confined to the prophets. (8) shut up, 1 Ki. xiv. 10. (9) Jeroboam, 1 Ki. xv. 29, 30. Baasha, 1 Ki. xvi. 11. (10) dogs, etc., the weight of the curse is to rest on her.^b

Sure retribution.—One of the most terrible instances of this truth, that as we have treated others we shall be treated ourselves, is the case of Charles IX. of France. He consented to the massacre of St. Bartholomew. He caused the streets of Paris to run with the blood of the Huguenots. He died at the age of twenty-four: and what a death! French historians of the highest order say that he was in such agony of remorse that he literally sweated blood. The blood that oozed from his own body caused him to think of those whose blood he had so freely shed, and he cried out in his last hours about the massacre of the Huguenots.—*C. H. Irwin.*

11-16. (11) servants, the captain of vs. 5. all well? is it peace? mad, or excited person. ye know, might not this scene be the plot of some secret enemy? Might it not at any rate be a reckless jest palmed upon him by his comrades? He would act warily. He came back to his fellow-captains and said nothing.—*Exp. B.* (12) false, i. e. there had not been any collusion bet. Elis. and the captains; there was no conspiracy to injure Jehu. thus, as vs. 6-10. (13) garment,^d outer robe, wh. would make sort of carpet. "They extemporized a cushion with their robes and set Jehu in state upon it."—*Cam. B.* stairs, belonging to the house in wh. the captains were assembled, a flight communicating from the courtyard. (14) conspired made a league with his fellow-captains. Does not suggest any previous treachery. had kept, or was defending. (15) be your minds, or if you agree with me. (16) come down, ch. viii. 29.

Laying down garments (vs. 13).—They laid down their garments instead of carpets. The spreading of garments in the street before persons to whom it was intended to show particular honor was an ancient and very general custom. Thus the people spread their clothes in the way before our Saviour (Matthew xxi. 8), where some also strewed branches. The hanging out of carpets, and strewing of flowers and branches, in solemn processions, among us, is a remnant of the ancient custom.—*Rosenmüller.*

17-20. (17) the tower, a post of observation, 2 Sa. xviii. 24. Comp. keep of an ancient castle. (18) Peace? R. V., "is all well?" hast thou, i. e. my mission is no concern of thine. (19) second, indicating the king's increased anxiety. (20) driving, etc., not charioteering, but leading or conducting a company. The watchman noticed signs of eager haste. furiously, lit. madly.

The minister of God's word a watchman.—1. He occupies an elevated and conspicuous position. 2. He keeps a vigilant lookout. 3. He is quick to discern the signs of the times. 4. He is faithful in reporting what is good, and in warning of coming danger. 5. He has keen insight into character, and the tendency of human conduct.—*Hom. Com.*

Kinds of peace (vs. 17).—There are several things called peace which are by no means Divine or God-like peace. If our peace be but the peace of the sensualist satisfying pleasure, if it be but the peace of mental torpor and inaction, the peace of apathy, or the peace of the soul dead in trespasses and sins, we may whisper to our souls, "Peace, peace," but there will be no peace; there

is not the peace of unity, nor the peace of God, for the peace of God is the living peace of love. — *F. W. Robertson.*

21—26. (21) make ready, put horses to the chariot. against, not with antagonistic intentions, but simply to meet. portion, or lot.^a The two kings met Jehu in a spot of the darkest omen. It was the plot of ground which had once been the vineyard of Naboth, at the door of which Ahab had heard from Elijah the awful message of his doom. (22) is it peace? prob. the mind of the king was occupied only with the Syrian war, of wh. he supposed Jehu brought tidings. (22) whoredoms,^b etc., idolatries and magical practices forbidden by the Mosaic law. By this Jehu reveals his treachery, and points out the chief object of his attack. (23) turned his hands,^c ordered the chariot to be turned round, and driven back. (24) between his arms, in the back. sunk, bowed himself. (25) rode, etc., either rode in a chariot after Ahab's chariot; or rode side by side behind Ahab in his chariot.^d (26) surely, etc., 1 Ki. xxi. 19. sons, this first mentioned here.

Sin and its punishment. — Robespierre, the famous French revolutionist, literally choked the river Seine with the heads of those whom he sent to the guillotine. But the day came when the death-tumbrel containing himself was trundled along the streets of Paris to the selfsame fatal axe, amid the shouts and execrations of the multitude. Cardinal Beaton condemned to death George Wishart, one of the first of the Scottish Reformers, and watched him burning at the stake, while he himself reclined on rich cushions on the walls of his castle at St Andrew's. Three months afterwards the cardinal himself was put to death, and his dead body was hung by a sheet from the very battlements whence he had looked at the execution of Wishart. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." — *Pulp. Com.*

27—29. (27) saw, the fall of Joram. garden house,^e Heb. *beth-hag-gan*, perhaps a proper name, the same as *Engannim*, or *Jenin*: due S. of Jezreel. smite, Ahaziah was Ahab's grandson, and subject to Elij.'s curse. Gur, the ascent of the Samaritan hills. Ibleam, Jos. xvii. 11. Megiddo, 1 Ki. iv. 12 (28) buried him, comp. 2 Chr. xxii. 9. (29) eleventh, comp. ch. viii. 25.

Carried in a chariot (vs. 28). — What does this funeral chariot, which was carried by men, mean? What we may see in the vicinity of a large town every day of our lives. This chariot, or *thandeki* (as it is called in Tamul), is about six feet long, three feet broad, and in the centre about four feet in height. The shape is various, and the following is more common than any other. The drapery is of white or scarlet cloth, and the whole is covered with garlands of flowers. The servants then carry it on their shoulders to the place of sepulture, or burning. — *Roberts.*

30—33. (30) painted her face, lit. placed her eyes in paint.^f Tinged the eyelids and lashes with a dye prepared fr. stibium and antimony. tired her head, dressing herself well so as to show herself a queen to the very last. (31) Zimri, 1 Ki. xvi. 9—15. R. V., "Is it peace thou Zimri, thy master's murderer?" (32) eunuchs, or officers of the chamber. (33) down, fr. the window or kiosk over the palace-gate. Such has ever been the policy of sycophants, the rats of court, who only linger there with a view of seeing how much they can appropriate or destroy. — *People's Bible.* he trode, or they trode. But doubtless Jehu drove right over her.

Woman's pride. — Mr. Howard, the philanthropist, was once honored with a visit from the governor of Upper Austria, accompanied by his countess. The governor asked him what was the state of the prisons in the provinces of Upper Austria. "The worst," he replied, "in all Germany, particularly in the condition of the female prisoners; and I recommend your countess to visit them personally, as the best means of rectifying the abuses in their management." "I!" said the countess haughtily. "I go to prison!" and instantly both descended the staircase so rapidly as to alarm him lest some accident should befall them. But notwithstanding the precipitancy of their retreat, he called after them in a loud voice, "Madam, remember that you are a woman yourself, and must soon, like the most miserable female in the dungeon, inhabit a small space of that earth from which you equally originated."

B. C. 842.

Jehu slays
Jehoram

a 1 Ki. xxi. 1-4.

b Nu. xxv. 1; Nah. iii. 3, 4.

c 1 Ki. xxi. 25; Is. xlviii. 22; lix. 8.

d 1 Ki. xxii. 34.

e *Spk. Com.* The Assyrian sculptures make it prob. that Josephus was right in this interpretation. The Assyrian monarchs, when they go out to war, are frequently attended by two guards, who stand behind them in the same chariot.

Jehu slays
Ahaziah

f "His chariot bore him off, far westward of Jezreel, to Megiddo, below Mount Carmel." — *Kitto.*

Jehu orders
the death
of Jezebel

f "In performing this operation the eye is closed and a small ebony rod, smeared with the composition, is squeezed between the lids, so as to tinge their edges with color. This is considered to add greatly to the brilliancy and power of the eye." — *Kitto.*

Je. iv. 30; Eze. xxiii. 40.

B. C. 842.

death and burial of Jezebel

"The body had been left on the 'mounds,' as they are called in E. stories, where the ofal is thrown outside the city gates."—*Stanley*.

"In an account of the drowning of a number of Indian pilgrims, a spectator says, 'The only portions of the several corpses I noticed that remained entire and untouched, were the bottoms of the feet and the insides of the hands. . . . The dog has a rooted antipathy to the human hands and feet.'"—*Kitto*.

1 Ki. xxi. 14-23.

"This day hath made much work for tears in many an English mother, whose sons lie scatter'd on the bleeding ground. Many a widow's husband grovelling lies, coldly embracing the discolored earth."—*Shakespeare*.

"Mind alone (bear witness, earth and heaven) the living fountains in itself contains of beautiful and sublime; here hand in hand sit paramount the Graces."—*Aken-side*.

Jehu orders the death of Ahab's children

a "Ahab had now been dead about fourteen years."—

b "The existing usage in Persia, and in some other Eastern countries, is for the king to throw upon his nobles the cost of maintaining his numerous progeny."—*Kitto*.

c 2 Ki. ix. 21-23.

d 1 Ki. xxii. 26.

34-37. (34) **eat and drink**, this is told to show the cool way in wh. those dreadful deeds were done. **cursed woman**, she had brought a curse on her husband, on her sons, and on her grandsons; she had been the evil genius of two countries, Israel and Judah; she had been the prime mover in a bloody persecution of the worshippers of Jehovah; and was the true original source of the present revolution, which was to result in the deaths of so many others.—*Pulp. Com.* 1 Ki. xxi. 23. **king's daughter**, he feared lest further indignities might arouse the anger of the Phœnician monarch. 1 Ki. xvi. 31. (35) **palms, etc.**, the harder parts of the human frame.—*Stanley*. The half-wild dogs made a rapid clearance of the flesh of dead bodies left exposed. (36) **the word**, 1 Ki. xxi. 23. (37) **this is Jezebel**, and so give her burial honors.

A king's daughter (vs. 34).—Who was this king's daughter? Jezebel. One of the most infamous of women. But we shall now speak of quite another kind of king's daughter. A good Christian girl is a true princess in the best sense, for she is the daughter of a king. I. Then consider her duties. 1. Her words should be true, *etc.*: the word of a king is his bond; 2. Her manner should be courteous: you expect princesses to be polite; 3. Her conduct should be circumspect: princesses often set the fashions; 4. Her spirit should be humble: she is daughter of a king by adoption. His love, not her merits, the reason of that relation. II. Consider her situation. 1. Her home, a palace: the house of God; 2. Her attendants, teachers, *etc.*, all trying to help her to adorn her station; 3. Her companions: the daughter of such a king will not associate with the vile and worthless, nor with rebels against her Father; but with the rest of the king's household (Ps. xlv. 9). III. Consider her privileges. 1. She wears a robe, *i. e.* of Christ's righteousness; 2. She expects to inherit title, honor, and wealth; 3. She has many instructors in all the high arts of the Christian life: learns the language of heaven: learns to sing the new song; 4. She is the bride of a king's son.—*Hive*.

Jezreel (vs. 36).—After half an hour more we began to ascend a low spur of Mount Gilboa, or rather a projecting knob of rising ground, covered with a few flat-topped huts, and with fresh verdure in pleasant contrast to the fallow plain below, but not relieved by a tree or shrub. This was Zerim, the ancient Jezreel. A lovely position for a capital city, but not a vestige of it remains. The very ruins have crumbled from the desolate heaps to flat turf-clad hillocks. On the crest a number of Arab boys were playing at hokey, near a marble sarcophagus, now converted into a horse-trough. One other perfect and several broken sarcophagi were strewn about, sculptured with the figure of the crescent moon, the symbol of Ashtaroth, the goddess of the Zidonians. On that rocky slope must have been Naboth's vineyard, but not a shrub now clothes the bare hill-side; here must have been the watch-tower, where for miles we could trace the route from the Jordan, by which, after dashing up round the knoll of Bethshean, Jehu urged on his horses over that smooth plain, as he drove from Ramoth-gilead. Down that other side of the hill and across the plain to En-gannim, "the garden house" (2 Kings ix. 27), now Jenin, he pursued the flying Ahaziah.—*Tristram*.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

1-7. (1) **sons**, the term probably includes descendants.^a **rulers, princes**. Jezreel, there is a difficulty here in the text wh. is best avoided by reading "Israel" for "Jezreel." **brought up**, nourished, and educated.^b (2) **master's sons**, actual sons of Jehoram. **fenced city**, such Samaria was. (3) **fight for**, in this Jehu intimates that he is prepared to struggle for his claim to the throne. (4) **two kings**, Joram and Ahaziah.^c (5) **over the house**, the officer in charge of the palace. **over the city**, governor of the town.^d (6) **the heads**, *i. e.* behead them, to prove their complicity with Jehu's conspiracy.

Faithless guardianship.—Let no man trust the golden words of him who fears man more than he fears God. Unfaithfulness ruins those who practice it. . . . What is the worth of all the friendship, favor and trust of this world. It is like a tree in soft, loose ground, which, so long as thou holdest it aright, covers thee pleasantly with its shadow; but which, when the storm roars through its top, and it is overthrown, no longer takes account of thee, but crushes thee in its fall.—*Lange*.

8-11. (8) **two heaps**, one on each side the gate. (9) **ye be righteous**, Jehu asks a judgment, *i. e.* does not this bloody evidence of the active coöperation of the lords of Israel clear me of any selfish motive in declaring the eagerness of the entire nation for a civil and religious change? (10) **fall**, *etc.*, he means that it is evidently the time when God's judgment on the house of Ahab must be fully accomplished. Jehu claims Divine sanction for his sanguinary violence. This was not *his* doing. He was but an instrument in the hands of fate. Jehovah is alone responsible. He is doing what He spake by His servant Elijah. — *Exp. B.* (11) **kinsfolks**, *R. V.* "familiar friends." **priests**, those connected with the court; poss. principal officers.

Who slew all these? (*vs.* 9). [A temperance sermon]. — I. The case of the slaughtered. 1. Their number; 2. Their relationship: our countrymen; 3. Their death: violent, sad, untimely; 4. Their mourning survivors. II. The case of the slaughterer. Strong drink. — 1. Works by stealth and stratagem; 2. Under patronage in high places; 3. A fashionable poisoner.

The heads of the slain. — The cutting off of heads in collective masses, and making them into heaps, is and has been frightfully common in the East, and an Oriental familiar with blood and beheading from his cradle would read this portion of Scripture with little, if any, of the disgust and horror, and certainly with none of the surprise, with which it inspires us. After a battle, or a massacre, or the rout of a band of robbers, the heads are, as in the present instance, heaped up pyramidally, face outward, on each side the palace gates; and the builder of this horrid pile, if a man of taste and fancy, usually reserves a picturesque head, such as one with a fine long beard, to form the crown of his handiwork. Indeed, we have it on credible authority, that these men make little scruple of taking off the head of a bystander for the purpose, if they find not one in their stock equally becoming for the apex of the pile. Nothing in the East so much shocks a European as the frightful cheapness of human life, and with it of human heads. In Persia, the king has not seldom been known to express his displeasure at a town or village by demanding from it a pyramid of heads of given dimensions. — *Kitto*.

12-17. (12) **shearing house**, *lit.* house of binding of the shepherds;^b not identified. (13) **brethren**, not actual brothers, but nephews.^c **children**, *queen*, or queen-mother, *i. e.* Jezebel. (14) **pit**, or well of Beth-eked.^d (15) **Jehonadab**,^e called Jonadab, a Kenite of much influence, "a good man and a just, who had long been a friend of Jehu," and was thoroughly at one with him in the destruction of the Baal-worship. *Jer.* xxxv. 6. (16) **they made**, better, *he made*.^f **chariot**, a mark of signal distinction. (17) **remained**, *comp. vs. 11*, the remote connections.

True and false religion (*vs.* 15). — Let us direct our attention to the following kinds of religion. The religion of — I. The eye and the ear. Such as have this are the worshippers of deified nature and not of Deity Himself. II. Forms and ceremonies. III. Intellect. IV. Imagination. This is the religion of poetry and romance. V. Conscience. VI. The natural affections. VII. Morality. VIII. Animal excitement. IX. The heart. The heart, and the heart alone, is the seat of the religious affections; of holy love, of faith, of every pious emotion. — *H. Humphrey*.

Hypocritical zeal. — Hypocrisy is very ostentatious. Drones make more noise than bees, though they make neither honey nor wax. It is reported of John Fox that as he was going along London streets, a woman of his acquaintance met with him, and as they discoursed together she pulled out a Bible, telling him she was going to hear a sermon; whereupon he said to her, If you will be advised by me, go home again. But said she, when shall I then go? To whom he answered, When you tell nobody of it. — *Trapp*.

18-23. (18) **people together**, in an assembly, giving his action the aspect of a religious reformation. (19) **servants**, prob. worshippers.^g **subtily**, to cover his hidden design. (20) **assembly**, the usual term for a relig. gathering.^h (21) **house of Baal**, temple. (22) **vestry**, it is doubtful whether it meant the robe-chamber of the temple, or that Jehu gave a festal robe to each fr. the robe-chamber of the palace. **vestments**, prob. of white byssus. (23) **of Baal only**, this appeared to be a security fr. defiling presence of unbelievers.

An idolatrous festival. — The rites grew furious and ecstatic. . . . Crowds of women, clothed with fawns' skins, and bearing the sanctified thyrsus (a staff wreathed with vine leaves), flocked to the solitudes of Parnassus,

B. C. 842.

the house of
Ahab
destroyed

a 1 Sa. iii. 19.

"The fact that a great pressure is brought to bear to induce one to violate his sense of right in no sense releases him from the responsibility of wrongdoing."

"The great thing which a man needs in a crisis of temptation is to declare for the right quickly. Leave no time for temptation to accumulate." — *Austin Phelps*.

The last part of a sinner's life, continuing to abuse the forbearance of God, is necessarily the worst part of it.

Jehu orders
the death of
Ahaziah's
brethren

b Or poss. "house of binding the sheep in order to be shorn." — *Wordsworth*.

c *Comp.* 2 Chr. xxi. 17; xxii. 1, 8. "The word *brethren*, as is generally allowed here, means *near relatives*." — *Keil*.

d *Comp.* 1 Chr. ii. 55; Ge. xv. 19; Nu. x. 29; Ju. i. 16; i. 11; 1 Sa. xv. 6; Je. xxxv.

e So the *Heb.*, but LXX. and *Josephus* say Jonadab blessed Jehu.

f So LXX.

Jehu's plot
against Baal

g "The temple of Ashtaroth had been left standing at Jezreel; the temple of Baal was still standing in Samaria." — *Stanley*.

h *Le.* xxiii. 36; Nu. xxix. 35; De. xvi. 8.

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"Ancient temples had vast courts round them, wh. could contain many thousands."
—*Spk. Com.*

Baal destroyed

a For the scene comp. Ju. xvi. 27-30.

"There Baal was seated aloft, with the gods of Phœnicia round him."
—*Stanley*.

b Ezr. vi. 11; Da. ii. 5; iii. 29.

Jehu's partial reformation

c 2 Ki. xlii. 1-10; xiv. 23, xv. 8-12

"No mere spasm of goodness will make a right life, for we rise no higher than our habitual thinking."
—*M. W. Richardson*

There is no sin so little as not to kindle an eternal fire.

death and burial of Jehu

d 1 Ki. xix. 15-17.

"As the profoundest philosophy of ancient Rome and Greece lighted her taper at Israel's altar, so the sweetest strains of the pagan muse were swept from harps attuned on Zion's hill."
—*Bp. Thomson*.

Kithaeron or Taygetus during the consecrated triennial period, and abandoned themselves to demonstrations of frantic excitement, with dancing and clamorous invocation of the god. They were said to tear animals limb from limb, to devour the raw flesh, and cut themselves without feeling the wound. The men yielded to a similar impulse by noisy revels in the streets, sounding the cymbal and tambourine, and carrying the image of the god in the procession.
—*Grote, Hist. Greece.*

24-28. (24) his life, etc., 1 Ki. xx. 39. (25) Jehu said, some signal was prob. appointed. The guard had waited outside the gates.^a city, etc., this term must mean much the same as holy of holies, an inner sanctuary. (26) images, R. V., "pillars:" idolatrous emblems. (27) draught house, place of refuse.^b (28) destroyed, removed all traces of. "Baal worship in Israel never survived that exterminating blow." Moloch worship was instituted in its stead.

The portion of sin (vs. 20).—The consul Q. S. Cæpio had taken the city of Toulouse by an act of more than common perfidy and treachery, and possessed himself of the immense hoards of wealth stored in the temples of the Gaulish deities. From this day forth, he was so hunted by calamity, all extremest evils and disasters, all shame and dishonor, fell so thick on himself and all who were his, and were so traced up by the moral instinct of mankind to this accursed thing which he had made his own, that any wicked gains fatal to their possessor acquired this name; and of such a one it would be said, "He has gold of Toulouse."—*Trench.*

29-31. (29) of Jeroboam, 1 Ki. xii. 28, 29. who, R. V., "wherewith he," (30) done well, i. e. to a certain extent. When David strives to do God's will perfectly with a true heart, the promise is that "he shall not be without a lamp before God for ever." The partial obedience of Jehu obtains the gift of a succession for four generations.—*Cam. B. fourth generation,* fulfilled in Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam, and Zacharia. (31) no heed, etc., this verse is intended to show that personal piety was not the life of Jehu's actions.

The character of Jehu (vss. 30, 31).—Let us consider—I. The character of Jehu. Notice—1. What he did for God; 2. What he omitted to do. II. The lessons to be deduced from it. He teaches us—1. That we may perform many outward duties, and yet have no vital principle of religion within us; 2. That we may profess much zeal for God, and yet have radical alienation of heart from Him; 3. That if ever we would be accepted of God hereafter, we must have our hearts right with Him now.—*C. Simeon.*

One sin (vs. 31).—If but one sin be unrepented of, the man continues still a bond-slave of hell. By one little hole a ship will sink into the bottom of the sea. The stab of a penknife to the heart will as well destroy a man as all the daggers that killed Cæsar in the senate-house. The soul will be strangled with one cord of vanity as well as with all the cart-ropes of iniquity; only the more sins, the more plagues and fiercer flames in hell; but he that lives and dies impenitent in one, it will be his destruction. One dram of poison will despatch a man, and one reigning sin will bring him to endless misery."—*R. Bolton.*

32-36. (32) cut Israel short, lit. make gashes in Israel: cut off portions of its territory. Hazeel,^d 2 Ki. viii. 12. all the coasts, along the whole frontier or border. (33) Gilead, Jos. xxii. 1-9. Arzer, De. ii. 36. Arnon, Ju. xi. 18. Bashan, Nu. xxi. 33-35; De. iii. 1-10. (34) might, personal courage; or promptitude of action; zeal. (35) Jehoahaz, whom Jehorah holds. (36) in Samaria, as distinct fr. Jezreel, where Ahab mostly resided.

Testimony of the monuments.—The Black Obelisk, found by Layard among the ruins of Nineveh, and now in the British Museum, has references to Jehu. There is a picture representing Jehu bringing tribute to Shalmaneser, with an inscription, "The tribute of Jehu, son of Omri, silver, gold, bowls of gold," etc. The conquest of Damascus from Hazeel is also recorded by Shalmaneser. Jehu. — The character of Jehu is not difficult to understand, if we take it as a whole, and consider the general impression left us by the Biblical account. He is exactly one of those men whom we are compelled to recognize, not for what is good or great in themselves, but as instruments for destroying evil and preparing the way for good; such as Augustus Cæsar at Rome, Sultan

Mahmoud II. in Turkey, or one closer at hand in the revolutions of our own time and neighborhood. A destiny, long kept in view by himself or others—inscrutable secrecy and reserve in carrying out his plans—a union of cold, remorseless tenacity with occasional bursts of furious, wayward, almost fanatical zeal; this is Jehu, as he is set before us in the historical narrative, the worst type of a son of Jacob, the “supplanter,” as he is called, without the noble and princely qualities of Israel—the most unlovely and the most coldly commended of all the heroes of his country.—*Stanley*.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

1-3. (1) **Athaliah**, 2 Ki. viii. 18. At this time she held the influential position of queen-mother.^a **seed royal**, remnants of the house of David; some were children of her own son. (2) **Jehosheba**, comp. 2 Chr. xxii. 11. **daughter of . . . Joram**, but not by Athaliah. **bedchamber**, where the matresses for sleeping were put by day.^b (3) **house, etc.**, priest's residence within the temple courts. Jehosheba was wife of Jehoiada the priest, so dwelt in the temple.^c **Athaliah did reign**, no queen had ever reigned alone either in Israel or in Judah. Judah must have sunk very low, and the talents of Athaliah must have been commanding, or she could never have established a precedent hitherto undreamed of, by imposing on the people of David for six years the yoke of a woman, and that woman a half-Phœnician idolatress.—*Exp. B.*

Massacre of the seed royal (vs. 1).—An independent sovereignty, in one family of Jews, had always been preserved on the mountain of Samem, and the royal residence was upon a high-pointed rock, called the Jew's Rock; several other inaccessible mountains served as natural fortresses for this people, now grown very considerable by frequent accessions of strength from Palestine and Arabia, whence the Jews had been expelled. Gideon and Judith were then king and queen of the Jews, and their daughter Judith (whom, in Amhara, they called Esther, and sometimes Saat, i. e. fire) was a woman of great beauty, and talents for intrigue; had been married to the governor of a small district called Bugna, in the neighborhood of Lasta, both which countries were likewise much infected with Judaism. Judith had made so strong a party, that she resolved to attempt the subversion of the Christian religion, and with it the succession in the line of Solomon. The children of the royal family were, at this time, in virtue of the old law, confined on the almost inaccessible mountain of Damo, in Tigré. The short reign, sudden and unexpected death of the late king, Aizor, and the desolation and contagion which an epidemical disease had spread both in court and capital, the weak state of Del Naad, who was to succeed Aizor, and was an infant; all these circumstances together impressed Judith with an idea that now was the time to place her family upon the throne, and establish her religion by the extermination of the race of Solomon. Accordingly, she surprised the rock Damo, and slew the whole of the princes there, to the number, it is said, of about four hundred. Some nobles of Amhara, upon the first news of the catastrophe at Damo, conveyed the infant king, Del Naad, now the only remaining prince of his race, into the powerful and loyal province of Shoa, and by this means the royal family was preserved, to be again restored.—*Bruce's Travels*.

4-8. (4) **rulers, etc.**, *R. V.*, “captains over hundreds of the Carites and of the guard;”^d names given, 2 Chr. xxiii. 1. **covenant**, to aid in restoring the rightful king. (5) **enter in**, allusion seems evidently to the weekly service of the Levites.^e **king's house**, royal palace, where Athaliah was. (6) **gate of Sur**, 2 Chr. xxiii. 5: the gate by wh. the palace was usually quitted for the temple. **gate . . . guard**, another of the palace gates (*vs.* 19). **that . . . not broken down**, *R. V.*, “and be a barrier,” poss. meaning that the scheme be not frustrated by a sudden invasion fr. the palace. (7) **go forth**, *R. V.*, “And the two companies of you” (i. e. the 200 Carites and guard off duty) “Even all that go forth.”^f Three-fifths of the guard having been disposed of about the palace, there remained only two-fifths, or two “companies.” These Jehoiada commanded to enter the temple and protect the young king.—*Pulp. Com.* (8) **within the ranges**, within the *ranks* of the soldiers.

True safety (vs. 8).—A minister who lived near the seashore was preaching one day to a congregation in which were several sailors, who had just been

B. C. 842 to 814.

“When thou doest good do it bec. it is good, not bec. men esteem it; when thou avoidest evil flee it bec. it is evil, not bec. men speak ag. it.”

B. C. 842.

Athaliah, Jehosheba, Joash

a 1 Ki. xv. 13.

“She saw herself a stranger in a strange land, an alien by birth and religion, without common sympathies bet. herself and the people among whom she occupied so high a place, and without support fr. the remaining members of the family to wh. she had become allied. What hindered that she should herself seize the dropped reins of the government.”—*Killo*.

b “The bed-chamber in the E. is a small closet, into wh. are flung during the day the matresses, and other bedding materials spread on the floors or divans of the sitting rooms by night.”—*Jamieson*.

c 2 Chr. xxii. 10-12.

Jehoiada's plot

d “Prob. those called Cherethites (1 Ki. i. 38).”—*Spk. Com.*

e 2 Chr. xxiii. 4-8; Comp. 1 Chr. ix. 25, xxiii.—xxvi.

f “By choosing the Sabbath-day, he doubled the number of the official forces of the temple, without exciting suspicion.”—*Wordsworth*.

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"*Hak*—*kari*, fr. *karah*, to bore, or stab, so meaning, the executioners"—*Gesenius*.

"*The Carians*; mercenary soldiers."—*Stanley*.

"Prob. the temple watch of the Levites."—*Bertheau*.

Jehoiada crowns Joash

"For the weekly turn of Levites to have entered the temple *in arms* would have prematurely awakened suspicion. They were, therefore, furnished with swords and spears, which, as we now first learn, were deposited within the temple."—*Kitto*.

a 2 Ch. iv. 1; 1 Ki. viii. 54.

Athaliah is slain

b Throne: *Arabic*, "platform; scaffold."—*Gesenius*, *Keil*.

"A stage under the pillar, which formed the usual station of the kings when they came to the temple."—*Kitto*.

2 Ki. xxiii. 3; 2 Ch. vi. 13; xxiii. 13; xxxiv. 31.

Jehoash begins to reign

c Ex. xix., xxi.; Jos. xxiv. 1-25; Ne. x. 1.

d 2 Ch. xxi. 6.

shipwrecked, and had narrowly escaped drowning. He spoke of the danger to which our souls are exposed of being lost forever on account of our sins, and compared sinners to drowning men, who catch at anything to save them. When he compared Jesus to a plank floating on the waters for the drowning men to lay hold of, he told them how safe those were who laid hold of this plank, for, "O my friends," said he, "this plank bears—this plank bears!" One of those sailors was converted by the sermon he heard that day. Fourteen years afterward the minister was called to see a dying sailor. It was the same man who had been led to become a Christian by the sermon just spoken of. He thanked the minister for that sermon, and especially for what he said about Jesus as "the plank that bears." "Those words," said he, "have been a great comfort to me ever since. And now I die in peace, because I know that this plank bears."

9—12. (9) came to, fitted in the scheme of; took their appointed places; "both the Levitical and military guards acted together to carry out his design. (10) David's spears, etc., these prob. hung in temple porch: there would be enough for all the soldiers. (11) from the right, etc., i. e. quite across the temple court. corner, the *vs.* is thus translated in the *R. V.*, "from the right side of the house to the left side of the house along by the altar and the house, by the king round about." altar, wh. was right in front of the porch." (12) testimony, Book of the Law.

Oriental expressions of joy (*vs.* 12). — The way by which females in the East express their joy, is by gently applying one of their hands to their mouths. This custom appears to be very ancient, and seems to be referred to in several places of Scripture. The sacred writers suppose two different methods of expressing joy by a quick motion of the hand: the clapping of the hands, and that of one hand only, though these are confounded in our translation. The former of these methods obtained anciently, as an expression of malignant joy; but other words, which our version translates clapping the hands, signify the applying of only one hand somewhere with softness, in testimony of a joy of a more agreeable kind. Thus in 2 Kings xi. 12, and Psalm xlvii. 1, it should be rendered in the singular, "Clap your hand," and as the word implies gentleness, it may allude to such an application of the hand to the mouth as has now been recited. — *Burder*.

13—16. (13) heard, comp. 1 Ki. i. 40, 41, all being ready they did not care for her hearing now. came, to quell disturbance by her royal presence. into the temple, the guards at once making way for her. (14) pillar, or raised platform.^b princes, captains of hundreds. all the people, there was a numerous convocation of the faithful worshippers of Jehovah. (15) ranges, *R. V.*, "between the ranks," i. e. surrounded by the guards she is to be pushed outside the temple and killed, that her blood might not defile the temple courts. "This is the only recorded revolution in the hist. of Judah." — *Exp. B.* (16) the way, etc., eastern gate toward the Kedron valley.

The place by a pillar (*vs.* 14). — The Orientals looked upon a seat by a pillar or column as a particular mark of respect. In the *Iliad*, Homer places Ulysses on a lofty throne by a pillar, and in the *Odyssey*, he more than once alludes to the same custom. The kings of Israel were, for the same reason, placed at their coronation, or on days of public festivity, by a pillar in the house of the Lord. Joash, the king of Judah, stood by a pillar when he was admitted to the throne of his ancestors; and Josiah, one of his successors, when he made a covenant before the Lord. — *Paxton*.

17—21. (17) covenant,^c renewed the old covenant bet. king and people on one side and God on the other; comp. 2 Sa. v. 3. (18) house of Baal, showing that one had been erected at Jerus.^d officers, or offices; prob. indicating a restoration of the full temple service. (19) brought down, down the valley of the Tyropean, avoiding the entrance near to wh. Athaliah had been slain. (20) rejoiced, at restoration of the legitimate sovereign of the royal and beloved line of Dav. (21) Jehoash, contracted to Joash, "whom Jehovah bestowed."

Earnest work and earnest words. — "I suppose that John Atkins is one of your best weavers," remarked a clergyman, who was being shown through a great mill by the foreman. "Not much, he isn't," responded the foreman. "The trouble with John is, that he stands around talking about his religion,

when he ought to be attending to his loom. He is a good enough fellow, and has the making of a fine weaver in him, but he hasn't learned yet that while he is in this weaving-shed his religion ought to come out of his fingers, and not out of his mouth." And it was thus that John's pastor was led to preach, on the following Sunday, from the text, "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

1-3. (1) of Beersheba, Ge. xxi. 14.^a (2) all his days, so long as the influence of Jehoiada continued.^b In Jehoiada the title of high priest was revived.^c (3) high places, etc., 1 Ki. xv. 14.^d

A mixed character.—I. Joash's advantages. He had—1. A pious education. 2. A good counselor. 3. An excellent opportunity. II. Joash's weakness. He lacked—1. Independence of judgment. 2. Firmness of will. 3. True surrender of self to God.—*J. Orr.*

The attractions of idolatry.—It has often seemed strange that the Israelites were so easily led into idolatry. (1) In the first place, they longed for some visible representation of God which would appeal to their senses, while Jehovah was unseen. (2) The great and powerful nations around them were idolaters. Idols seemed to have power to build up their greatness. Idolatry was fashionable and in favor with learning, wealth and power. (3) But perhaps the chief attraction consisted in the sports, the revelry, the licentious freedom, appealing to every passion, with which idols were worshipped. In the revels of idolaters there was no restraint, no confession of sin, no costly sacrifices, except to passion, but they could serve every evil in the name, and under the sanction, of their gods; while, on the other hand, the worship of Jehovah was in perfect contrast. It was spiritual, moral and pure; it restrained all sin; it required the confession and restraining of wrong; it appealed to the higher nature.—*Peloubet.*

Doing right under influence.—The late Dr. Finley, President of Princeton College, had once in his congregation a man over whom intemperate drinking had got the dominion. But when the pastor discovered the fact, he applied himself most anxiously to the reformation of the wanderer. His commanding eloquence in the pulpit was seconded by most earnest and impressive appeals in private. Everything was united in Dr. Finley to show the utmost effect of talent and piety,—the power of his personal presence—his watchful care and tender solicitude—and, when he preached on the end of the drunkard, the thunder of his eloquence. The effect was irresistible, and the parishioner abstained from liquor many years. At length Dr. Finley fell sick, and the unhappy man, in his turn, showed a corresponding anxiety for his minister's health. He often sent to inquire how the president was; and as the accounts became more unfavorable, his anxiety became distressing. At length the answer came that Dr. Finley was dead. "Then," said he, "I am a lost man." He returned to his house, resumed his cups, and soon drank himself to death.

4-8. (4) dedicated things, the consecrated money, described in foll. sentences. even . . . passeth, R. V., "in current money."^e set at, the redemption price made for redeeming the first born (Num. xviii. 15, 16), and also the price of those who had devoted themselves by vow of Jehovah.^f cometh, etc., i. e. freewill offerings. There are three kinds of offerings mentioned in the verse. (1) Current money offered for the provision of vessels and other things required for the temple. (2) The money which the priests were instructed to assess on those who had bound themselves by vows. (3) Voluntary gifts of which the appropriation was not prescribed.—*Cam. B.* (5) of his acquaintance, or friend.^g breaches, dilapidations, 2 Chr. xxiv. 7. (6) not repaired, 2 Chr. xxiv. 5. (7) receive no more, i. e. directly. Joash proposes a scheme in place of collection by the priests. "If he does not charge the priests with downright embezzlement, he does reproach them for most reprehensible neglect." deliver it, give it up, as far as your collecting is concerned. (8) consented, it involved for a time yielding their own allowances.

Influence of piety.—Sir Matthew Hale found that prayer gave a "tincture of devotion" to all secular employments; that "it was a Christian chemistry, converting those acts which are materially natural and civil into acts

B. C. 886.

reign of
Jehoash

a 1 Ki. xix. 3.

b 2 Ch. xxiv. 2, 3,
15-23.

"The part played by Jehoiada raised the priesthood to an importance wh. it had never before attained in the history of the Jewish nation, and wh. it never afterwards altogether lost."—*Stanley.*

c 2 Ch. xxvi. 20;
xxxi. 10; xxxiv. 9;
Je. xxix. 28.

d "The popular fondness for the private and disorderly rites performed in the groves and recesses of hills was so inveterate that even the most powerful monarchs had been unable to accomplish their suppression."—*Jamieson.*
"A statesman, we are told, should follow public opinion. Doubtless; . . . as a coachman follows his horses, having firm hold on the reins and guiding them."—*Hare.*

Jehoash
repairs the
temple

e This was a poll-tax of half a shekel; see Ex. xxx. 12-16.

f Le. xxvii. 1-13;
Nu. xviii. 15, 16.

g "The collection was to be made in all the cities of Judah (2 Chr. xxiv. 5), and the various priests and Levites were to collect in their own neighborhoods."—*Spk. Com.*

B. C. 813.

"So work the honey-bees, creatures that by a rule in nature teach the act of order to a peopled kingdom."—*Shakespeare*.

truly and formally religious, whereby all life is rendered interpretatively a service to Almighty God." He discovered in habitual devotion what Herbert calls "the elixir" of life.

"This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold;
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for less be told."

And amidst the cares, and troubles, and vexations, and sorrows of secular life, his fervent spirit was a consolation and a joy; "a sun that gave light in the midst of darkness, a fortress that kept safe in the greatest danger, that never could be taken unless self-betrayed." He found the fear of God like the tree put by Moses into the waters; it cures, he says, the disorders and uneasiness of all conditions. A conscience full of peace he pronounces "a Goshen to and within itself, when the rest of the world without and round about a man is like an Egypt for plagues and darkness." To lose this, he said, is like Samson, "to lose the lock wherein, next to God, our strength lieth."—*Stoughton*.

Jehoiada makes a treasury

a "We see here a distinct indication of a practice still followed in the East where large sums of money are concerned, as in the disbursements of the government, and in the taxes and tributes paid to the crown. The money is in such cases deposited in long narrow bags, each containing a certain sum, and carefully sealed with the official seal."—*Kitto*.

b "These were, however, provided after the repairs of temple buildings were complete."—*Wordsworth*.

c 2 Ki. xxiv. 12; 2 Chr. xxiv. 12.

B. C. 796.

death of Joash

d 1 Ki. ii. 39; iv. 21; 2 Chr. xi. 8.

e 2 Chr. xxiv. 25.

"He that has peace with God is armed cap-a-pie: he is covered head to foot in a panoply. Oh! take care that you are at peace with God; for, if you are not, you ride forth to tomorrow's fight unarmed, naked; and God help the man that is unarmed when he has to

9—16. (9) took, by king's order, 2 Chr. xxiv. 8. altar, great brazen altar before the porch. all the money, the evident purpose of the arrangement was to encourage an increase of freewill offerings. (10) king's scribe, auditing as a government official. in bags,^a each holding a fixed quantity. told, counted, not as we count coins, but by filling the bags with pieces of silver until each bag had a certain specified weight, 1 Ki. viii. 5. (12) laid out, R. V., "paid it out." (13) not made,^b comp. 2 Chr. xxiv. 14. (14) gave that, the first sum of offerings. (15) reckoned not,^c as overseers were priests, etc., this shows they had not misappropriated the previous money, only had been negligent. (16) trespass money, R. V., "the money for the guilt offerings." "Trespass money" is here first mentioned.—*Exp. B. Nu. v. 8, 10.*

Hewers of stone.—

Master, to do great work for Thee, my hand
Is far too weak! Thou givest what may suit,
Some little chips to cut with care minute,
Or tint, or grave, or polish. Others stand
Before their quarried marble, fair and grand,
And make a life work of the great design
Which Thou hast traced; or many skilled combine
To build vast temples, gloriously planned.
Yet take the tiny stones which I have wrought
Just one by one, as they were given by Thee,
Not knowing what came next in Thy wise thought:
Set each stone by Thy master-hand of grace;
Form the mosaic as Thou wilt for me,
And in Thy temple-pavement give it place.—*Havergal*.

17—21. (17) Then, considerable time elapsed bet. *vss.* 16 and 17. Cf. 2 Chron. xxiv. Jehoiada died and Joash fell into grievous apostasy, wh. resulted in his conflict with the growing priestly dominance. When Jehoiada was dead, the princes of Judah came to Joash, who had now been king for many years, and with a strange suddenness tempted the zealous repairer of the Temple of Jehovah into idolatrous apostasy. With soft speech they seduced him into the worship of Asherim.—*Exp. B. Gath,^d Jos. xi. 22.* set his face, fig. for formed a determination. (18) took, etc., only however after his army was defeated. Impossible to account for the statements of these *vss.* without a careful reading of the account of the reign of Joash in 2 Chron. 2 Chr. xxiv. 23. (19) written, etc., 2 Chr. xxiv. (20) conspiracy, connection of it with Joash's religious failure narrated, 2 Chr. xxiv. 14—20. Millo, 1 Ki. ix. 24. Silla, poss. for *meshillah*, a street: otherwise not known. (21) with his fathers, in Jerus., but not in sepulchre of the kings.^e

False peace (*vs.* 18).—Your peace, sinner, is that terribly prophetic calm which the traveler occasionally perceives upon the higher Alps. Everything is still. The birds suspend their notes, fly low, and cower down with fear. The hum of bees among the flowers is hushed. A horrible stillness rules the

hour, as if Death had silenced all things by stretching over them his awful sceptre. Perceive ye not what is surely at hand? The tempest is preparing: the lightning will soon cast abroad its flames of fire. Earth will rock with thunder-blasts; granite peaks will be dissolved; all nature will tremble beneath the fury of the storm. Yours is that solemn calm to-day, sinner. Rejoice not in it, for the hurricane of wrath is coming, the whirlwind and the tribulation which shall sweep you away and utterly destroy you.—*Spurgeon*.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

1-7. (1) **three and twentieth**, Josephus, with prob. says, *one and twentieth*; see vs. 10. It seems unnecessary to enter into a lengthy discussion of the point, since *all* the synchronisms of the later kings of Israel and Judah are in confusion, and appear to be the work of a later hand.—*Pulp. Com.* (2) **Jeroboam**, 1 Ki. xii. 26-30. which, *R. V.*, "wherewith he made." (3) **delivered**, as a punishment for their national sins. **Ben-hadad**, prob. the favorite name for the Syrian kings. **all their days**, *lit. all the days*; either of Jehoahaz, or of the 2 Syr. kings.^a *R. V.*, "continually." (4) **besought**, in a spirit of repentance.^b (5) **a saviour**,^c either a temporary deliverer in this reign, or Joash, the following king, or perhaps Jeroboam II., cf. ch. xiv. 27. **went out**, *etc.*, *i. e.* gained independence. **tents**,^d houses. **beforetime**, before the time of Hazael. (6) **the grove**, Asherah, *i. e.* "a wooden image of a goddess worshipped with similar rites as those of the god Baal."—*Cam. B.* 1 Ki. xvi. 33. (7) **leave**, *etc.*, Syr. king fixed within very precise and narrow limits the standing army of Israelite king, **by threshing**, *R. V.*, "in threshing." *i. e.* the dust of the threshing floor.

Threshing in the East (vs. 7).—In modern Turkey, the custom of treading out the corn by oxen is still practiced. This is a much quicker way than our method of beating out the corn with the flail, but less cleanly; for, as it is performed in the open air, upon any round, level plat of ground, daubed over with cow-dung, to prevent as much as possible the earth, sand, or gravel from rising, a great quantity of them all, notwithstanding these precautions, must unavoidably be taken up with the grain; at the same time the straw, which is their only fodder, is by this means shattered to pieces.—*Paxton*.

8-13. (8) **written**, *etc.*, Comp. 3 Ki. x. 34. (9) **in his stead**, marg. adds, *alone*. (10) **Joash**, *etc.*, ch. xii. (11) **Jeroboam**, vs. 2. (12) **his might**, ch. xiv. 8-14.^e (13) **Jeroboam**, known as Jeroboam the Second.

Hieroglyphical embassy (vs. 15-18).—After the Scythians had laid waste their country before the legions of Darius, and thus reduced the invading army to the greatest distress for want of provisions, they sent an ambassador to the Persian king to present him with a bird, a mouse, a frog and five arrows. The ambassador was asked what these presents meant. He answered that he had nothing else in charge but to deliver them, and return with all speed; but that the Persians, if they were ingenious, would discover what interpretation to put upon them. Darius, judging according to his wishes, gave it as his opinion that they were tokens of submission. "The mouse," said he, "being bred in the earth, indicates that they yield up their lands: the frog, living in water, that they yield up also their lakes, rivers, *etc.*; the bird represented all the wild and tame fowl; and the delivering up the five arrows was the same with the Scythians as delivering up arms is with other nations." "Alas!" said Gobryas, one of the seven princes who had ejected the magi, "it is far otherwise. For, O Persians! unless as birds ye fly in the air, or as mice ye retreat under the earth, or as frogs ye swim in the water, ye shall never return whence ye came, but shall perish by these arrows." And so, in fact, it turned out; for it was only by the merest accident that Darius and the whole of the army were not cut off by the Scythians.—*Percy Anec.*

14-19. (14) **sick**,^f suggesting the natural feature of his dying in contrast with the translation of Elijah. **came down**, an unprecedented act of courtesy wh. God richly rewarded. **over his face**, in his presence. **chariot**, *etc.*, 2 Ki. ii. 12. (15) **take bow**, Elisha was about to give a prophecy in a symbolical act.^g (16) **Elisha . . hands**, to indicate that the promised triumphs would be due to the Divine aid. (17) **eastward**, so looking towards the country that,

B. C. 814 TO 796.

fight with hell and earth!"—*Spurgeon*.

reign of Jehoahaz

a Je. ii. 13, 14; iii. 7, 8; Ho. v. 11.

b Ps. lxxviii. 23.

c Ne. ix. 27; Is. xix. 20; Ob. 21.

d "The use of this idiom shows trace of their old nomadic life!"—*Spk. Com.*

e "The house of correction is the fittest hospital for those cripples whose legs are lame through their own laziness."—*Fuller*.

death and burial of Joash

f Comp. 2 Chr. xxv. 17-24.

g "Just are the ways of God, and justifiable to men; unless there be who think not God at all. If any be, they walk obscure; for of such doctrine never was there school, but the heart of the fool, and no man therein God but himself"—*Milton*.

Elisha visited by Joash

f "When at last his end comes, in a great old age, he is not rapt away like Elijah, but buried with a splendid funeral."—*Stanley*

g "Hostilities were usually proclaimed

B. c. 814 to 796.

by a herald, sometimes by a king or general making a public and formal discharge of an arrow into the enemy's country." — *Jamieson*.

a 2 Ki. x. 32, 33.

b Comp. Mk. vi. 5, 6.

death,
burial,
and tomb of
Elisha

c 2 Sa. xi. 1.

d De. xxxii. 36; La. iii. 31, 32; Mi. vii. 18-20; Lu. i. 54, 55, 72, 73.

"Paid the debt of nature." No; it is not paying a debt — it is rather like bringing a note to a bank to obtain solid gold in exchange for it. In this case you bring this cumbrous body, which is nothing worth, and which you could not wish to retain long; you lay it down, and receive for it from the eternal treasures — liberty, victory, knowledge, rap-
ture." — *J. Foster*.

the king of Syria had occupied.* **Aphek**, 1 Ki. xx. 26. (18) **upon the ground**, downwards to the earth in token of the prostration and subjection of the Syrians. (19) **wroth**, bec. Joash did not execute his bidding with any fullness of zeal.^b

Elisha's reproof to Joash (vss. 18, 19). — Consider — I. What messages of mercy God has sent to us — 1. By significant emblems; 2. By express promises; 3. By the declarations and examples of dying saints. II. Whence it is that we profit so little by them. The fault is in ourselves alone, just as it was in the king of Israel. 1. Our desires are faint; 2. Our expectations low; 3. Our exertions languid. — *C. Simeon*.

An answer by symbol. — It was an ancient custom to shoot an arrow or cast a spear into the country which an army intended to invade. Justin says that as soon as Alexander the Great had arrived on the coast of Ionia he threw a dart into the country of the Persians. The dart, spear or arrow thus thrown was an emblem of the commencement of hostilities. Virgil represents Turnus as giving the signal of attack by throwing a spear.

Who first, he cried, with me the foe will dare?
Then hurl'd a dart, the signal of the war.

20-25. (20) **And the bands**, *R. V.*, "Now," as a usual custom. **coming in**, *i. e.* spring time. (21) **they**, *i. e.* some Israelites. **sepulchre**, prob. a rock-cave, of wh. the stone cover would be easily removed. **let down**, *etc.*, simply **came to touch**. **revived**, *etc.*, the record of this miracle seems intended to set forth that it was nothing in the prophet himself which had given him the great powers he manifested in his lifetime. Through his dead body God could work a miracle also. — *Cam. B.* (22) **Hazael**, *etc.*, vs. 3. (23) **cast he them**, so the subsequent captivity was regarded.^d (24) **Ben-hadad**, vs. 3. (25) **cities**, *etc.*, prob. some the Syr. king had taken *west* of the Jordan; the territory E. of Jordan was recovered by Jeroboam II. **three times . . beat**, *R. V.*, "smite." *cf.* vs. 18.

The virtue of a corpse (vs. 21). — This story may teach the mighty influences a good man exerts after his decease. I. We should be ambitious of this influence. Our lives at the longest are brief. How consolatory and inspiring is the fact that when our brief life is finished we can still be a power for good. II. Let me remind you of how much we owe to this influence. I appeal to you. Would you be what you are were it not for the memory of the dead? III. The best methods for securing this posthumous influence for good. 1. By a definite and public profession of religion; 2. By active engagement in Christian work. IV. Remember, whether we wish it or not, we must all exert some influence after death; some influence either for weal or woe. Let us then be jealous over ourselves with a godly jealousy. — *R. A. Griffin*.

Burials in the East (vs. 21). — With us the poorest people have their coffins; if the relations cannot afford them, the parish is at the expense. In the East, on the contrary, they are not at all made use of in our times: Turks and Christians, Thevenot assures us, agree in this. The ancient Jews probably buried their dead in the same manner; neither was the body of our Lord, it seems, put into a coffin; nor that of Elisha, whose bones were touched by the corpse that was let down a little after into his sepulchre. — *Harmer*

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH.

reign of
Jehoahaz

e 2 Ki. ix. 26.

f Ju. i. 36.

"What poor things are kings! what poorer things are nations to obey him, whom a petty passion does command! Fate, why wast made so ridiculous? O h, I am mortal! Men

1-7. (1) **second year**, to fit the chronological references it is necessary to suppose that Joash of Israel reigned two years along with his father. (2) **Jehoaddan**, whom *Jehovah* adorns. (3) **not like David**, see 2 Chr. xxv. 2. **as Joash**, *i. e.* began well and ended ill. (4) **high places**, these were remnants of an old ancestral worship which went back to the time of the judges, and which had been connived at by judges and kings and prophets. Local feeling was everywhere in their favor, since they provided for local needs, and enabled men to dispense with the long and tedious journey to the distant Jerusalem. — *Pulp. Com.* 1 Ki. xv. 14. (5) **slew**, *etc.*, 2 Ki. xii. 21. (6) **children**, *etc.*, according to De. xxiv. 16. This is remarked as a deference to the law, in opposition to established custom.* If Deuteronomy represents the legislation of Moses, we can only say that in this respect Amaziah was the first person who paid the slightest attention to it. — *Exp. B.* (7) **valley of salt**, broad open plain S. end of Dead Sea. **Selah**, Petra. **Joktheel**, *i. e.*

subdued by God. **unto this day**, *i. e.* the time of Amaziah: but the name took no permanent hold, the later writers call it **Selah**.

The cares of kings.—A king must have a special care of five things, if he would not have his crown to be but to him “unhappy felicity.” 1. That “pretended holiness” be not in the Church, for that is twofold iniquity; 2. That “useless equity” sit not in the chancery, for that is “foolish pity;” 3. That “useless iniquity” keep not the exchequer, for that is a cruel robbery; 4. That “faithful rashness” be not his general, for that will bring, but too late, repentance; 5. That “faithless prudence” be not his secretary, for that is a snake beneath the green grass.—*Bacon*.

A pious king.—On one occasion his majesty George III. was engaged in conversation with a pious man on the subject of religion, which, after some persuasion from the king, he defined in a very clear and evangelical manner. A bishop happened to be present, whose preaching was entirely of a moral cast, but never pointed to a Saviour, to whom his majesty gave this reproof, “There, my lord, you never tell us these things.”—*R. T. S. Anec.*

8-12. (8) **sent messengers**, for the occasion, *see* 2 Chr. xxv. 13. **come . . . face**, a challenge to battle, or a trial of strength: “Let us measure swords.” (9) **thistle**, a low shrub, representing Amaziah. **cedar**, repres. powerful king of Israel. **wild beast**, the army of Israelite king. (10) **glory**, enjoy thy honor, be content with it. (11) **went up**, taking the advantage of the first move. **Bethshemesh**, Jos. xv. 10. (12) **put, etc.**, defeated.

Speaking by parables (vs. 9).—We have here another beautiful instance of the way in which the ancients conveyed instruction or reproof in parables, apologies or riddles. Jehoash, the king of Israel, the author of the parable, compares himself to a cedar: and Amaziah, the king of Judah, to a thistle. It would no doubt be very annoying to Amaziah, to be represented by a thistle, and his opponent by a cedar. Thus in India, the people to show how much better their present magistrate was than a former one, said, “Ah! the banyan of our country is now giving the fruit of the palmyra.”—*Roberts*.

13-16. (13) **took Amaziah**, took him prisoner, and under threat of death, compelled him to open the gates of Jerus. to the army of Israel. **brake down**, comp. fig. of wild beasts, *vs.* 9. **gate of Ephraim**, north of city, towards the kingdom of Israel. **400 cubits**, *i. e.* about 600 feet. (14) **all the gold, etc.**, all left fr. prev. spoliation for Hazael, ch. xiii. 18. **hostages**, “sons of surety;” pledges that Amaziah would not renew hostilities. (15) **16 rest, etc.**, these *vs.* seem out of place here, interrupting the story of Amaziah.

Useless bloodshed.—When Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, was making great preparations for his intended expedition into Italy, Cineas, the philosopher, took a favorable opportunity of addressing him thus:—“The Romans, sir, are reported to be a warlike and victorious people; but if God permit us to overcome them, what use shall we make of the victory?” “Thou askest,” said Pyrrhus, “a thing that is self-evident. The Romans once conquered, no city will resist us; we shall then be masters of all Italy.” Cineas added, “And having subdued Italy, what shall we do next?” Pyrrhus, not yet aware of his intentions, replied, “Sicily next stretches out her arms to receive us.” “That is very probable,” said Cineas, “but will the possession of Sicily put an end to the war?” “God grant us success in that,” answered Pyrrhus, “and we shall make these only the forerunners of greater things; for then Libya and Carthage will soon be ours; and these things being completed, none of our enemies can offer any further resistance.” “Very true,” added Cineas, “for then we may easily regain Macedon, and make an absolute conquest of Greece; and when all these are in our possession, what shall we do then?”—Pyrrhus, smiling, answered, “Why, then, my dear friend, we will live at our ease drink all day long, and amuse ourselves with cheerful conversation.” “Well, sir,” said Cineas, “and why may we not do all this *now*, and without the labor and hazard of enterprises so laborious and uncertain?”—*Whitecross*.

17-22. (17) **lived**, this is not the usual way in which the continuance of a king's reign is described. It may be that while Jehoash was on the throne of Israel Amaziah was kept in subjection, if not a prisoner, and even after that never came again to the full enjoyment of his power.—*Cam. B. Comp.* 2 Chr. xxv. 25. (18) **written**, 2 Chr. xxv. (19) **conspiracy**, his people were ashamed of him, and weary of him; and at last, seeing that nothing more

B. C. 796.

but flatter me, oh, fate! Why were not kings made more than men? Or why will people have us to be more? Alas! we govern others, but ourselves we cannot rule; as our eyes that do see all other things, but cannot see themselves.”—*Fontaine*.

parable of thistle and cedar

a “The superior energy of Joash surprised him ere he had completed his military preparations.”—*Jamieson*.

death and burial of Jehoash

“The tree of peace strikes its roots into the crevices of the everlasting Rock; it grows securely from that Rock, and casts out its cool shadow in the sunshine, and makes sweet music in the storm, and is to the believer as the shadow of a great rock and fruit of refreshment in a weary and parched land.”—*Cumming*.

death and burial of Amaziah

B. C. 782.

a "The combination of relentless animosity against the living prince with the deepest respect for his dead remains is very characteristic of an Oriental people."—*Spk. Com.*

b 2 Chr. xxvi. 1-23; 2 Ki. xv. 13, 32, 34; Is. i. 1, vi. 1.

"The sense of death is most in apprehension."—*Shakespeare.*

death and
burial of
Jeroboam

"If a man were to fight with a dragon, his best way to deal with him is to pull out his venomous sting. The dragon which every Christian man has to encounter is Death, whose sting is sin; therefore, that we may not be folled by Death, we are all our life to labor to deprive him of this sting."—*Cavendish.*

B. C. 782 TO 737.

Azariah

c 1 Ki. xv. 14; xxii. 43; 2 Ki. xii. 3; xiv. 4.

"Peace with God implies reconciliation, pardon, adoption, and protection. And how can we be at peace with ourselves till we have reason to believe that God is at peace with us?"—*Stillington.*

could be expected of one whose spirit had evidently been broken from impetuosity into abjectness, they formed a conspiracy against him.—*Exp. B.* Lachish, Jos. x. 31, 32, 35. (20) on horses, *i. e.* in chariot drawn by the king's horses. (21) people . . took, the people, uncertain probably of the intention of the conspirators, and fearful that they might set up a king not of the house of David, took the initiative, went to the royal palace, and finding there a son of Amaziah—whether his eldest son or not, we cannot say—proclaimed him king and placed him upon the throne.—*Pulp. Com.* Azariah, also called Uziah.^b (22) Elath, rebuilt or fortified it, *see* 1 Ki. ix. 26.

Wait till the end.—Cræsus, the king of Lydia, who became so rich from the golden sands of the river Pactolus that his name was a proverb for riches and luxury for ages, once asked Solon, the wise man of Greece, who was visiting him, if he did not consider him the most fortunate and happy of men. Solon replied that he could not tell till he had seen his end. Years afterwards Cræsus, having lost his kingdom, his riches, his son, and in captivity, laid upon a funeral pile to be burned to death, exclaimed, "O Solon, Solon, thou hast told the truth!"—*Peloubet.*

23-29. (23) Jeroboam, ch. xiii. 13. (24) evil, the usual formula. (25) Hamath, Nu. xxxiv. 8. sea of the plain, the Dead Sea. Jonah, Jon. i. 1. Gath-hepher, prob. same as Jos. xix. 13, now Meshed. (26) shut up, *etc.*, 1 Ki. xiv. 10. (27) blot out, still a time of mercy remained for them. (28) Hamath . . belonged, *R. V.*, "which had belonged," *i. e.* in Dav.'s and Sol.'s time. (29) Zachariah, whom Jehovah remembers. By this accession the Divine promise given to Jehu, 2 Ki. x. 30, was graciously fulfilled.

God with us in death.—It is true that no earthly friend can accompany us through the swellings of Jordan. There is no human arm on which we can stay as we walk through the dark valley. But though we may then be alone in one sense, yet we need not in another: the Saviour has promised to accompany us. He says, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." Surely, then, we may sing with David, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." See that child who has to go through a dark plantation at the dead hour of night. Does he fear? No. Why? Simply because his father's hand is locked in his. The presence of his father dismisses his fears. So, when we are in the hands of our heavenly Father, we need not fear. He who holds up worlds can surely protect us, and He has pledged Himself to do so if we fully trust ourselves to Him."—*Whitson.*

CHAPTER THE FIFTEENTH.

1-7. (1) twenty and seventh year, comp. ch. xiv. 2, 17, 23. (2) Jehoiah, *able through Jehovah.* (3) right, comp. 2 Chr. xxvi. 4, 5. (4) high places, 1 Ki. iii. 2.^c (5) a leper, "the Chronicler says that the king's successes caused his heart to be lifted up, and he presumed to go into the temple, and to take upon him the priest's office of burning incense. He was withstood by the priest (also called Azariah) and by fourscore other priests, but in his anger he persisted, and then it was that the leprosy rose up in his forehead." 2 Chr. xxvi. 16-21. several house, separate house; *lit. in a house of relief.* house, *R. V.*, "household." (6) rest, *etc.*, 2 Chr. xxvi. 22. (7) buried, *etc.*, not in tombs of kings, 2 Chr. xxvi. 23.

Presumption from success (comp. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16).—How many there are whose prosperity or whose wealth leads them to violate the laws of God! Look at Claverhouse, inflated with his triumphs over the Scottish Covenanters as with his dragoons he surrounded the cottage of John Brown of Priesthill. Touched by the prayers of John Brown, and the sight of his wife and helpless children gathered round him, the dragoons, with moistened eyes, refused to do their deadly work. Snatching a pistol from his belt Claverhouse himself shot the good man through the head. Turning to the wife, whom he had widowed, he said, "What do you think of your husband now?" "I always thought much of him, sir," replied the brave woman; "but never so much as I do this day. But how are you to answer for this morning's work?" "To men," he replied, "I can be answerable, and as for God I will take him in my own hands." Four years afterwards, in the Pass of Killiecrankie, Claverhouse died by an unknown hand.—*Pulpit Com.*

8-12. (8) **did Zachariah, etc.**, poss. an interregnum bet. Jeroboam and Zachariah. (9) **evil**, the usual formula. (10) **before the people**, openly, not by a secret conspiracy. (11) **rest, etc.**, usual formula. (12) **the word**, as 2 Ki. x. 30.

Fatal opposition.—Twelve hundred dead birds were found one morning around Bartholdi's statue in New York harbor. They had dashed their life out against the lighthouse the day before. Poor things! And the great lighthouse of the gospel—how many high-soaring thinkers have beaten all their religious life out against it, while it was intended for only one thing, and that to show all nations the way into the harbor of God's mercy. — *Talmage*.

13-15. (13) **Shallum, retribution**, full month, *lit. month of days*; i. e. a month with all its days complete. (14) **Menahem, consoler**. Commander of the forces. He seems to have undertaken to avenge the murder of Zachariah; but he did not place on the throne the heir of Jehu. **Tirzah**, the residence of the kings of Israel before their removal to Samaria; a site uncertain: prob. *Tellûzah*, 9 m. N. of Samaria. (15) **conspiracy**, as vs. 10.

National demoralization.—I. The corruption of Israel extended, in the first place, from the head downwards, Jeroboam made Israel to sin. II. Then, however, it came from below upwards. The rebels and murderers who came to the throne came from the people.

Shallum.—A month's royalty! and what is any royalty but a month, if it is not a royalty of righteousness and patriotism and faithful discharge of high duty? No man is a sovereign in God's sight who is not the subject of his own people. — *Parker*.

16-22. (16) **Tiphsah**, either a town near Tirzah: or *Thapsacus*, on the Euphrates, the Tiphsah of Solomon. (1 Ki. iv. 24.) **coasts**, districts round the city. **from Tirzah**, i. e. his expedition started out from this place. **women, etc.**, indicating the dreadful cruelty of his nature.^b "Nowhere except here do we find such cruelty exercised by an Israelite." — *Cam. B.* (17) **Azariah**, 2 Chr. xxii. 6. (18) **all his days**, in his case there was not even a partial or temporary repentance. (19) **Pul**, or *Phul*. Prof. Schroder from a careful study of Babylonian documents, and a comparison of contemporaneous dates, identifies Pul with Tiglath-Pileser. **hand . . . hand**, i. e. that Pul would take him under his protection as a tributary prince, and protect him against possible rivals. (20) **exacted**, demanded as a tax. (21) **rest, etc.**, Assyrian inscription tells of his later subjection by Tiglath-Pileser. (22) **Pekahiah**, only son, who, at this period of the history, succeeded his father.

Menahem.—A cruel man arose, a man with a fiend's heart; one of the Iscariots that make all the history red with shame. He reigned ten years over Israel. We cannot dwell upon his reign: ten years of the worst kind of evil-doing. Sometimes we come upon a kind of evil that seems at least to be streaked with occasional good; now and then the black becomes a kind of gray, and the gray seems to lighten a little in patches here and there; but in the case of Menahem there was nothing but the blackness of darkness of guilt. — *Parker*.

23-26. (23) **two years**, the brief periods of the reigns indicate the disorder of the times. (24) **evil**, comp. vs. 18. (25) **Pekah**, chief captain of the war chariots. Prob. a man of low birth, therefore called by Isaiah, "Remaliah's son."^d **palace**, either the tower or the harem; to this he had fled for safety. **Argob and Arieih**, after this brief and uneventful reign, his captain Pekah got together fifty fierce Gileadites,^e and with the aid of two otherwise unknown friends, Argob and Arieih, murdered Pekahiah in his own harem. Argob was probably so named from the district in Bashan, and Arieih was a fit name for a lion-faced Gadite (1 Chron. xii. 8). — *Exp. B.* **him**, i. e. Pekah had the 50 Gileadites.

An unfaithful prince has unfaithful servants (vs. 25). — I. Pekahiah did evil in the sight of the Lord. Such a man would not regard honor in his servants. Bad men would be promoted. II. As Pekahiah turned against God, so Pekah turned against him. The principle herein applies to masters and servants, and the compacts generally of social life.

Too many kings.—We still hear the moan of the old prophet when he said: The people of Israel say I am getting old, and they want a king like the other nations of the world. Verily God gave them kings enough. He surfeited

B. C. 782 TO 737.

Zachariah

"The best foundation of peace of mind is the testimony of conscience; a sense of having lived before God in sincerity and without hypocrisy."

Shallum

a 1 Ki. xiv. 17; xv. 21; xvi. 8.

"In one demagogue there are hidden ten tyrants." — *Luther*.

Menahem

b Am. i. 13; Hos. xlii. 16.

c Prob. Pul was invited in the first instance, either by Menahem, or by some rival party in Israel.

"This is the first notice we have of kings of Assyria in connection with the history of Israel and Judah." — *Wordsworth*.

"Pul visited the country in person, to offer his powerful support to the king, in his attempt to restore internal tranquillity." — *Euclid*.

Pekahiah

d Is. vii. 4, 5, 9; viii. 6.

e "Pekah came prob. fr. Gilead, fr. wh. country 50 desperate warriors had conspired with him to destroy the previous king." — *Euclid*.

"Morality without religion is only a kind of dead reckoning.—an endeavor to find our place on a cloudy sea by measuring the distance we have to run, but without

B. c. 737 to 733.

any observation of the heavenly bodies."—*London fellow.*

Pekah

a The Assyrian canon fixes his reign fr. B. C. 745 to B. C. 727.

b "I reached Yanoah in about an hour fr. Tarshish, and as this name occurs among the cities wh. Tiglath conquered, I was gratified to find in and about it evidences of extreme antiquity."—*Thomson.*

c Jos. xii. 22; xix. 37.

"Tyrants generally rise very high that they may fall only so much the further."—*Osiander.*

"Morality does not make a Christian; yet no man can be a Christian without it."—*Bishop Wilson.*

Jotham

d 2 Chr. xxvii.

e 2 Chr. xxvi. 16-21.

f 2 Ki. xviii. 4; xxiii. 1-20; 2 Chr. xxxi. 1; 1 xxxiv. 3-7.

g Ben Tabeal, Is. vii. 6.

"When God wishes to punish the sins of a nation, He is wont to remove pious princes by death before the judgment begins."—*Osiander.*

"Hope is brightest when it dawns from fears."—*Scott.*

B. C. 735.

Ahaz

h 2 Chr. xxviii. 24

them with kings. God gave them their desire, and sent leanness into their souls. It is a terrible thing to have some prayers answered! Look at the history. What is it? A river of corruption; a black, broad, deep river rolling on, and swallowing up so much of Israel's strength and beauty and nobleness.—*Parker.*

27-31. (27) Azariah, 2 Chr. xxii. 6. twenty yrs., an impossibility; Pul's whole reign was only 18 yrs., and more than covered that of Pekah. (28) evil, as vs. 18, 24. (29) Tiglath-pileser,^a Tiglath-pileser II. As his genealogy is nowhere given, he is supposed to have been a usurper. His capital was Nineveh. Ijon, or Ayun, in Naphtali, N. W. of Dan. Abel, 1 Ki. xv. 20. Janoah, now Yanoah, 12 m. N. E. of Acre.^b Kedesh, west of Lake Huleh.^c Judges iv. 6. Hazor, Jos. xi. 1. Gilead, LXX. have Galaam, and prob. a district E. of the lake is meant. Galilee, this name at first applied to a portion of country round about Kadesh. captive, B. C. 734. Deportation was the Assyrian plan of subjugating the captured nations. (30) Hoshea, one of Pekah's friends. Uzziah, or Azariah. The numbers given of the years of reigns cannot be harmonized. The records of Tiglath-pileser II. show that this revolution was the result of another invasion of Samaria. Hoshea was the vassal and appointee of the Assyrian. (31) all . . . did, Is. vii, viii.

Assyria. — Now appeared on the Eastern horizon that great power which for a hundred years was the scourge of Asia. The ancient empire of Assyria, possibly repressed for the time by the dominion of Solomon, rose on its fall, and was henceforth intermingled with all the good and evil fortunes of the kingdom of Israel. The destruction of Damascus by Jeroboam II. brought the two powers of Israel and Assyria into close contact; there was now no intervening kingdom to act as a breakwater. Long before its actual irruption the rise of the new power is noted by the prophets. Jonah had already traversed the desert and seen that great Nineveh. Amos had already, though without naming it, foretold that a people should arise which should crush the powerful empire of Jeroboam from end to end. Hosea brings out the danger more definitely. The wakeful ear of Isaiah catches the sound of the irresistible advance of the Assyrian armies; their savage warfare, their strange language, the speed of their march, their indefatigable energy, their arrows sharp, their bows bent, their horses' hoofs like flint, and their chariots like a whirlwind.—*Stanley.*

32-38. (32) Jotham, 2 Chr. xxvii. 1. (33) sixteen yrs., *i. e.* fr. the time of his appointment as regent. Zadok, the priest mentioned in 1 Chr. vi. 12. (34) according to all, except usurping the priestly functions,^d wh. had been Uzziah's sin.^e (35) high places, at these the worship of Jehovah was carried on, but they became a snare, bec. the idolatrous worship took the same form. Under Hezekiah all were swept away.^f higher gate, protection on the northern side, fr. wh. danger was now expected. (36) book, *etc.*, 2 Chr. xxvii. (37) Rezin, who prob. joined Pekah for strong resistance of Assyria. Part of their scheme was to secure the aid of Judæa in the S. by putting a creature^g of their own on the throne. (38) Ahaz, *possessor*, full name was prob. "Jehoahaz." "Jeho" omitted because of his sinful reign, his wicked apostasy.

The acts of Jotham. — I. The real glory of a king may be secured without foreign conquests or victorious wars. II. It is illustrated by the acts of Jotham. 1. Beginning to reign young, he proceeded with the thoughtfulness of age; 2. He imitated the example of his father, and manifested the influence of his mother; 3. His attention to religion shows his wise estimate of the influence of Divine worship on the manners and prosperity of the people.

CHAPTER THE SIXTEENTH.

1-4. (1) Ahaz, *etc.*, comp. 2 Chr. xxviii. 1. (2) twenty yrs. old, *etc.*, in reference to Ahaz the figures are not without some difficulty. He begins his reign at 20 years old and reigns 16 years. But his son Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 2) was twenty-five years old at his accession, and so if the figures were correct must have been born when Ahaz was not more than eleven. did not . . . right,^h the wealth of the two prev. reigns led to religious and moral degeneracy. (3) way of the kings, in his early reign adopting the Israelite sym-

baol worship by images, but in his later reign falling into actual idolatry. **son . . fire**,^a comp. 2 Chr. xxviii. 3. Prob. this done by Ahaz in a season of great distress and despair. **abominations**, the heathen practices of the foulest char., of Tyre, Sidon, Ammon and Damascus, found place and worshippers in Judah and Jerusalem. **Lord cast out**, indic. that it was the Canaanite type of idolatry that Ahaz chose, not the Phœnician or Assyrian. (4) **he sacrificed**, actually setting the bad example.

King Ahaz. — I. The way in which he walked (vs. 1-4) — an apostate. II. The distress into which he came (vs. 5, 6). Land devastated. Elath cut off. Throne in danger. He trembled like trees in a wind (Is. vii. 2). III. The help which he sought (vs. 7-9). 1. Not from God; but — 2. From Assyria (Ps. cxxiv. 8; Jer. xvii. 5-7). Instead of seeking it with prayer and supplication, he seeks it with silver and gold.

Passing through the fire. — The words of vs. 3 might be made to refer only to a passing through flame, as a ceremony significant of purification. But the words of the Chronicler are stronger: "he burnt his children in the fire." From which it would appear that not one son only was offered. That the children offered in such sacrifices were actually burnt is seen from 2 Kings xvii. 31; Ezek. xvi. 21; and many other passages. But from the words of Ezekiel it may perhaps be inferred that the victims were first slain and then burnt. — *Cam. B.*

5-9. (5) **then**, immediately on the accession of Ahaz.^b **could not overcome**, bec. the defenses of Jerus. were so strong. The Jews were beaten in the open field, but were protected by the situation and walls of their city. (6) **Elath**, ch. xiv. 22, prob. Syria here should be *Edom*, to wh. Elath belonged. **Syrians**, better *Edomites*. (7) **messengers**, this appeal to man rather than to God, this trust in "an arm of flesh," was exactly what Isaiah had been endeavoring to prevent, what he viewed as unfaithfulness, and as inevitably drawing down God's wrath both upon king and kingdom.^c — *Pulp. Com.* (8) **took**, etc., "political necessity was always held to justify the devotion of the temple treasure to secular purposes."^d **present**, to gain favor, not as tribute. (9) **Damascus**, Rezin's capital, in 733 B. C. and failed; he came again the next year and destroyed the city. **captive to Kir**, Am, ix. 7, south-eastern limits of Assyria.^e

Judah under Ahaz. — Even in the midst of this afflictive dispensation there were no signs of repentance. The children of Israel were rebels who despised the Holy One of Israel. (Is. i. 7-9). They had all the externals of religion: they offered vain sacrifices, and kept a multitude of idle feasts, and offered many formal prayers; but all this was but a cumbance to Him who desired clean hands and a pure heart as conditions of forgiveness. What hope could there be for a city of murderers, who loved bribes and perverted judgment (Is. i. 21-24)? The land was full of pride, full of idols, full of the luxury of the rich amid the starvation of the poor (Is. ii. 1-22). — *Farrar*.

10-16. (10) **to meet**, as act of respect; it seems to have involved his being recognized as a tributary king.^f **an altar**, the altar, poss. the Assyrian altar, wh. he imitates to curry favor. Assy. altars were small, and kings took them with them on expeditions. **Urijah**, Is. viii. 2. **fashion**, design. **pattern**, of its ornamentation. (11) **built**, etc., an act of unfaithful yielding. (12) **offered**, this kings sometimes did.^g (13) **offering**, for the various kinds of offerings cf. Lev. i-vii. (14) **brazen altar**, 2 Chr. iv. 1. **forefront**, immediately facing the porch.^h (15) **great altar**, his own altar "great" bec. of its central position. **enquire by**, should read, "for me to consider what I shall do with it." (16) **thus**, as vs. 15.

The sacrilege upon the house of God. — I. The king's self-willed assault on established institutions. II. The high priest's concessions. See in this a clear picture of the lack of Christian spirit in the two highest ranks. The State desires to see everything arranged according to its whims: the Church yields for the sake of temporal advantage.

Unreligious religion. — We may take an interest in religious things without being under the influence of a truly religious spirit. It is possible to spend a lifetime in collecting rare editions of the Bible. A man may have a thousand Bibles, and yet not have one revelation. The man may be most pious, devoted, simple-minded, holy, but he is not all these simply because he spends so much time and money in collecting rare editions of the Bible. Any edition of the

B. C. 735.

^a "He adopted the Moloch worship of the Ammonites and Moabites, and sacrificed at least one son, prob. his first-born, according to the horrid rites of those nations." — *Spk. Com.*

^b Comp. 2 Kl. iii. 27; xxi. 6; Mi. vi. 7; Le. xviii. 21; De. xviii. 10.

^c "All sects are different, because they come from men; morality is everywhere the same, because it comes from God." — *Voltaire*.

war with Pekah and Rezin

^d Comp. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5-8.

^e Ps. cxlvi. 3; Je. xvii. 5; Is. vii. 17; 2 Kl. xv. 18; 2 Kl. xii. 18.

^f "Tiglath seems to have desired not only the plunder of the country, but the persons of the people, to be sent for the replenishment of his own land, not peopled in proportion to its extent, and thinned by losses in his wars." — *Kitto*.

^g "Kir was near the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates." — *Rawlinson*.

the altar of Ahaz

^h "Among the tributes brought to Tiglath at this time, those of Judæa, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Gizzah, Ascalon, Tyre, and Arvad (Aradus) are mentioned." — *Spk. Com.*

ⁱ 1 Kl. iii. 4; 2 Chr. i. 3-6.

^j Urijah had placed the new altar in a line with the old, but away fr. it, between it and the eastern gate. Ahaz made it take the place and work of the old.

^k First must the dead letter of re-

B. C. 735 to 725.
ligion own itself
dead, and drop
piecemeal into
dust, if the living
spirit of religion,
freed from its
charnel house, is
to arise on us, new
born of heaven
and with new heal-
ing under its
wings."—*Carlyle*.

death of
Ahaz

a 1 Ki. vii. 27-30.

b 1 Ki. vii. 23-26.

c "Removed he
into the house of
the Lord from fear
of the king of
Assyria."—*Keil*.

d 2 Chr. xxviii. 27.

"Let us have
faith that right
makes might, and
in that faith let us
dare do our duty
as we understand
it"—*A. Lincoln*.

"It is shameful to
introduce changes
in religious mat-
ters for political
reasons."

Hosea

e 2 Chr. xxx. 1-11.

f Ho. x. 14.

g "A famous Ethi-
opian who for 50
years occupied the
Egyptian throne."
—*Jamieson*.

"We know little
of him fr. Assyr.
sources, since his
records have been
mutilated by his
successors, the
Sargonids, who
were of a wholly
different family."
—*Spic. Com.*

"True hope is
swift, and flies
with swallows'
wings."—*Shake-
speare*.

Bible will do when a man wants with his whole soul to know which is the greatest commandment of the law. Are there not those who take a great interest in embellishing the house of God? They wish to have everything beautiful round about them. All this is right. God does not want any of our disorder, slovenliness, or neglect of things that are true and beautiful; God himself condescends to accept all our efforts to make the place of his feet glorious: but we may have only an artistic interest in the house of God. He builds God's house who builds a man's true life. He loves the sanctuary who accepts its stones as but symbols: altars that do nothing themselves, but help men to pray steadfastly and hopefully in the name of the eternal Son of God.
— *Parker*.

17-20. (17) cut . . bases, this refers to the 10 lavers made by Solomon; ^a Ahaz intended to use the material of these for his idolatrous constructions. the sea, etc., great molten sea; ^b these seem to have been little used thro' the neglect of Jehovah's worship; these treasures may have been removed that the Assyrian monarch might not see and ask for them.—*Cam. B.* (18) covert, *R. V.*, "covered way," portico through which the king or priests entered the temple on the Sabbath. king's entry, a private external entrance for the king. turned he from, *R. V.*, "turned he unto." From the bases and the brazen sea, all the decorative portion had been taken away lest it should excite the cupidity of the Assyrian. And in the richly decorated ascent and covered way a like dismantling took place and for a like reason. If this be the sense, then "unto the house of the Lord" must be taken as an adverbial clause explaining that the removal of ornaments and gold took place throughout the whole length, even up to the very temple building. for the king, *R. V.*, "because of," i. e. fearful that otherwise the Assyrian king would demand all these treasures, or enlarge the annual tribute. (19) rest, etc., 2 Chr. xxviii. xxix. (29) with his fathers, not, however, in the sepulchres of the kings.^d

The standard of true religion. — All religion must be Scripture religion; all worship, Scripture worship; all zeal, Scripture zeal: so that, let a man have never such sublime knowledge, and such burning zeal, yet, if it be not according to the law and the testimony, there is no light in him. To say, "It's upon my conscience; it's upon my spirit; I find much comfort and much sweetness in religion" — all this is nothing; for all false religions can and do say this. But hast thou the Word of God to warrant thee? Doth that justify thee? All things else are but an empty shadow. — *Burgess*.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

1-5. (1) twelfth year, comp. ch. xv. 30. Impossible to clear this chronological tangle. "Tiglath-pileser expressly says that he himself slew Pekah and appointed Hoshea." (2) not as, he allowed liberty in worship of Jehovah. "It seems like a harsh jest that this Hoshea, who was better than all his predecessors, was to be the last king," says Ewald. — *Exp. B.* (3) Shalmaneser, successor of Tiglath, 727-722 B. C. Same as Shalman, ^f predecessor of Sargon. presents, marg. rendered him tribute. (4) conspiracy, a plot to secure the help of Egypt against Assyria. So, ^g the Sabaco of Herodotus. no present, withheld the wonted tribute. shut him up, whether Hoshea was taken in battle, or betrayed by the Assyrian party in Samaria, or whether he went in person to see if he could pacify the ruthless conqueror, he henceforth disappears from history "like foam upon the water." — *Exp. B.* (5) throughout all, devastating all the open country.

The siege of Samaria. — As the end drew near, they gave themselves up to the frantic revelings of despair. At last the city was stormed. With the ferocity common to all the warfare of those times, the infants were hurled down the rocky sides of the hill on which the city stood, or destroyed in their mothers' bosoms. Famine and pestilence completed the work of war. The stones of the ruined city were poured down into the rich valley below, and the foundations were laid bare. Palace and hovel fell alike; the statues were broken to pieces; the crown of pride, the glory of Ephraim was trodden under foot. — *Stanley*.

Confirmation by the monuments. — On the tablets discovered in the great library of Sargon in Nineveh, we have Sargon's own account of this story.

"I besieged the city of Samaria," says he, "and took it. I carried off 27,280 of the citizens. I chose fifty chariots for myself from the whole number taken; all the other property of the people of the town I left for my servants to take. I appointed resident officers over them, and imposed on them the same tribute as had formerly been paid. In the place of those taken into captivity, I sent thither inhabitants of lands conquered by me, and imposed the tribute on them which I require from Assyrians."

6-12. (6) the king of Assyria, not Shalmaneser, but Sargon, his successor.^a Halah, same as Calah, Ge. x, 11, 12. The Chalcitis of Ptolemy, N. of Nineveh. Habor, name of chief river of Gozan,^b the western Khabour, the great affluent of the Euphrates. (7) for . . that, R. V., "and it was so because." The historian in *vss.* 7-17 turns religious teacher and prophet, feared, with fear that led to worshiping. (8) walked, arranged their conduct. heathen, Canaanite, whose idolatries were Phœnician. (9) secretly, cloaking their idolatries by keeping up the external service of Jehovah. from . . city, *i. e.* a strong hyperbole to express the extent of the prevalence of the "high places"—fr. the smallest abode to the most populous city. (10) images, *etc.*, 1 Ki. xiv. 23. (11) burnt incense, a characteristic heathen rite. (12) idols, vanities, false deities.

The sins and idolatries of Israel had a double origin. The great majority were derived from the heathen nations with whom they were brought into contact, and were adopted voluntarily by the people themselves. Of this kind were the worship at "high places" (*vs.* 9), the "images" and "groves" (*vs.* 10), the causing of their children to "pass through the fire" (*vs.* 17), the employment of divination and enchantments (*vs.* 17), and perhaps the "worship of the host of heaven" (*vs.* 16). A certain number, however, came in from a different source, being imposed upon the people by their kings. To this class belong the desertion of the temple worship, enforced by Jeroboam (*vs.* 21), the setting up of the calves at Dan and Bethel (*vs.* 16) by the same, and the Baal and Astarte worship (*vs.* 16), introduced by Ahab.—*Pulp. Com.*

13-18. (13) testified, with gracious warnings.^d against R. V., "unto," Judah, wh., though not so far gone in idolatry, had yet perilously yielded to temptation. seers, Heb. *chôzeh*, distinct fr. *nabi*, the prophets.^e (14) hardened, *etc.*, De. x. 16.^f (15) covenant, at Sinai, wh. the nation ratified, *cf.* Ex. xxiv. 3-8. vanity, all idols were so regarded, 1 Cor. viii. 4. became vain, *i. e.* weak, impotent. Monotheism is of advantage to men not only "by reason of the high concentration of steady feeling which it produces, but also for the mental calmness and sagacity which surely spring from a pure and vivid conviction that the Lord reigneth." — *Exp. B.* charged them, as Ex. xxiii. 24, *etc.* (16) molten . . calves, 1 Ki. xii. 28. grove,^g lit. *Asherah*. host, *etc.*, star worship would naturally be associated with that of *Baal*, the sun, and *Ashtoreth*, the earth. (17) thro' the fire, ch. xvi. 3. divination, De. xviii. 10, 11. (18) angry, judicial wrath is indicated. removed . . sight, the language is accommodated to human ideas. God's eye was regarded as specially directed to the land of Canaan, where He has chosen to place His name. So to be taken away from that land is a removal from His special oversight. — *Cam. B.*

The childless chief. — On one occasion, at Raiatea, one of the Society Islands, six hundred children were assembled. A feast was prepared for them; they marched through the settlement in procession, dressed in European garments, with little hats and bonnets, made by those very parents who would have destroyed them had not the Gospel come to their rescue. They and their parents occupied the chapel. The appearance of the parents was most affecting. The eyes of some were beaming with delight, as the father said to the mother, "What a mercy it is we spared our dear girl." Bitter tears rolled down the saddened countenance of others, told the painful tale that all their children were destroyed. A venerable chief, gray with age, could bear the scene no longer; he arose, and with an impassioned look, and manner exclaimed, "Let me speak; I must speak. Oh! that I had known that the Gospel was coming, my children would have been among this happy group; but, alas! I destroyed them all. I have not one left. I shall die childless, though I have been the father of nineteen children." Sitting down, he gave vent to his agonized feelings in a flood of tears. — *Cheever.*

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idolatry
of Israel

^a Sargon may have been generalissimo of the forces, and Shalmaneser may have died in the course of the siege.

^b 2 Ki. xviii. 11; xix. 12; 1 Chr. v. 26.

^c For prophetic reproaches for this see Is. lxxv. 8, 7. Hos. ii. 13; iv. 13.

the Lord's
testimony
against
Israel
and Judah

^d Ps. lxxxii. 8, 9. Ne. ix. 28-30; Je. xviii. 11; xxv. 5; xxxv. 15; xlii. 19; Ho. iv. 15.

^e "Havernick conjectures that the term *nabi* was applied to the members of the prophetic order only, while *chôzeh* was applicable to all who receive a prophetic revelation." — *Spk. Com.*

^f Ex. xxxii. 9; xxxiii. 3-5; xxxiv. 9; De. ix. 6, 13; xxxi. 27.

^g 1 Ki. xvi. 33.

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the reason of the captivity of Israel

a 2 Ki. xv. 19-29; 1 Chr. v. 26; 2 Ki. xviii. 13-16; 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11.

"There are four things that come not back—the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life and the neglected opportunity."—*Arab Proverb.*

Assyrian colonization of Samaria

Kitto thinks this was done partly by Shalmaneser, and partly by Esar-haddon.

b 2 Ki. xviii. 34; xix. 13.

c Ezr. viii. 15.

d Ju. xiv. 5; 1 Sa. xvii. 34; 1 Ki. xlii. 24; xx. 36; Song iv. 8.

e "It must not be supposed that the Israelites were universally removed to a man. A remnant was left, chiefly of the poorer and lower classes, with whom these foreign colonists mingled."—*Jamieson.*

"Never was a man truly and inwardly humbled but God, in the riches of His special mercy in Christ, truly pardoned him."—*Sanderson.*

Babylonian idolatry

Nu. xxv. 1-8; Am. ii. 8.

"Assyr. inscrip. connect Nergal in a very special way with Cutha, of wh. he was evidently tutelary deity."—*Spk. Com.*

f These explan. come from the

19-23. (19) **Judah**, comprising the section that clung to the house of David. (20) **all the seed**, both of Israel, and of Judah. **spoil**ers, such as Tiglath, Sennacherib, Esar-Nebuchadnezzar.^a (21) **he rent**, as a judgment on the nation. **drave**, Jeroboam acted with great violence and wilfulness. (22) **walked in**, adopted the way that Jeroboam marked out. (23) comp. vs. 13.

The Assyrian conquests.—The progress of the Assyrian conquerors, as described by the sacred historians and the prophets, is remarkably corroborated by the Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions, deciphered by Colonel Rawlinson. "These campaigns," says Rawlinson, "are almost all described in the same terms; the king of Assyria defeats the enemy in the field, subjugates the country, sacrifices to the gods, and then generally carries off the inhabitants, with their most valuable effects, into captivity into Assyria; replacing the people with colonists drawn from the nations immediately subject to him, and appointing his own officers and prefects to the charge of the colonists, and the administration of the new territory."—*Kitto.*

24-29. (24) **the king**, some think this was Sargon, the father of Sennacherib; others think *Esar-haddon*, Sennacherib's son. **Cuthah**, prob. a city some 15 m. N. E. of Babylon. **Ava**, prob. *Ivah*,^b see also Ahava,^c **Hamath**, 1 Ki. viii. 65. **Sepharvaim**, *Sipphara* of Ptolemy; *Tsiphar*, on Assyrian inscriptions; mod. name Mosaib, on the Euphrates, above Babylon. (25) **feared not**, etc., were ignorant of Jehovah, who would still be regarded as the God of the land of Israel. **lions**, these increased^d by reason of the limited population.^e (26) **manner**, etc., i. e. the way in wh. Jehovah ordered his worshipers to propitiate and worship him. (27) **one of the priests**, this therefore occurred soon after the deportation. (28) **taught**, etc., he was probably a priest of Jeroboam's type of religion. (29) **gods**, besides this supposed god of the land.

The Samaritans (vs. 29).—Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, destroyed the kingdom of Israel, and carried away the mass of the people into captivity. Some, however, were suffered to remain, that the ground might not become a complete desert; and these united and intermarried with colonists sent from various parts to supply the vacancies occasioned by the loss of the former inhabitants. Idolatry soon corrupted the whole people; but they retained with it the worship of the One living and true God. Cyrus afterwards permitted the Jews to return from captivity and rebuild the temple, when the Samaritans, so called, wished to unite in the labor, and share in their religious privileges. But Zerubbabel and the other Jewish rulers would not admit of so corrupt a mixture among their nation. The Samaritans then employed their most strenuous efforts to obstruct the rebuilding of the temple and the prosperity of the Jews. Hence originated a mutual hatred between the nations; they also at length, aided by Sanballat, their governor, obtained permission from Alexander the Great, and built a rival temple on Mount Gerizim (Ezra. iv. 1-4; Neh. ii. 10-20). The two nations made this a subject of future contention, and each nation claimed superiority for its own place of worship. The rancorous hatred between them became at last so strong that to many of the Jews the Samaritans were objects of greater detestation than even the Gentiles (Luke x. 33). A poor remnant of this people is found at Nablous, the ancient Shechem; but they exist in a state of very great poverty, and probably will soon be extinct.—*I. Cobbin.*

30-35. (30) **Succoth-benoth**, prob. the name of Bab. goddess called *Zirbanit*. **Nergal**, god of war. **Ashima**, idol in form of entirely bald he-goat. (31) **Nibhaz**, the barker, god in form of dog. **Tartak**, prob. in form of ass.^f **Adramelech**, etc., names of the sun. (32) **so they feared**, i. e. "and they also honored," etc., combined Jehovah worship at Bethel with their own peculiar idolatries. **lowest**, 1 Ki. xii. 31. (33) **served**, etc., with the devotion of heart and will. **after the manner**, etc., R. V., "after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away." (34) **this day**, time of writing or compiling the Books of Kings. **fear not**, with fear that includes service. The apparent contradiction is easily reconciled. The new immigrants "feared Jehovah" in a certain sense, i. e. externally. They admitted him into their pantheon, and had ritual observances in his honor. But they did not really fear him in their hearts.—*Pulp. Com.* (35) **not fear**, Ju. vi. 10.

The inconsistent worship (vs. 33).—In looking at the statement that the inhabitants of the Samaritan cities "feared the Lord and served their own gods," consider—I. The curious inconsistency of their conduct. II. The motive which led them to offer worship to the true God. Pure and simple fear. III. That the worship which they paid to the true God was not nearly so hearty and real a thing as that which they paid to their old idols. They "feared" the Lord, but "served" their own gods.—*Boyd.*

The permanence of hypocrisy.—I am almost obliged to believe in the final perseverance of hypocrites, for, really, when a man once screws himself up to play the double, and both to fear God and to serve other gods, he is very apt to stick there. On the anvil of a false profession, Satan hammers out the most hardened of hard hearts.—*Spurgeon.*

36—41. (36) Lord, read "Jehovah." stretched out arm, Ex. vi. 6. (37) he wrote, Ex. xxxiv. 1. (38) not forget, De. iv. 23. (39) fear, with fear that unites with itself love, trust, and obedience. (40) former manner, yielding to the enticements of surrounding idolatry. (41) graven images, heathen idols having some material form and shape."

Too late.—A great surgeon stood before his class to perform an operation. With strong and gentle hand he did his part of the work successfully, and then, turning to his pupils, said: "Two years ago a simple operation might have cured this disease. Six years ago a wise way of life might have prevented it. Nature must now have her way. She will not consent to the repeal of her capital sentence." The patient died next day.—*W. A. Dickson.*

CHAPTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

1—3. (1) Hezekiah, whom Jehovah strengthens. (2) twenty and five, by comp. ch. xvi. 2, it would appear that Hezekiah was born when his father was eleven years old. Ahaz may, however, have shared the throne with his father for some years. *Abi*, in 2 Chr. xxix. 1, *Abijah*. *Zachariah*,^b prob. favorite proph. of Uzziah. (3) right,^c the model of Dav. indic. that he did right things in a right spirit. Only two other kings received such unqualified praise, Asa and Josiah: "the three were sons of wicked fathers."

Ashamed of religion.—What would the king think of her soldiers if they should swear they were loyal and true and were to say, "Your Majesty, we prefer not to wear these regimentals: let us wear the dress of civilians! We are right honest men and upright, but do not care to stand in your ranks, acknowledged as your soldiers: we had rather slink into the enemy's camp, and into your camps, too, and not wear anything that would mark us as being your soldiers." Ah! some of you do the same with Christ. You are going to be secret Christians, are you, and slink into the devil's camp, and into Christ's camp, but acknowledged by none!—*Spurgeon.* *Slaying the serpent.*—It is related of a celebrated British ambassador to the court of Berlin that at one time he possessed a huge boa constrictor, and interested himself in watching its habits. One day the monster escaped from the box where he supposed it was asleep, quietly wound itself around his body, and began gradually to tighten its folds. His position became extremely perilous; but the consummate coolness and self-possession which had enabled him to win many a diplomatic triumph, befriended him in this emergency. He remembered there was a bone in the throat of the serpent which, if he could find and break, he would save himself. He was aware that either he or the snake must perish. Not a moment must be lost in hesitation. He deliberately seized the head of the serpent, thrust his hand down its throat, and smashed the vital bone. The coils were relaxed, the victim fell at his feet, and he was free! So Hezekiah saw his kingdom ensnared in the deadly coils of idolatry, and that unless he acted with promptitude and vigor, both he and his kingdom would perish as Israel had done. He attacked the vulnerable part of the evil with such resolution that he and, for a time his people, were saved.—*Barlow.*

4—8. (4) removed, etc.,^d details given in 2 Chr. xxix. 3; xxxi. 19. images, 1 Ki. xiv. 23. groves, R. V., "the Asherah." brasen serpent,^e Nu. xxi. 9. It is indeed most difficult to understand a state of things in which the children of Israel habitually burned incense to this venerable relic, nor can we imagine that this was done without the cognizance and connivance of the

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Rabbis, and may indicate Heb. scorn rather than the precise truth.

God's testimony against idolatry

a "The Babylonians appear to have made a very sparing use of animal forms among their religious emblems."—*Spk. Com.*

Ju. vi. 10.

Hezekiah

b Is. viii. 2.

c Comp. 1 Ki. xv. 11; 2 Ki. xxii. 2; See also 2 Chr. xxix. Examples of boldness.—Abraham (Gen. xvii. 22-32); Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 24-29); Moses (Ex. xxxii. 31, 32, xxxiii. 18); Aaron (Num. xvi. 47, 48); David (1 Sam. xvii. 45); Elijah (1 Ki. xviii. 15, 18); Nebemlah (Neh. vi. 11); Shadrach (Dan. iii. 17, 18); Daniel (Dan. vi. 10); Joseph (Mark xv. 43); Peter and John (Acts iv. 8-13); Stephen (Acts vii. 51); Paul (Acts ix. 27, 29, xix. 8); Barabas (Acts xiv. 3); Apollus (Acts xviii. 26).

his prosperity

d "The high places were the rival centres for the worship of Jehovah, standing in the place of the later synagogues, and they had hitherto been wicked at, or rather, regarded as legitimate, even by the best kings."—*Spk. Com.*
e "Idol gods in the form of serpents

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were adored as the emblems of health and immortality." — Jamieson.

"There is even a happiness that makes the heart afraid." — Thomas Hood.

Assyrian invasion of Samaria

a Ne. ix. 26, 27; Ps. cvii. 17; Da. ix. 6-10.

It is wonderful what strength of purpose and energy of will are communicated by the assurance that we are doing our duty.

Assyrian invasion of Judah

b The *Sanacharibos* of Herodotus.

c "It was as the outposts of Egypt that the fortresses of Southern Palestine stood in the way of his great designs. To have dried up the canals of the Nile was the climax of his ambition." — Stanley.

d Pr. xxix. 25; Lu. xiv. 31, 32.

priests. Ewald makes the conjecture that the brazen *Saraph* had been left at Zalmonah and was an occasional object of Israelite adoration in pilgrimage for the purpose. It may have been brought to Jerusalem in the idolatrous reign of Ahaz.—*Exp. B.* he called, *R. V.*, margin, "it was called." *Nehushtan*, mere brass: a play on the word *nachash*, a serpent. (5) *after him, etc.*, comp. ch. xxiii. 25; treat this as a proverbial expression. The true conclusion would seem to be that Hezekiah and Josiah were selected from the rest, and placed upon a par, above all the others. The context shows that the pre-eminence is not the same in the two cases. To Hezekiah is ascribed pre-eminence in *trust*; to Josiah, pre-eminence in exact observance of the Law; one excels in faith, the other in works; Josiah's whole life is one of activity; Hezekiah's great merit lies in his being content, in the crisis of his fate, to "stand still, and see the salvation of God."—*Pulp. Com.* (6) *clave*, was steadfast throughout life, (7) *the Lord, etc.*, said besides only of Dav. *went forth*, in all his goings. *rebelled*, refused to acknowl. Assy. superiority, or pay tribute. (8) *Gaza*, Ge. x. 19; Jos. x. 41.

Nehushtan (vs. 4).—I. The perverting tendency of sin. The brazen serpent was a special provision of goodness for a special evil. Here we find the Jews perverting this special display of goodness. II. The true instincts of a reformer. He displays, like Hezekiah—1. Insight: Hezekiah saw what the people did not see: where his age saw a god he saw nothing more than a piece of brass—*Nehushtan*; 2. Honesty: Hezekiah not only saw it was brass, but said it; 3. Practical courage.—*Thomas*.

The brazen serpent (vs. 4).—The preservation of the brazen serpent for so many centuries, until it was destroyed by King Hezekiah, is a very remarkable fact. But the passion for relics is not extinguished by the destruction of its object. In A. D. 971, a Milanese envoy at Constantinople, being asked to select a present from the Imperial treasury, chose a brazen serpent which the Greeks assured him was made of the same metal that Hezekiah had broken up; and this serpent, probably the idol of some ophite sect (that is, serpent-worshipping, from "ophis," Greek for serpent), is still shown in the church of St. Ambrose at Milan, as that which was lifted up by Moses in the wilderness.—*Smith's O. T. History*.

9—12. (9) *came to pass*, this account is already given, ch. xvii. 5-8. It seems reinserted here for the sake of fixing the Jewish dates in relation to it. (10) *three years*, ch. xvii. 5. (11) *the king, i. e.* Sargon, prob. a usurper who conspired against Shalmaneser. At this point culminates the history of the northern kingdom of the ten tribes. Judah alone continued the covenant mercies of Jehovah. *Halah, etc.*, ch. xvii. 6. (12) *because, etc.*,^a distinctly connecting national calamities with national sins.

Jerusalem.—O lamentable and in sight desperate condition of distressed Jerusalem! Wealth it had none; strength it had but a little; all the country around about was subdued to the Assyrian; that proud victor has begirt the walls of it with an innumerable army, scorning that such a shovelful of earth should stand out but one day. Poor Jerusalem stands alone, blocked up with a world of enemies, helpless, friendless, comfortless, looking for the worst of a hostile fury, when Tartan and Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh, the great captains of the Assyrians, call to a parley. Lord! what insolent blasphemies does that foul mouth of Rabshekah belch out against the living God, against His anointed servant.—*Bp. Hall*.

13-16. (13) *fourteenth year*, comp. Is. xxxvi. 1. Perhaps a clerical interpolation or addition. The operations against Hezekiah seem to have been only part of a larger campaign, which appears to have been directed against those states which were in alliance with Egypt. For the Assyrian troops had gone beyond Jerusalem, and were at Lachish when Hezekiah sent in his submission. According to the inscriptions Sennacherib had overrun Phœnicia and advanced along the coast to attack the cities of the Philistines.—*Cam. B.* This invasion took place in 701 B. C., wh. would appear to be the twenty-fifth of Hez. *Sennacherib*,^b son and successor of Sargon. At this time engaged in expedition against Egypt,^c all, not absolutely every one. Sennacherib boasted of taking forty-six. (14) *offended*,^d it seems that the temper of his people did not allow Hezekiah longer to resist. Naturally he had not within his soul that burning light of inspiration which made Isaiah so sure that, even though clouds and darkness might lower on every side, God was an eternal

Sun, which flamed forever in the zenith, even when not visible to any eye save that of Faith. — *Exp. B.* return, or retire. appointed, as tribute. three hundred, Sennac. boasts of eight hundred. (15) in the house, fr. these stores such tributes were usually taken. Josephus adds to the history (*Ant. x. 1. 1*) a link which may explain the events which follow in the next section. He says that Sennacherib had promised the ambassadors of Hezekiah to depart on the payment of the impost, but that when he had received the money he paid no regard to what he had promised, but sent his officers to attack Jerusalem. In this way the Biblical record of *vs. 17* may be joined on to the statements in *vs. 16*. — *Cam. B.* This fact helps to explain the attitude of the prophet Isaiah, who had so earnestly warned Hez. not to trust in the Egyptian alliance. (16) pillars, door-posts.

Sennacherib's own account of this invasion. — The best commentary on the record given in the Bible is found on one of Sennacherib's own cylinders, now in the British Museum. The following is a part of his story: "Because Hezekiah, king of Judah, would not submit to my yoke, I came up against him, and by force of arms, and by the might of my power, I took forty-six of his strong, fenced cities: and of the smaller towns which were scattered about, with the marching of a host and surrounding of a multitude, with attack of ranks, and force of battering-rams, and mining and missiles, I besieged and and captured a countless number. From these places I took and carried off 200,150 persons, old and young, male and female, together with horses and mules, asses and camels, oxen and sheep, a countless multitude. And Hezekiah himself I shut up in Jerusalem, his capital city, like a bird in a cage, building towers round the city to hem him in, and raising banks of earth against the gates, so as to prevent escape. . . . Then upon this Hezekiah there fell the fear of the power of my arms, and he sent out to me the chiefs and the elders of Jerusalem, with 30 talents of gold, and 800 talents of silver, precious stones of large size, couches of ivory, . . . woods of every kind — an abundant treasure. . . . All these things were brought to me at Nineveh, the city of my dominion, Hezekiah having sent them by way of tribute, and as a token of his submission to my power." — *Taylor Cylinder*.

17-22. (17) Tartan, lofty; commander-in-chief, ranked next to the king. Is. xx. 1. Rabсарis, chief of the eunuchs. Rabshakeh, chief cup-bearer. Lachish, Jos. xv. 39. conduit, etc., Is. vii. 3. The upper Gihon, west of Jerus fuller, bleacher. Those engaged in this trade required to be near the water. (8) called, informed him that they had a message. Eliakim, a man of high character, who took the place of Shebna. Shebna, Is. xxii. 15-19. scribe, or secretary. recorder. 1 Ki. iv. 3. (19) Rabshakeh, said, prob. he the speaker bec. knowing Heb. great king, as ruling over other kings. (20) vain words, lit. "a word of the lips." (21) staff . . . reed, metaphor fr. the reed or bulrush of the Nile, wh. was quite useless as a staff. (22) whose altars, Rabshakeh mistakes the character of Hez.'s reformation: also the nature of true worship to Jehovah.

Rabshakeh's question to Hezekiah (vs. 19). — I. The taunt of Rabshakeh Founded on poverty and subjugation of Judah. Egypt a bruised reed. The Assyrian had no conception of higher help. II. The confidence of Hezekiah. He turned to Isaiah. Laid the letter before the Lord. Learn: — 1. The soul of man needs something to rest on; 2. Some trust in self; 3. Some in Egypt — something external to self, as wealth, income, influence, a happy home; 4. No solid trust for man but God. — *H. P. Liddon*.

Trust in man. — As a traveler overtaken by a storm, having sought the shelter of some fair-spread oak, finds relief for some time, till suddenly the fierce wind tears some strong branch, which, falling, hurts the unsuspecting passenger, so fares it with not a few who run for shelter to the shade of some great man. "Had I served my God," said poor Wolsey, "as faithfully as I have served my king, He would not have forsaken me now." — *Roberts*.

23-26. (23) pledges, a taunt of Hez.'s weakness. The third argument: let Hezekiah make a wager; and if Sennacherib furnished him with two thousand horses, he would be unable to find riders for them! How, then, could he drive back even the lowest of the Assyrian captains? And was not Jehovah on their side? It was He who had bidden them destroy Jerusalem. — *Exp. B.* (24) one captain, etc., still taunting the king with his

B. C. cir. 701.

a 2 Ki. xvi. 8.

"Such as do build their faith upon the holy text of pike and gun, decide all controversies by infallible artillery; and prove their doctrine orthodox by apostolic blows and knocks." — *Butler*.

"The old hope is hardest to be lost." — *E. B. Browning*.

Rabshakeh's message to Hezekiah

b "These were prob. official titles." — *Delitzsch*

c "There is a series of Assyrian bas-reliefs representing the siege of a town, wh. the inscription on the sculpture shows to be Lachish. The legend, over the head of the king runs thus: 'Sennacherib, the mighty king, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment before the city of Lachish, I give permission for its slaughter.'" — *Layard*

d Is. xxii. 20-25.

e *Mildman* supposes he was a renegade Jew.

f The practice of Egypt was to pretend friendship, to hold out hopes of support, and then to fail in time of need." — *Spk. Com.*

B. C. 705 to 686.

a "The court language of Assyria was an Aryan dialect."—Wordsworth.

"If there is one thing upon earth that mankind love and admire better than another, it is a brave man—it is a man who dares look the devil in the face and tell him he is a devil."—James A. Garfield.

b Chr. xxxii. 11.

c Nu. xiv. 7; De. i. 25; xiii. 7-9; xi. 11, 12.

"O war! thou son of hell, whom angry heav'ns do make their minister, throw in the frozen bosoms of our part hot coals of vengeance! let no soldier fly; he that is truly dedicate to war hath no self-love; for he that loves himself hath not essentially, but by circumstances, the name of valor."—Shakespeare.

the message is reported to Hezekiah

d 2 Ki. xix. 13; Is. x. 9; xxxvi. 19; xxxvii. 13; Je. xlix. 23.

e "The defiance was received by the people in dead silence. The three ministers tore their garments in horror, and appeared in that state before the king. He, too, gave way to the same uncontrolled burst of grief."—Stanley.

helplessness. (25) **without the Lord**, either this was a bold and unauthorized assertion, or he had heard of the prophecies concerning Judah. This above all else was calculated to shake the spirit of Hezekiah. This statement led Hezekiah's courtiers to fear lest the stress of siege would issue in popular sedition. (26) **Syrian, Aramaic**, the dialect of Damascus, and prob. popular language of Assyria. **Jews' language**, Hebrew.

The armies of Israel (vs. 23).—In the first periods of the Jewish history the armies of Israel consisted all of footmen. At length Solomon raised a body of twelve thousand horse, and fourteen hundred chariots; but whether that magnificent prince intended them for pomp or war is uncertain. The kings who succeeded Solomon certainly raised a body of horse for the defense of their dominions. But the Jewish cavalry were seldom very numerous; and under the religious kings of David's line, who made the Divine law the rule of their policy, they were either disembodied altogether, or reduced to a very small number. In the reign of Hezekiah, when the country was invaded by the king of Assyria, the Jews seem to have no force of this kind.—Paxton. *Bravery in trial*.—When Palissy, the Huguenot potter, was lying a prisoner in the Bastille for his adherence to the Protestant faith, it is said that the king of France, who had a great regard for him, visited him in his dungeon, and told him that if he did not comply with the established religion he should be forced, however unwillingly, to leave him in the hands of his enemies. "Forced, sire!" replied the noble old man, with all the energy and fire of his earlier years. "This is not to speak like a king; but they who force you cannot force me. I can die."—Wm. H. Taylor.

27-32. (27) **eat, etc.**,^b these terms hint the straitness and distress of the siege that was threatened. Note the extreme and disgusting insolence of this man. (28) **stood and cried**, an intolerable act on the part of an envoy who had no right to address the governed. **Jews' language**, haughtily refusing to change his speech. (29) **his hand**, he should have said *my hand*. (30) **trust in the Lord**, it was perilous work thus to scorn Jehovah. **be delivered**, *R. V.*, "given," not the same word as that rendered "delivered" just above. (31) **make, etc.**, *R. V.*, "Make your peace with me." Then shall you have prosperous and peaceful days in the enjoyment of the paternal possessions. **cistern**, or well: rain-water cisterns were comparatively rare. (32) **like your own**, Nu. xiii. 27.^c

The siege of Genoa.—In 1800, Genoa, occupied by 24,000 French troops, was besieged at once by a British fleet and a powerful Austrian army. We will not detail the horrors attendant on the sallies and assaults, but let us look at the condition of the soldiers and citizens within. The former, worn down by fatigue and wasted by famine, had consumed all the horses in the city and were at length reduced to the necessity of feeding on dogs, cats, and vermin, which were eagerly hunted out in the cellars and common sewers. Soon, however, even these wretched resources failed; and they were brought to the pittance of four or five ounces a day of black bread made of cocoa, rye, and other substances ransacked from the shops of the city.

33-37. (33) **any of the gods**, local gods of the conquered countries. (34) **Hamath, etc.**, ch. xvii. 24.^d **Samaria**, as if he had mentioned or had in his thought the local god of Samaria. (35) **the Lord**, read Jehovah. Rabshakeh had to learn the mistake of classifying Jehovah with idols. It is interesting to note the glaring inconsistency bet. this defiance of Jehovah and the previous statement regarding this sanction and commission to go up and take Jerus., vs. 25. (36) **held their peace**, so disappointing Rabshakeh, who expected to excite popular tumult. "This sulphurous flask, therefore, dies in his own smoke, only leaving a hateful stench behind it," says Bp. Hall.—*Cam. B.* (37) **clothes rent**, in token of exceeding shame, grief, and anxiety.

Grounds for trust in God.—When Martin Luther was writing to his friend, the chancellor, at the Diet of Augsburg, you know many reformers at the time had their minds filled with great anxieties—Melancthon was very fearful—and many of the Protestant princes were fearful, too; but glorious Luther, his heart was stout as a castle wall. He trusted in the Lord his God; nothing made him afraid; and he wrote, as I tell you, to the chancellor a letter, in which he says, "I fear not, and why should I fear? I have seen two miracles lately. I looked up and saw the clouds above me in the noontide; and they looked like the sea that was hanging over me, and I could see no

cord on which they were suspended, and yet they never fell. And then when the noontide had gone and the midnight came, I looked again, and there was the dome of heaven, and it was spangled with stars, and I could see no pillars that held up the skies, and yet they never fell. Now He that holds the stars up and moves the clouds in their course. He can do all things. and I trust Him in the sight of these miracles."—Coley.

CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

1-5. (1) **rent**, *etc.*, sign chiefly of horror at Rabshakeh's blasphemy. **sackcloth**, sign of personal humiliation and penitence. **went**, *etc.*, not to worship; but to seek the oracle in his time of need. (2) **Isaiah**, *salvation of Jehovah*. he had previously counseled the king.^a (3) **rebuke**, or chastisement. **blasphemy**, *R. V.*, "contumely." **children**, *etc.*, comp. Hos. xiii. 13; fig. for utter weakness to meet the present need. (4) **living God**,^b contrast with lifeless idols. **remnant**, Sennacherib had already deported many thousands of Jews fr. the territory of Judah to Assyria; Jerus. alone was left. (5) **servants**, mentioned *vs.* 2.

Failure at the last.—When a person has all but accomplished his object, when only a very slight obstacle has prevented him, it is then said, "The child came to the birth, but there was not strength to bring it forth." When a person has succeeded in gaining a blessing which he has long desired, he says, "Good, good! the child is born at last."—Roberts.

6-13. (6) **servants**, lackeys, a term of contempt. **blasphemed me**, Jehovah heard the insult, and would surely avenge His outraged honor (7) **blast**, a spirit, fill him with a craven fear.^c **rumour**, the expedition of Tirhakah, king of Egypt, *vs.* 9. (8) **Libnah**,^d near Lachish, but further toward Egypt. 30 m. S. W. of Jerus. (9) **Tirhakah**, third and last king of the 25th dynasty, wh. was of Ethiopians.^e There seems to have been a contemporary king in Egypt at the time, one *Sethos*. **Ethiopia**, Cush.^f (10) **deceive**, by assurances wh. Assy. power should prove vain. **delivered**, *R. V.*, "given." (11) **all lands**, extravagant boast. (12) **my fathers**, esp. Sargon. **Gozan**, ch. xviii. 11. **Haran**, "the *Carrhæ* of the Gks. and Roms." where Abram dwelt after his departure fr. Ur of the Chaldees. **Rezeph**, *razappa*, near Haran. **Eden**, the *Beni Eden*, name of a tribe. **Thelasar**, per. Hill of Asshur.—Rawlinson. (13) **Hamath**, *etc.*, ch. xvii. 24.

Destruction of Sennacherib's host.—The destruction of Sennacherib and his army appears to have been effected by that pestilential wind called the simoom. At Bagdad, Sir R. K. Porter informs us the master of the khan "told me that during forty days of July and August the hot wind blows from the desert, and its effects are often destructive. Its title is very appropriate, being called the samiel, or baude semoom, the pestilential wind. None dare stir from their houses while this invisible flame is sweeping over the face of the country. Previous to its approach the atmosphere becomes thick and suffocating. When it has passed over, a sulphuric, and indeed loathsome smell, like putridity, remains for a long time. The poison which occasions this smell must be deadly; for if any unfortunate traveler, too far from shelter, meet the blast, he falls immediately."—Robinson.

14-19. (14) **spread it**, laid it down before the veil of the holy of holies. (15) **dwestest**, *etc.*,^g *R. V.*, "which sittest upon the cherubim." the God, Jehovah only is God, the local deities of whom Sennach. has written are "no gods," mere vanities. (16) **sent him**, wh. he hath sent. **living God**, *vs.* 4. (17) **destroyed**, *etc.*, their gods not being able to deliver. (18) **fire**, they could be no gods that could be burnt. (19) **save thou**, *etc.*, Hez. urges preservation of the Div. honor,^h which was thus grievously assailed. Prove that thou art not a "no-god," but the "living God."

Proof of trust in God.—There was an action that Alexander the Great did, which I use only to express what I mean by trusting in God. When he was sick, there comes a friend that was always close with him, who was a physician, and he prepared him a potion: but before it was given, there was a letter delivered to him to signify that that very potion was poison. When his friend came with his potion in his hand, Alexander takes the letter that was sent to

B. C. 705 to 686.

Hezekiah's
humiliation

a Is. i. 1

b De. v. 26; Jos. iii. 10; 1 Sa. xvii. 26; Ps. xlii. 2, lxxxiv. 2; Hos. 1, 10; Je. x. 10; xliii. 36; Da. vi. 26.

"A noble heart, like the sun, showeth its greatest countenance in its lowest estate."—Sir Philip Sidney.

Isaiah
encourages
Hezekiah

c "I will take possession of him by means of a panic, depriving him of his strength, and making him tremble and flee like a dastard before me."—Wordsworth.

d Jos. x. 29-32.

e "The name is written in hieroglyphics TE-HARKA. Sculptures at Thebes commemorate his rule, and at Gebel-Berkel or Napata, he constructed one temple and part of another. Of the events of his reign little else is known."—Smith's Bib. Dic.

f Is. xliii. 3; xlv. 14.

Hezekiah
spreads
letter of
Assyrian
before
the Lord

g Ps. lxxx. 1.

h Ez. xxxvi. 22, 23.

"We may well be astonished at the wonderful ways in which God answers

B. C. 705 TO 686.

prayer, but not at the fact that he answers."—*Felou-bel.*

Isaiah instructs Hezekiah how to reply

a Ps. xxii. 7; cix. 25; Lam. ii. 15; Matt. xxvii. 39.

b "The meaning seems to be—Mountains do not stop me; I cross them even in my chariots. Deserts do not stop me; I dig wells there, and drink the water. Rivers do not stop me; I pass them as easily as if they were dry land."—*Spk. Com.*

c "The histories of the Cæsars, Alexanders, and Napoleons of this world may be summed up in this verse."—*Wordsworth.*

d Eze. xxix. 4.

e Ps. xxxii. 9.

"In one of the ancient court-rooms of Europe there was fixed a large mirror near the prisoner's dock, so that each arraigned culprit might look upon his own image as he sat there on trial."—*C. S. Robinson.*

and assures Hezekiah of the defeat of Assyria

f 2 Ki. xxiii. 15-20.

give him notice of the treason, and drinks off the cup with one hand, and reaches the letter with the other; so he drank off the cup before he showed the letter. How he trusted him! If he had failed him, Alexander had lost his life. He did not first show him the letter, and hear what he had to say; but he showed that he trusted him. And know, except thou do it thus, God is not ready to help thee.—*Preston.*

20-24. (20) against Sennac., in regard to him. (21) virgin, Zion is so called, because it had never been conquered by an enemy since Dav.'s time. Obs. that Is.'s words are addressed to Sennacherib. daughter, *i. e.* "her inhabitants may be counted poetically as the offspring of Zion."—*Cum. B.* shaken her head, the gesture of scorn. (23) hast said, *Is. trans.* the king's pride. sides, *R. V.*, "innermost parts." lodgings, *etc.*, *R. V.*, "his farthest lodging places," *i. e.* the whole land of Judah to its remotest border was to be ravaged. his Carmel, *R. V.*, "his fruitful field." (24) strange waters, making wells for myself. b dried up, *R. V.*, "will I dry up," *i. e.* mountains and deserts and rivers are no hindrance to the Assyrian's progress—what was Jerus.? rivers, *etc.*, *R. V.*, "rivers of Egypt."

The French armament. — The destruction of the French armament, under the Duke D'Anville, in the year 1746, ought to be remembered with gratitude and admiration by every inhabitant of this country. This fleet consisted of forty ships of war; was destined for the destruction of New England, was of sufficient force to render that destruction, in the ordinary progress of things, certain; and sailed from Chebucto in Nova Scotia for this purpose. In the meantime, our pious fathers, apprised of their danger, and feeling that their only safety was in God, had appointed a season of fasting and prayer to be observed in all their churches. While Mr. Prince was officiating in this church (Old South church, Boston), on this fast day, and praying most fervently to God to avert the dreadful calamity, a sudden gust of wind arose (the day had till now been perfectly clear and calm), so violent as to cause a loud clattering of the windows. The reverend pastor paused in his prayer, and, looking round upon the congregation with a countenance of hope, he again commenced, and with great devotional ardor supplicated the Almighty God to cause that wind to frustrate the object of our enemies and save the country from conquest and popery. A tempest ensued in which the greater part of the French fleet was wrecked on the coast of Nova Scotia. The Duke d'Anville, the principal general, and the second in command, both committed suicide. Many died with disease, and thousands were consigned to a watery grave. The small number that remained alive returned to France without health and without spirits. And the enterprise was abandoned, and never again resumed.—*Cheever.*

25-28. (25) hast thou, *etc.*, a sudden transition. God now speaks, and tells the boaster that he, and all conquerors, do but execute Div. commissions. (26) therefore, bec. I sent thee. small power, weak of hand. grass . . tops, Ps. cxxix. 6; growing on the flat roofs. (27) abode, *R. V.* "sitting down," in times of peace. going out, *etc.*, all thy doings. (28) tumult, arrogance. hook, or ring; treating thee as a wild beast. c bride, driving thee as a horse. d way . . camest, *i. e.* the low coast route, he was not permitted to come near Jerus.

Showing a man himself. — A woman determined that her husband should know how he looked when he was drunk. She knew well enough how he looked, but the man himself had a very imperfect idea of the state of the case. So once when he came home and fell into a maudlin slumber, she sent for the photographer. The photographer did his work well; and when the photograph was finished and laid beside the husband's plate at breakfast, it was a revelation. There was no chance for contradiction; the sun tells no lies. How many there are who, if they could only get one view of themselves, would at once and forever change their course in life.—*H. L. Hastings.*

29-34. (29) unto thee, *i. e.* Hezekiah. grow of themselves, though unsown, the land for two years should yield sufficient by natural sowing. In the third year they should resume agriculture, and be undisturbed. (30) remnant, as vs. 4. bear fruit, as in time of Josiah. f (31) go forth, *i. e.* return in security to their country homes, and occupations. zeal, *Is. ix. 7.*

(32) shoot, etc., by this act giving order for an assault. shield, screen under wh. attack may be made on walls and gates. bank, fr. wh. to throw missiles. (23) by the way, etc., intimation of hasty retreat, vs. 28. (34) mine own sake, upholding my insulted honor.

Jehovah, the defense of His people. — 1. He vindicates His character from the wicked aspersions of His enemies. 2. He preserves His people inviolate. 3. He delivers them from distress, and restores to them prosperity and power. 4. He is unchanging in His fidelity to His covenant. — *Hom. Com.*

Trust in God. — The blows by which people are endeavoring to subvert the house of God are so rude, and the assaults made upon it are so frequent, that it is not only the winds and the rain that beat upon it, according to our Lord's prediction, but hail and lightning. Had I not perceived that the Lord was preserving the vessel, I should long ago have thrown the helm into the sea. I behold Him through the tempest, strengthening the cordage, adjusting the yards, spreading the sails; what do I say? commanding the very winds; . . . should I not then be a coward unworthy of the name of man were I to abandon my post in order to find a shameful death in flight? I commit myself wholly to His sovereign goodness; let Him govern, let Him transport, let Him hasten, let Him delay, let Him accelerate, let Him retard, let Him even plunge us into the bottom of the abyss, we will fear nothing; we are earthen vessels that belong to Him. He can employ us in His service according to His good pleasure, whether for honor or dishonor. — *Zwingli.*

35-37. (35) that night, the one following on Is.'s prophecy. The LXX. says more indefinitely "during the night." smote, either by pestilence, or hot, poisonous wind.^a in the camp, at this time some distance fr. Jerusalem, and towards the Egypt. deserts. they arose, the king, and the few spared. (36) departed, hurriedly, in haste and fear.^b Nineveh, the Assyrian capital (Jonah i. 2). (37) Nisroch, not certainly identified. Armenia, *lit. land of Ararat.* Esarhaddon, 681-668 B. C., approximately.

The destruction of Sennacherib (vs. 35). — The events recorded of this memorable night develop the force of — I. Wickedness. The fact that wickedness is allowed great power on this earth shows — 1. The regard which God has for the free agency of the human mind; 2. The wonderful forbearance of God; 3. The certainty of a future retribution. II. Justice. 1. Justice will not always sleep; 2. When roused, it does its work with ease; 3. Its work involves ruin to the wicked, but salvation to the good. III. Prayer. Observe — 1. Hezekiah's prayer; 2. The answer. Instrumentally, it was prayer that now delivered Jerusalem. Learn — (1) That wickedness, however triumphant, must end in ruin; (2) That goodness, however threatened, shall end in a glorious deliverance. — *Thomas.*

Destruction of Sennacherib's host. —

The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.
Like the leaves of the forest, when summer is green,
That host, with their banners, at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest, when autumn hath blown,
That host, on the morrow, lay withered and strown.
For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed on the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!
And there lay the steed, with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.
And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
The tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances uplifted, the trumpet unblown.
And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord! — *Byron.*

B. C. 705 to 686.

Wars since 1848. — Since 1848, there has been at lesser intervals than six years, actual or threatened war. Thus in 1854 there was the Crimean War, in 1857 the Indian Mutiny, in 1859 the Italian War, in 1863 the American War and the Trent affair, in 1864 the Danish War, in 1866 the Austro-Prussian War. — *Leisure Hour for Jan., 1871.*

the host of Assyria destroyed

a "Some have thought the powerful natural agent employed was the hot pestilential wind, the simoom, which is often represented as suddenly destroying travelers, and indeed whole caravans. The effects of this wind are felt most strongly in the heart of the great deserts, and with mitigated results the farther one recedes from them." — *Kitto.*

"On the whole it would seem that all mere natural causes must be rejected." — *Spk. Com.*

b Comp. 1 K1. xix. 3; Ps. lxxvi. is entitled in the LXX. a Song of Thanksgiving for Deliverance from the Assyrians.

"The route is described Is. x. The early chariot track near Beyrout is on the rocky edge of Lebanon, which is skirted by the ancient Lycus, *Nahr-el kelb.*" — *Jamieson.*

B. C. cir. 701.

CHAPTER THE TWENTIETH.

sickness of
Hezekiaha Comp. 2 Ki. xviii.
2 and 13.

See also Is. xxxviii.

b The remedy suggests that Hez. was suffering fr. some kind of carbuncle. Is. xxxviii. 21; 2 Ki. xx. 7.

c Comp. Ahab, 1 Ki. xxi. 4.

"Let each day take thought for what concerns it, liquidate its own affairs, and respect the day which is to follow, and then we shall be always ready."—*Amiel*."If thou expect death as a friend, prepare to entertain it; if thou expect death as an enemy, prepare to overcome it; death has no advantage, but when it comes a stranger."—*Quarles*.the dial
of Ahaz

d Comp. Ju. vi. 17, 37, 39; Mat. xii. 39.

e Is. vi. 11.

f "Some have supposed that it was a stair so artfully contrived that the shadow on the steps indicated the hours and the course of the sun."—*Jamieson*."A partial eclipse of the sun took place at Jerus. as far as can be known, in the year of Hez.'s illness. This is a pos. natural cause of the phenomenon."—*Stanley*.

"What is time?—the shadow on the dial,—the striking of the clock,—the running of the sand,—day and night—summer and winter,—months, years, centuries. These are but arbitrary, and outward signs,—the measure of time, not time it-

1-7. (1) *those days*,^e impossible to decide when this was. Canon Cheyne says 713-711 B. C., just before an expected invasion by Sargon. The Cam. Bib. places it after the defeat of the Assyrian army. Farrar, in the Exp. Bib. accepts the earlier date. This is rendered more probable by Isaiah's promise (2 Kings xx. 6), "I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria," and by the fact that Hezekiah still possessed such numerous and splendid treasures to display to the ambassadors of Merodach-Baladan. This could hardly have been the case after he had been forced to pay a fine to the king of Assyria. *sick unto death*,^b of disease likely to prove fatal. *set, etc.*, arrange thy affairs. (2) *to the wall*, so securing privacy^c for devotion. (3) *perfect*, here, as often in Scrip., put for *sincere*. *wept sore*, tho' 40 years of age, he had at this time no son to succeed him on his throne. (4) *middle court*, R. V., "middle part of the city." (5) *captain*, name given to David, and applied to Dav.'s true followers. (6) *fifteen years*, during wh. time a son was born to continue the house of Dav.

Preparations for death essentially necessary (vs. 1).—I. We must all die. 1. We must all die. The decree is gone forth; 2. We may die soon: no age, no situation, no description of person or character is exempt; 3. Death terminates all our present joys and sorrows; 4. Death ends our probation for eternity. II. To be prepared for death is a duty solemnly incumbent on each of us. This preparation respects—1. The present world; 2. The world to come.

Hezekiah's dependency.—We must remember, as we contemplate his utter prostration of soul, that he was not blessed, as we are, with the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life. All was dim and dark to him in the shadowy world of *eidola* beyond the grave, and many a century was to elapse before Christ brought life and immortality to light. To enter Sheol meant to Hezekiah to pass beyond the cheerful sunshine of earth and the felt presence of God. No more worship, no more gladness there!

"For Sheol cannot praise Thee, Death cannot celebrate Thee;
They that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth."—*Farrar*.

8-11. (8) *sign*, of so extraordinary a recovery. Signs may be asked rightly as well as wrongly.^d (9) *go forward, etc.*, he was so far permitted to fix his own sign.^e *ten degrees*, or steps. (10) *light thing*, forward was its regular course: it would be a surprising and mirac. thing for it to go back. (11) *dial of Ahaz*,^f "Sundials had been invented by the Babylonians before the time of Herodotus." By God's blessing on man's therapeutic care, the king was speedily rescued from the gates of death. Constantly in Scripture what we call the miraculous and what we call the providential are mingled together.—*Exp. B.*

A modern example.—E. L. Garbett, in *Knowledge*, for January, 1883, says that he knew of an afternoon some years ago, when on a plenty of sundials in Southern England there occurred exactly the wonder described in the book of Kings. "The shiftings of shadows on the dial that Isaiah predicted to sick Hezekiah are liable to occur at any place, when these two circumstances concur: (1) that the upper atmosphere is in that condition which causes two bright parhelia or mock suns to appear on opposite sides of the sun; and (2) that the lower air contains drifting clouds, massive enough to hide often two of the three. When the real sun and eastern mock sun are hidden, there is only the western to cast shadows, which then coincide with what the sun will cast an hour and a half later; but if the clouds shift so as to hide the west parhelia, and disclose the eastern, the shadows instantly become such as the sun cast an hour and a half earlier. On March 29, 1848, these effects occurred, had any one been looking, on every dial in the Isle of Portsea, and very probably of much of Hampshire besides. The parhelia were present and bright enough at about 11 P. M., and still better at 1 P. M." *Inscriptions on dials*.—On one at Ecclesfield we have, "Watch, for ye know not the hour." At Aynho, near Bicester, "Yet a little while is the light with you, walk while ye have the light." One at Guilsborough, Northamptonshire, has, "Opportunity has hair in front, and is bald behind." At Heslington Hall, York, "Snatch the day." At Austin Friars, "The shadow teaches." At Bishopthorpe, near York, "Slippery time." At Eastlake Church, Nottinghamshire, "Now is yesterday's to-morrow." At Buxted, Sussex, "We shall —" the reader is

expected to supply, "Di-all." At Calgaith, near Penrith, there is a conversation — "(Dial), 'Staie, Passenger, tell me my name, thy nature.' (Pass.), 'Thy name is Die all, I a mortall Creature.' (Dial), 'Since my Name and thy Nature soe agree, Thinke on Thy Selfe when thou Looks upon me.'" One, named in *Friends in Council*, has, "I reckon only the bright hours." At Geneva, "After darkness light." — *Mrs. Gatty's Book of Sundials*.

B. C. 705 to 686.

self. Time is the life of the soul. If not this, — then tell me what is time?" — *Longfellow*.

12—15. (12) **Berodach**,^a prop. Merodach, Is. xxxix. 1. "He reigned 12 yrs., was then deposed, ultimately recovered his throne, reigned 6 months, and was then murdered. king of **Babylon**, now first mentioned. present, one intended to procure alliance and aid. Hez. was so flattered by this offer as to forget that Jehovah was his strength. heard, comp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. (13) **shewed them**,^b the relations of this king to Sargon led Hez. to think his aid might be valuable, and this induced him to show his treasures, and produce a favorable impression on his visitors. house . . . armour, *i. e.* "the house of the forest of Lebanon." (14) **Babylon**, at this time quite an unknown country to the Jews. (15) **all, etc.**, as vs. 13.

Hezekiah receives messengers from Babylon

Hezekiah's sin. — I. He was delighted with the company of the ambassadors. II. He evidently leaned to their alliance. III. His unholy silence concerning his God. IV. His loud boasting about himself. V. He put himself on a level with these Babylonians. — *Spurgeon*.

^a "The rival, or rebel king against the Assy. Many motives may have conspired to draw these strangers to Palestine. It may have been to contract an alliance with Hezekiah against the declining empire of Assy. It may have been, to observe the internal resources of the country." — *Stanley*.

The danger of prosperity. — The Lord gave Hezekiah an unusual run of prosperity. Everything prospered. Many serpents lurk among the flowers of prosperity; high places are dangerous places; it was not easy to carry a full cup with a steady hand; a loaded wagon needs a strong axle; and a well-fed steed requires a tight rein. Hezekiah, at this time, had become singularly conspicuous. The world's mouth was full of Hezekiah. What a temptation is this! When many eyes are upon one, they may, unless grace prevent, act like the eyes of the fabled basilisk which fascinated their prey. A full sail needs much ballast, or the vessel will be overturned. — *Spurgeon*.

^b 2 Chr. xxxii. 31.

B. C. 701 to 686.

16—21. (16) **hear**, a solemn introduction to his message. (17) **fathers, etc.**, the temple treasures. **carried into Bab.**, tho' now it seemed an insignificant country and excited no fear, it would become their greatest scourge. (18) **sons, i. e.** descendants; his son Manasseh was carried away prisoner to Babylon. **eunuchs, etc.**, perform menial duties in the royal palace, 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11; Da. i. 3. (19) **good**, spoken in the spirit of submission. **is it not good**, at least God granted him a respite, peace and truth were to endure during his own reign. (20) **rest**, 2 Chr. xxix.—xxxii. **pool**,^d ch. xviii. 17. (21) **slept, etc.**, his funeral was an unusually honored one.^e

death of Hezekiah

Resignation under severe trial. — I remember I saw an old officer, having his son with him (a fine man, about twenty years of age), going into the tent to dine. Whilst they were at dinner, a shot from the bastion of St. Antonio took off the head of the son. The father immediately rose up, first looking down upon his headless child, and then lifting up his eyes to heaven, whilst the tears ran down his cheeks, only said, "Thy will be done!" It was a sad spectacle, and truly it affects me even now whilst I am writing. — *Capt. Carleton*.

^c 2 Kl. xxiv. 13; xxv. 13; Jer. xxvii. 19—22.

^d The pool now called the pool of Hez. lies to the N. E. of the Jaffa gate, and W. of the street that leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; and is now the *Birket-el-Hu m-mâm*. — *Robinson*.

^e 2 Chr. xxxii. 33.

Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, author of *Telmachus*, when his illustrious pupil, the Duke of Burgundy, lay dead in his coffin, on coming into the room, broke out in terms to this effect — "There lies my beloved prince, and all my worldly happiness lies dead with him. But if the turning of a straw would call him back to life, I would not for ten thousand worlds, be the turner of that straw, in opposition to the will of God."

Resignation. —

Since thy Father's arm sustains thee,
Peaceful be;
When a chastening hand restrains thee,
It is He.
Know — His love in full completeness
Fills the measure o. thy weakness;
If He wound thy spirit sore,
Trust Him more.

Fearest sometimes that thy Father
Hath forgot?
When the clouds around thee gather,
Doubt Him not.
Always hath the daylight broken,
Always hath He comfort spoken,
Better hath He been for years
Than thy fears.

B. C. 686.

"Come, Resignation, spirit meek, and let me kiss thy placid cheek, and read in thy pale, eye serene their blessing, who by faith can wean their hearts from sense, and learn to love God only, and the joys above."—*Keble*.

Manasseh
a Ge. xii. 51.

b "Some of the aristocracy who had been most powerful at the court of Ahaz seem to have taken possession of their youthful sovereign on the death of the good Hezekiah, and thus early and permanently corrupted his mind."—*Ewald*.

c For worship of Astarte, see Je. vii. 17, 18.

B. C. 686 to 641.

Manasseh's idolatry

d Je. xxxii. 35; Eze. xxiii. 37.

e "This has been explained as—1. Predicting from state of clouds and atmosphere (*Keib*); 2. Fascination with the eye (*Vitringo*); 3. Watching and catching at chance words as omens."—*Farrar*.

f Is. viii. 19; xxix. 4. Comp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 16; xxxv. 3. g Also 1 Ki. vii. 29; ix. 3-9; Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.

prophecy against

Manasseh

2 Chr. xxxiii. 18. h Je. xix. 3.

i "There is a widespread tradition that the prophet Isaiah was one of his victims."

death of
Manasseh

j "The only name of an Egyptian deity that we find in the Jewish annals."—*Stanley*.

k It may be the *Jothab* of De. x. 7.

Therefore, whatso'er betideth

Night or day,

Know—His love for thee provideth

Good away.

Crown of sorrow gladly take,

Grateful wear it for His sake,

Sweetly bending to His will,

Lying still. — *From the German*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIRST.

1-5. (1) **Manasseh, forgetting**, so called bec. in the birth of an heir God made Hez. forget his grief.^a **fifty and five**, so 2 Chr. xxxiii. 1; LXX.; and Josephus. The longest in the annals of Judah. **Hephzi-bah, my delight is in her**. (2) **evil**, under the bad influence of the Jewish nobles.^b (3) **high places**, ch. xviii. 4. **grove**,^c "Asherah," see 1 Ki. xvi. 33. **host of heaven**, De. iv. 19. Sabaism, or star-worship without images. (4) **altars**, to other gods, an advance beyond Athaliah and Ahaz. **in the house**, see vs. 5. (5) **two courts**, idol altars not within actual temple building, but within the precincts of the priest's court and the people's court.

Sabat's wretchedness.—After poor Sabat, an Arabian, who had professed faith in Christ by means of the labors of the Rev. Henry Martyn, had apostatized from Christianity, and written a book in favor of Mohammedanism, he was met at Malacca by the Rev. Dr. Milne, who proposed to him some very pointed questions; in reply to which he said, "I am unhappy! I have a mountain of burning sand on my head! When I go about, I know not what I am doing." It is indeed "an evil thing and bitter to forsake the Lord our God."

6-9. (6) **thro' the fire**,^d ch. xvi. 3. **observed times**,^e R. V., "practiced augury," De. xviii. 10. **enchantments**, Le. xix. 26-31. **familiar spirits, etc.**, Le. xix. 31.^f R. V., "dealt with them that had;" perhaps Manasseh placed such persons in office. (7) **graven image, etc.**, R. V., "graven image of Asherah." **Lord said**, 2 Sa. vii. 10-13, 25-29.^g (8) **only**, God's promise rested on a strict condition wh. Manasseh by his iniquities had annulled. (9) **more evil**, "bec. committed against light, in spite of the Law, and against all the warnings and denunciations of the prophets." "The nation emancipated itself from the moral law as with a shout of relief, and plunged into superstition and licentiousness."

Evil influence of example.—Be vicious, and viciousness may go down as an heirloom in half a hundred families; be inconsistent, and enmity to the Gospel may be propagated over a parish; give occasions of offense, and many may fall; those who are entering in the narrow way may be discouraged, and those who have already entered may be made to stumble. Ye live not for yourselves; ye cannot live for yourselves; a thousand fibres connect you with your fellow-men, and along those fibres, as along sympathetic threads, run your actions as causes, and return to you as effects.—*H. Melvill*.

10-16. (10) **prophets**, poss. Habakkuk. (11) **Amorites did**, 1 Ki. xxi. 26. (12) **tingle**,^h 1 Sa. iii. 11. (13) **wipe, etc.**, fig. for entire removal of the people, and desolation of city. (14) **forsake**, R. V., "cast off," temporarily, and in judgment; not finally. (15) **done . . evil, etc.**, the tendency to idolatry had been constantly manifest. (16) **innocent blood**, of the Jehovah worshippers.ⁱ

The line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab.—The figures are taken from the occupation of the builder. The builder employs line and plummet that he may carry out his work exactly according to the plan prescribed. But here the pattern is one of utter destruction, which God Himself threatens to carry out after the fashion of Samaria and the house of Ahab, which the previous generation had beheld utterly destroyed.—*Cam. Bib*.

17-22. (17) **rest**, 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11-20. (18) **garden**, of the royal palace. poss. bec. the catacomb of David was full. **Amon**,^j same name as Egyp. deity worshipped at Thebes. This may be however derived fr. Heb. *aman*, to establish. (19) **Meshullemeth**, an Idumean, if Jothab^k be identified with *Jothathah*, of Nu. xxxiii. 33, 34. (20) **as his father**, evil of the worst heathen

type. Manasseh's reformation (2 Chr. xxxiii. 12-16) seems to have had no effect upon his son. (21) **walked, etc.**, comp. descrip. in Zep., i. 4-12; iii. 1-7. (22) **forsook**, did not even maintain an outward observance of Jehovah worship.

A dark day and a bright sunset (vss. 17, 18). — Here is an unostentatious, an unhonored, an unepitaphed grave. We have to trace, in Manasseh's case, a sunrise of promise, soon obscured with clouds of guilt and crime. These clouds burst in floods of penitence and sorrow. A meridian of sudden brilliancy follows. The sky clears and the orb of a chequered life sets cloudless and serene on the hills of Judah. Standing by his grave, let us consider — I. Manasseh's sin. Look at — 1. His early training. Hezekiah would well bring him up; 2. The baneful influence his creed and example had on his subjects; 3. His repeated and obdurate rejection of Divine warning. II. His conversion. His dungeon became to him as the gate of heaven. Note here the wonderful power of sanctified affliction. III. His new life. The grand test of the reality of conversion is the regenerated being. The tree is known by its fruits. We read that when God had brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom, "then Manasseh knew that the Lord He was God." — *Macduff*.

23-26. (23) **conspired**, either bec. some were zealous for Jehovah's worship; or more prob. bec. renewed idolatry meant renewed tyranny. **people of the land**, "tumultuously (it would seem) arrested them and put them to death." (25) **rest, etc.**, 2 Chr. xxxiii. 21-25. (26) **in the garden**, vs. 18.

Dark places in the Bible. — A little while ago I was in the noble cathedral at Cologne. Going in the early morning, I saw the eastern windows lit up by the sun. Far away in the great church the other windows were all obscure and dusky. We strolled in about noonday, and then these windows in the depths were lit up with ruby, purple, gold — prophets, apostles, saints, martyrs. And then, when the sun was going down, we looked in to find that the great western window was magnificently kindled, like a window that opened into heaven. As the hours of the day went on, first one window was illuminated, then another, until in the end there was not a painted pane but had added some splendor to the temple. It is a great deal like that with your Bible. There is many a dark page in the Bible to-day, but in the process of the suns they are lit up one after another. — *W. L. Watkinson*.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-SECOND.

1, 2. (1) **Josiah**, one whom Jehovah heals, or gives. **eight years**, so young that a sort of council of regency was necessary. **thirty and one years**, probably from B. C. 639 to B. C. 609 — a most important period of the world's history, including, as it does, (1) the great Scythic invasion; (2) the fall of Assyria; (3) the formation of the Median empire; and the foundation of the Babylonian empire by Nabopolassar. — *Pulp. Com.* **Jedidah**, beloved. **Boscath**, Jos. xv. 29. (2) **way of David**,^b ever regarded as the highest model of Jehovah-service.

An example for young men. — The piety of Josiah as illustrative — I. Of the power of a good example. 1. His attachment to God's house and devotion to its services. 2. His love to the word of God. 3. His reverence for godly men. II. Of the strict integrity of goodness. 1. He was not affected by the force of ancient custom. 2. He was not influenced by any feeling of false shame. III. Of the course of life that insures Divine approval; the life which lives for others and for God. Application. — 1. Do not exist merely, live. 2. Only goodness is greatness. — *Hom. Com.*

An example for royalty. — There is at the top of the Queen's staircase in Windsor Castle a statue from the studio of Baron Triqueti, of Edward VI., marking with his sceptre a passage in the Bible, which he holds in his left hand, and upon which he earnestly looks. The passage is thus concerning Josiah: "Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David, his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left." The statue was erected by the will of the late prince, who intended it to convey to his son the Divine principles by which the future governor of England should mould his life and reign on the throne of Great Britain. — *T. Hughes*.

B. C. 639.

"We are the portion the Lord takes out of the hand of his enemy and ours, and he cares for us as such." — *John Hall*.

"Suffering is a wonderful fertilizer to the roots of character." — *Phelps*.

"Those that are bound for heaven must be willing to swim against the stream, and must not do as most do, but as the best do." — *Henry*.

death of Amon

"Parents must give good example and reverent deportment in the face of their children. And all those instances of charity which usually endear each other — sweetness of conversation, affability, frequent admonition — all signification of love and tenderness, care and watchfulness, must be expressed towards children." — *Bp. Taylor*.

Josiah

a "There was a circle of remarkable persons in or around the palace and temple, who, poss. driven together by the recent persecutions, had formed a compact band, who remained unbroken till the fall of the monarchy itself." — *Stanley*.

^b 2 Chr. xxxiv. 1, 2.

B. C. 621.

Josiah repairs the temple

a 1 Chr. vi. 13, 14.

b 2 Chr. xxxiv. 12.

" 'Tis a zealot's faith that blasts the shrines of the false god, but builds no temple to the true."—*Sydney Dobell*.

Hilkiah finds a copy of the law

2 Chr. xxxiv. 14.

c "It had been no doubt deposited (De. xxi. 26) by the side of the ark of the covenant, and kept ordinarily in the holy of holies. It had been lost, or secreted, during the desecration of the temple by Manasseh, but had not been removed out of the temple building."—*Spk. Com.*

d 2 Ki. xii. 9, 10.

The great thing which a young man needs in a crisis of temptation is to declare for the right quickly. Leave no time for temptation to accumulate. — *Austin Phelps*.

Huldah, the prophetess

e "Huldah did not flatter Josiah bec. he was a king."—*Ep. Hall*.

f 2 Ki. xxiii. 30.

g 2 Ki. xxiii. 29.

3—7. (3) **eighteenth year**, this was not the first effort made by Josiah to serve and honor Jehovah, but it proved to be the most momentous. (4) **Hilkiah**, son of Shallum, and father of Azariah.^a **sum the silver**, collected in a similar way to that recorded 2 Ki. xii. 9, 10. (5) **doers**, or contractors, who had undertaken the repairs. **doers**, this second term may include the actual laborers. **repair**, comp. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 11. **breaches**, dilapidations. (7) **faithfully**,^b comp. ch. xii. 15.

Undiscovered wealth.—A poor farmer owned a piece of hard, rocky land, from which, at the price of only the severest toil, he was able to support his family. He died and bequeathed the farm to his eldest son. By an accident, the son discovered traces of gold on the land, which, being explored, was found to contain mineral wealth of immense value. The father had had precisely the same property which the son now possessed, but while the one lived and died a poor man, the other became independently rich. It is not what we have, but what we know that we have, that determines our material or spiritual wealth.—*A. J. Gordon*.

8—14. (8) **book of the law**, that an authoritative copy of the Law, whatever it may have comprised, would be supplied for preservation in the temple we certainly might expect, but after nearly sixty years of neglect of the temple and its services we can feel little surprise that neither Hilkiah nor his fellows were aware of its existence, and that Josiah knew concerning it only what had been taught him by the priests. The half century previous to Josiah's accession had been a period of utter darkness both for people, priests and king.—*Cam. B.* The book of Deuteronomy, *Milman*. The whole Pentateuch, *Ewald*. **in the house**, or temple: during the disasters it was prob. secreted.^c (9) **gathered**, emptied out, fr. the chest.^d (10) **a book**, vs. 8. To Josiah, the book was evidently, as to Hilkiah, in some sort a discovery. It was not, however, a wholly new thing; rather, he accepted it as the recovery of a thing that was known to have been lost, and was now happily found. And in accepting it he regarded it as authoritative. It was not to him "a book of Law" (*Ewald*), but "the book of the Law."—*Pulp. Com.* **read it**, prob. such parts as De. xxviii. (11) **rent his clothes**, in anxiety and alarm, at the evils hanging over the land. (12) **Ahikam**, Je. xxvi. 24. **Aehbor**, or *Abdon*. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 20. **Asahiah**, 2 Chr. xxxiv. 20. (13) **enquire**, of a prophet. (14) **Huldah**, a *weasel*, shares with Miriam and Deborah exclusively this divine endowment. **wardrobe**, of the Levites. **in the college**, *lit. second part*, a suburb of Jerusalem.

The Bible brought to light.—"I reside," says a Scripture reader in Ireland, "with a very friendly family, in a large and well-inhabited village, where all are Roman Catholics, except two families professedly Protestant. The whole of this population never heard of the Bible, and are, consequently, very ignorant. On the Sabbath, I read a considerable portion of it to the family. They were greatly surprised to see so small a book contain such wonderful things, and inquired how I obtained it, and what country it came from? I informed them it was the Book of God; that it was written by the holy prophets of the Lord many hundred years ago; and that it contained an account of the nativity, life, and death of the Son of God, etc. They were all perfectly astonished; and, after I had read a few chapters, the man of the house ran out in haste to two of his next door neighbors, and brought them in to see and hear 'the book of God.' These individuals also expressed their surprise, and, after hearing me read of the birth, miracles, and death of our Saviour, they went out and brought their wives to hear the same glorious news."—*Whitecross*.

15—20. (15) **the man**, an uncourtly style of speech: comp. vs. 18. (16) **words**, or threatenings. (17) **burned incense**, alluding to worship of Baal fr. small altars on the housetops. (18) **sent you**, now she gives a personal message concerning him. (19) **humbled thyself**, as vs. 11. (20) **unto thy fathers**, "Josiah was the last king honorably buried in Jerus." ^f **in peace**, Josiah died in battle.^g The term relates to attacks on his city, wh. were delayed till after his death.

Wrath not quenched.—If a nation persists long in evil-doing, there comes a time when the sentence can be no longer averted. A real repentance has become impossible, and a mock one does but provoke God the more. For such a state of things there is "no remedy." (2 Chron. xxxvi. 16), and this was the state of things reached by the Jews.—*Pulp. Com.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-THIRD.

B. C. 621.

1-5. (1) sent, to call an assembly for the public reading of the law.^a (2) prophets, we only know of Zephaniah, Urijah, and perhaps Jeremiah.^b small and great, the poor and the rich. he read, caused to be read. (3) by a pillar,^c or perhaps, "on a raised scaffold." made a covenant, solemnly renewed the old covenant.^d He acted as representing the people. stood to, agreed to. (4) second order, i. e. the common priests. keepers, Levites, for Baal, ch. xxi. 3-5. Kidron,^e at foot of Mt. Olives. Bethel, to defile therewith the idol altar in that place, where the first step was taken wh. led the Lord's people astray. (5) put down, stopped them fr. further sacrificing, e. c.

The reformation in Judah.—Consider—I. The object of that reformation: to restore the pure religion, which God had originally instituted. Not to introduce any new religion, but simply to revive the old. II. The agents by whom it was undertaken: the king himself, the high priest, priests, officers of the court, and elders. It was effected in a quiet, orderly manner by lawful authority. III. The means by which it was effected. 1. The instruction of the people in the written Word of God. 2. The destruction of all the memorials and institutions of idolatry.—Bp. Perry.

Enthusiasm.—"What we want," said a Chinese convert, "is men with hot hearts to tell us of the love of Christ." The late Dr. William Arnot, of Edinburgh, used to tell of his being at a railway station, where he grew weary of waiting for the train to move. He inquired if the trouble was lack of water. "Plenty of water," was the quick reply, "but it's no' bilin'."—Peloubet.

6-10. (6) grove, asherah, wooden statue of Astarte.^f stamped it, fr. this we must suppose it was partly stone, or coated with metal. upon the graves, as extreme desecration: everything connected with graves was regarded as unclean. children, etc., the common people. (7) sodomites, 1 Ki. xiv. 24. by, R. V., "in," wove hangings, priestesses of Astarte prepared coverings, or tents, for impure purposes. (8) priests, etc., the Levitical priests, who in various cities of Judah had conducted the worship at the high places, were summoned to Jerusalem by Josiah, and forced to remain there, that the unauthorized worship which they had conducted might be brought to an end.—Pulp. Com. Geba, Jeba, 9 m. N. of Jerus. Beer-sheba, S. limit of Palestine.^g high . . gates, prob. two special ones at Jerus. One by Joshua's gate, and one on the left hand. (9) did eat,^h as unfit for office: see Le. xxi. 21-23. Unleavened bread was only eaten at the Passover; and when there was a Passover, was eaten by all alike. Perhaps the reading for "unleavened bread" should be (priestly) "portions"—a reading found by Geiger in an old manuscript.—Exp. B. (10) Topheth (Jos. xv. 8, xviii. 16), abomination:ⁱ also called Ge Hinnom; this word corrupted into Gehenna.^j

Hangings for the grove.—Very large hangings are used in the temples, some of which are fastened to the roof, others used as screens, and others to cover the sacred cars. On them are painted the actions of the gods, as described in the books Ramyanum and the Scanda Purana; and there are portrayed things of the most indecent nature.—Roberts.

11-14. (11) horses, these were sacrificed to the sun by the Persians. The course of the sun has been in many languages compared to the careering of a chariot drawn through the sky. Hence when men began to adore the heavenly bodies, it was natural to dedicate a triumphal car to the sun-god and to keep splendid horses for use in the procession in his honor. Such had been provided in Judah during the days of Manasseh and Amon.—Cam. B. chamber, etc., wh. was turned into stable or harness-room. suburbs, R. V., "precincts." (12) upper chamber, prob. an erection on some part of the temple building.^k (13) mount of corruption, southern part of Olivet. Ashtoreth, 1 Ki. xi. 5. Chemosh, 1 Ki. xi. 7. Milcom, 1 Ki. xi. 7. (14) images, statues, groves, pillar statues of wood, the Asherim. bones, so as utterly to defile them.

Mahmoud.—Mahmoud, the great Mohammedan conqueror of India, when he had reached Somnât, an idol fifteen feet high facing the entrance of the temple, instantly ordered the image to be destroyed: but the Brahmins, threw themselves before him and offered an enormous ransom if he would

Josiah's covenant

De. xxxi. 10-13.

b There were, however, many members of the schools of the prophets.

c "Leaning against the pillar, at the entrance of the inner court, beside the sacred laver."—Stanley.

Comp. 2 Ki. xi. 14.

De. v. 2.

e 1 Ki. ii. 37.

"As every thread of gold is valuable, so is every minute of time."—Mason.

Josiah abolishes idolatry

f 2 Ki. xxi. 3-7.

g Ge. xxi. 31; Ju. xx. 1.

h "They were regarded as ceremonially unclean, and as disqualified from ministering at the altar."—Wordsworth.

i "From Heb. taph, to spit out."—Gesenius.

j Matt. v. 22.

Josiah destroys heathen altars

k "A chamber erected on the flat roof of one of the gateways wh. led into the temple court."—Thenius.

"Prob. built in order that its roof might be used for the worship of the host of heaven."—Spk. Com.

Je. xix. 13; Zep. i. 5.

B. C. 621.

spare their deity. Mahmoud, after a moment's pause, declared that he would rather be known as the breaker than the seller of idols, and struck the image with his mace. His example was instantaneously followed, and the image, which was hollow, burst with the blows, and poured forth a quantity of diamonds and other jewels which amply repaid Mahmoud for the sacrifice of the ransom." — *Elphinstone*.

Josiah defiles
heathen altars

15-20. (15) at Bethel, 1 Ki. xii. 29, xiii. 1, 2. (16) sepulchres, in the rocky sides of *Wady Suweinit*. according, etc., 1 Ki. xiii. 2. (17) title, or pillar, used as a way-mark, or sepulchral monument. man of God, prophet.^a (18) bones alone, regard them as sacred. (19) high . . . Samaria, Josiah's zeal extended even into the neighboring country. (20) slew, more violently treating them than those in his own land.

a 1 Ki. xiii. 30.

Maurice in his *Indian Antiquities*, refers thus to the worship of the British Druids: "The pen of history trembles to relate the baleful orgies of their frantic superstition, when, enclosing men, women and children in one vast wicker image, and filling it with every kind of combustibles, they set fire to the huge figure."

Lessons from an old tombstone (vs. 17). — Look at the gravestone and learn — I. That God's servants shall be encouraged by intimations of the Divine will concerning them. II. That life must not be regarded as the boundary of the servant's usefulness. The dead parent's prayers, the dead teacher's lessons, the dead minister's sermons, all live. III. That God will reward His servants' work, and vindicate their character. IV. That here is a record of the servant's duties. — *H. Parker*.

Sparing the dead (vs. 18). — While the troops of Charles V. were quartered at Wurtemberg, in 1547, a year after Luther's death, a soldier gave the reformer's effigy, in the church of the castle, two stabs with his dagger; and the Spaniards earnestly desired that his tomb might be pulled down, and his bones dug up and burnt; but the emperor observed, "I have nothing further to do with Luther; he has henceforth another judge, whose jurisdiction it is not lawful for me to usurp. Know that I make no war with the dead, but with the living, who still make war with me." He would not, therefore, permit his tomb to be demolished; and forbade any attempt of that nature, upon pain of death.

B. C. 621 to 609.

Josiah
proclaims a
Passover

21-25. (21) passover, comp. 2 Chr. xxxv. 1-19. as it is written, with most exact attention to the requirements of the law. (22) such a passover, either for attendance, or strictness of observance. Both the passover and the day of atonement were observed, though there were times when insufficient regard was paid to the required ceremonial. The passover of Josiah however went back to the complete form ordained in this book of the covenant, and in that respect was remarkable above all those which had been held since the days of Joshua and the elders that outlived Joshua. — *Cam. B.* (23) in the eighteenth year, wh. saw the completion of his reformation. (24) familiar spirits, etc., *R. V.*, "them that had, etc." 2 Ki. xxi. 6. images, teraphim, household gods. idols, "figures used as amulets and talismans." abominations, i. e. secret defilements, magical arts, etc., wh. had to be searched out.

"We mount to heaven mostly on the ruins of our cherished schemes, finding our failures were successes." — *Alcott*.

The Bible and reform (vs. 24). — The Bible — I. Exposes the dangers and abuses of all false systems. II. Supplies clear and authoritative ideas of what is right, and the most powerful motives to act up to these ideas. III. Demands that all efforts of reform shall be thorough and complete. — *Hom. Com.*

Destroying the enticement. — Hon. Neal Dow was lecturing one summer evening, and the flies and gnats gathered in such swarms around the lamp near him that he took out his handkerchief and waved them away. They went for a time, but soon returned. He repeated his movements with the handkerchief, with the same results. Finally he blew out the light; the insects were no longer attracted, and kept away. — *Peloubet*.

the death of
Josiah

26-30. (26) provoked him, Manasseh's crimes were the climax of the national wickedness, ch. xxi. 11-16, xxii. 17. (27) Judah also, as well as Israel. Judah failed to take warning fr. Israel's fall. My name, 2 Sa. vii. 13; 1 Ki. viii. 29, ix. 3. (28) rest, 2 Chr. xxxiv., xxxv. (29) Pharaoh-nechoh, 6th king of the 26th, or Sahidic dynasty; son of *Psammetichus*, king of Assyria, not certainly identified.^b against him, i. e. the Egyptian, acting as under tribute to the Assyrians. Megiddo, in plain of Esdraelon.^c Nechoh may have conveyed his troops to the Syrian coast by sea, and have landed in the Bay of Acre, close to the Plain of Esdraelon. In this case Josiah would have no choice, but must have met him where he did, in the Esdraelon plain. — *Bähr*. (30) own sepulchre, ch. xxi. 18, 26.

^b Most prob. Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar, who had captured Nineveh, and established his kingdom at Babylon. ^c Ju. v. 19; 1 Ki. ix. 25.

Forced reformation imperfect.—The first glamor of Josiah's movement ended in disillusionment. A religion violently imposed from without as a state religion naturally tends to hypocrisy and externalism. What Jehovah required was, not a changed method of worship, but a changed heart; and this the reformation of Josiah did not produce—*Exp. Bible.*

B. C. 597.

"Little sins multiplied become great."

31-37. (31) **Libnah**, Jos. x. 29-32. (32) **evil**, "he was irreligious and of impure habits."—*Josephus.* (33) **at Riblah**,^a on the Orontes, in Syria, about 25 m. S.S.W. of Emesa, now called *Ribleh*. (34) **Eliakim**, or **Jehoiakim**.^b "El" and "Jeho" mean the same, both words are used for "God." **room** . . . **father**, not recognizing Jehoahaz. (35) **taxed the land**, exacting, beyond the gathered treasures, fr. the people themselves. Even this comparatively small sum was a heavy burden for so greatly afflicted and impoverished a country, and Pharaoh further imposed on them a vassal to see that it was duly extorted. This was Eliakim, the eldest living son of Josiah.—*Exp. B.* (36) **Rumah**, either *Arumah*, Ju. ix. 41; or *Dumah*, Jos. xv. 52. "Josephus has a Rumah in Galilee." (37) **evil**, comp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 8; Jer. xxii. 13-17.

Jehoahaz

a 2 Ki. xxv. 21; Je. xxxix. 5 lii. 9, 10, 26, 27.

Vice suicidal.—Three German robbers, having acquired what amounted to a very valuable booty, agreed to divide the spoil, and to retire from so dangerous a vocation. When the day appointed for this purpose arrived, one of them was despatched to a neighboring town to purchase provisions. The other two agreed to murder him on his return, that they might come in for one-half of the plunder instead of a third. They did so. But the murdered man was a closer calculator even than his assassins, for he had previously poisoned a part of the provisions that he might appropriate to himself the whole of the spoil. This precious triumvirate were found dead together; a signal instance that nothing is so blind and suicidal as the selfishness of vice.—*Colton.*

b "In ancient times princes were wont to give new names to the persons who entered into their service."—*Keil.*

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH.

1-7. (1) **Nebuchadnezzar**, son of *Nabopolassar*, who was the founder of the Babylonian empire. At this time associated with his father in government. **servant**, tributary. (2) **bands, etc.**, to harass the king until Nebuch. could deal with him in person.^c A few regiments of Chaldees formed the nucleus of this army. **according to, etc.**, ch. xxiii. 27. (3) **sins, etc.**, the special sins were (1) idolatry, accompanied by licentious rites; (2) child-murder, or sacrifice to Moloch; (3) sodomy (ch. xxiii. 7); and (4) the use of enchantments and the practice of magical arts (ch. xxi. 6); ch. xxi. 11-15. (4) **innocent blood**, ch. xxi. 16. (5) **rest, etc.**, 2 Chr. xxvi. 6. (6) **slept**,^e the writer withholds reference to his sad end. His actual fate is uncertain. (7) **not again**, his power being destroyed at battle of Carchemish. **river of Eg., R. V.** "brook of Eg." Wady-el-Arish, not the Nile.^f

Jehoiakim subject to Nebuchadnezzar

c "Jehoiakim was encouraged to revolt by hope from Egypt, where a new king (Psammis) had ascended the throne."—*Kitto.*

Innocent blood (vs. 4).—A similar statement is found in xxi. 16. And yet we are told in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 19, that Manasseh obtained pardon from God. To reconcile these, if it be necessary, we must remember that Manasseh's sin might be viewed in two aspects—as his personal trespass, and his transgression in his capacity of monarch. His individual sin was removed on his repentance and amendment, his official sin was identified with the nation. It could not be wholly removed for this reason—nations as organizations have no existence beyond the grave, and therefore God deals with them now in the way of judgment or mercy.—*Bibl. Treas.*

d Je. xxv. 9; xxxii. 28.

e Je. xxii. 19; xxxvi. 30; Eze. xix. 8, 9.

f 1 Ki. viii. 65.

Jehoiachin submits to king of Babylon

8-12. (8) **Jehoiachin**,^g son of Jehoiakim, also called *Coniah*, or *Jeconiah*. Jer. xxii. 28. **eighteen**, comp. 2 Chr xxxvi. 9. **mother's name**, mentioned bec. of the part she played in the politics of the period.^h (9) **according . . . done**, adopting the same policy towards Babylon. (10) **the servants**, without their king, who was engaged on the siege of Tyre. (11) **came against**, prob. with a large force, wh. rendered further resistance useless. **did besiege**, R. V., "were besieging." Cf. the words of Jeremiah, ch. xxiv., xxix. (12) **went out**, surrendering himself, hoping to avoid the horrors of siege, and preserve his crown. **officers, i. e. eunuchs.** **his reign**, i. e. Nebuch.'s reign.

g "Meaning, 'The Lord will establish him.' The prophet appears to protest against the empty hypocrisy of the royal names; he takes away from the name of Jeconiah the element wh. connected him with Jehovah, and leaves him just *Coniah*."—*Wordsworth.*

Homiletic hints (vs. 28).—Jehoiachin, an illus. of a short reign and wicked one. At eighteen a king; three months after a prisoner of war (vs. 12).

h 1 Ki. xv. 10.

B. C. 597.

a 2 Ki. xx. 17; Is.
xxxix. 6. Comp.
Je. xx. 6.

b It seems to have
included Ezekiel,
Eze. i. 1.

Unconditional surrender of a royal family to foreign foe, an illus. of the retributive effects of sin.

13-16. (13) cut . . vessels, "rudely hacked off the ornaments of the temple."—*Stanley*. At the former capture the movable vessels had been taken. the Lord had said, by Isaiah.^a (14) all, except those mentioned at close of verse. craftsmen, artisans in wood, stone and metal. These would be useful members of society in Babylon. (15) officers, vs. 12. mighty, not the same word as that in vs. 14; this refers to persons of high civil rank.^b captivity, in which Jeconiah lived 37 yrs. (16) smiths, or forgers of arms.

None remained save the poorest.—The policy of Nebuchadnezzar was to remove out of the way all those who might be able to organize and plan a revolt when he and his army had departed. Hence all the people of rank, of wealth, and of skill as handicraftsmen are deported, and only the poorest folk left, who had neither knowledge nor means for doing more than work of drudgery.—*Cam. B.*

Zedekiah
(or Mattaniah)

c He turned to
Egypt subsequent-
ly, 2 Ki. xxiv. 20.

See 2 Chr. xxxvi.
13; Eze. xvii. 15.

d 2 Ki. xxiii. 31, 36.

e Je. xxvii. 3;
xxviii. 10; xxxvii.
5; Eze. xvii. 15.

"Psaumis, Ne-
cho's son, under
whom the Eg-
yptians in Asia
had been com-
pletely lost, was
succeeded by a
very enterprising
king named Hoph-
ra in (in Herodotus
Apries). Jerusa-
lem, wh. had
always felt more
drawn to Egypt
than to Babylon,
was the object of
his special atten-
tion."—*Ewald*.

17-20. (17) Mattaniah, = gift of Jehovah. A son of Josiah. Prob. one known not to be of the Egyptian party.^c Zedekiah, = righteousness of Jehovah. The new name as well as the old, has Jah (= Jehovah) for a termination. Therefore we may suppose the choice of a new name was left to the Jewish king. (18) twenty and one, comp. 1 Chr. iii. 15; 2 Ki. xxiii. 31; 2 Chr. xxxvi. 2. Fr. these passages it would seem that he must have been 34 or 35. Hamutal, so half-brother to Jehoiakim.^d Libnah, Jos. x. 29-32, 39; xii. 15. (19) evil, a weak man rather than a wicked one. (20) came to pass, it was "through the anger of the Lord" at the persistent impenitence of the people, that that came to pass which actually came to pass—the rejection of the nation by God and the casting of it out of His presence.—*Pulp. Com.* rebelled, threw off his dependency, relying on the support of Egypt.^e

Kings and kingdoms of Judah and Israel.—Soon after Solomon's death Ahijah's prediction (1 Ki. xi. 29-40) was verified, and the kingdom, greatly weakened by the division, formed separate kings of Judah and Israel. As the first effect of Jeroboam's religious revolt, all the priests and Levites were driven to Jerusalem (2 Chr. xi. 13, 14). "With the line of David remained God's promise of permanent kingdom, made doubly sure by its ultimate reference to the Messiah." Moral superiority of Judah noticeable. Israel given up to idolatry; Jehovah worshiped at Jerusalem. Their final fate also presents a contrast. Israel captive 130 years sooner than Judah. "And while the ten tribes never returned to their land, and only a scattered remnant of them shared the restoration of Judah, the latter became once more a small but powerful nation, not free from faults of fathers, but worshiping God with a purity and serving Him with an heroic zeal unequaled since the days of Joshua, and preparing for the restoration of the true spiritual kingdom under the last great Son of David."—*Topics for Teachers*.

B. C. 586.

Zedekiah
taken a
captive
to Babylon

f Eze. xxiv. 1.

g Jer. lii. 4-6.

h "They escaped
not by any of the
regular gates, but
by a passage
broken through a
narrow alley con-
fined bet. two
walls, at the south-
eastern corner of
Jerusalem, wh.
the Chald. army
had not been able
completely to in-
vest."—*Stanley*.
Ne. ii. 15.

i Je. xxxix. 6, lii.
10.

CHAPTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

1-7. (1) ninth, etc., "the day was revealed to Ezekiel in exile." his reign, i. e. Zedekiah's. forts, or movable towers. (2) eleventh year, so lasted one year and a half.^g (3) famine, occasioned by the siege being turned into blockade. (4) broken up, or into, a breach was made; this was plainly the beginning of the end. men of war, who formed the garrison; as the enemy broke in on the north the king and garrison fled by some particular southern gate. way . . garden,^h comp. Je. xxxix. 2-5; lii. 4-8. the plain, or Arabah, lower valley of the Jordan. (5) scattered, by effort to secure their own safety. (6) Riblah, Nu. xxxiv. 11; a city on N. E. frontier of Palestine, in territory of Hamath, on the great road bet. Bab. and Judæa. (7) before his eyes, this barbarity was specially noticed.ⁱ fetters, lit. two chains of brass, the one securing the hands, the other the feet.

The blind king (vs. 7).—Trace his history and character. I. He did not make good use of sight when he had it. II. He was then morally blind. III. Had often looked on the misery of others; now beholds that of those dear to him. IV. He is deprived of sight. The last thing he saw would ever after be seen with the eye of memory. There is also a judicial blindness for those who will not see their own sinfulness and the love of God.

Putting out the eyes (vs. 7).—This was probably done with the intention of rendering the king incapable of ever reascending the throne. Thus it was a law in Persia down to the latest time, that no blind person could mount the throne. Hence the barbarous custom, common at the time of Chardin, and even since, of depriving the sons and male relations of a Persian king, who are not to be allowed to attain the government, of their sight.—*Rosenmuller*.

8-12. (8) **seventh**, Jeremiah says tenth day. **captain**,^a or chief commander. (9) **burnt**,^b that so they might be completely destroyed. **house of the Lord**, Josephus says the burning by the Rom. took place on the same day of the month. (10) **brake . . walls**, wh. they could not burn. (11) **rest**, *R. V.*, "the residue." **fugitives**, persons who, foreseeing the end, had previously gone over to Nebuch. (12) **poor**, mostly people of the district, not inhabitants of the city. *R. V.*, "poorest."

Jerusalem and its sieges.—Probably no capital city of equal consequence and antiquity was ever taken and retaken so many times as Jerusalem. We have no record of the date of its foundation; yet its subsequent history is one of continual contests and continual restorations; and it is no doubt owing to these changes that the ground of the modern city is in many places thirty feet above the level of the old, and that the valleys which formerly intersected its divisions are now filled with soil and *débris*.—*Bibl. Treas.*

13-17. (13) **pillars of brass**, Jachin and Boaz. 1 Ki. vii. 15-22. **bases**, 1 Ki. vii. 27-37. **brassen sea**, 1 Ki. vii. 23-26. (14) **pots, etc.**, some of these had been originally of gold,^c others of bright brass. The gold ones had prob. been taken away when the city was first captured. (15) **firepans**, snuff-dishes. (16) **without weight**, so much that they ceased from weighing it. (17) **height, etc.**, comp. 1 Ki. vii. 15-20; Je. lii. 21-23.

Jerusalem fallen.—O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the wonder of all times, the paragon of nations, the glory of the earth, the favorite of heaven, how art thou now become heaps of ashes, hills of rubbish, a spectacle of desolation, a monument of ruin! There is no prescription to be pleaded for the favor of the Almighty: only that temple not made with hands is eternal in the heavens. Thither He graciously brings us, for the sake of the glorious High Priest, that hath once for all entered into that holy of holies.—*Bp. Hall*. *Jerusalem remembered*.—The Jews at this day, when they build a house, leave one part of it unfinished, in remembrance that Jerusalem and the temple lie desolate. At least they leave about a yard square of the house unplastered, on which they write in great letters: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, etc;" or else the words, "The memory of the desolation."—*Trapp*.

18-21. (18) **Seraiah**, 1 Chr. vi. 14; Ezr. vii. 1. **second priest**, the Sagan, or deputy of the high priest.^d **keepers, etc.**, temple Levites. (19) **an officer**, the commandant of the city. **king's presence**, as members of his council. **the principal scribe**, secretary or adjutant of the host. **people of the land**, representatives of the people. (20) **Riblah**, vs. 6. (21) **smote them**, these being treated as representatives of the conquered people. **carried away**, and their kingdom finally broken up.

The captivities.—First captivity: Nebuchadnezzar (B. C. 597) took Jerusalem (Dan. i. 1), dethroned Jehoiachim, and having directed that a number of royal and noble Hebrew youths should be trained in learning of Chaldees, Daniel and "the three children" were among those selected. Second captivity: Jerusalem again surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar (B. C. 596) 10,000 captives, among whom are Ezekiel, and grandfather of Mordecai (*J.*, *Ant.* x. 6, 3; *Est.* ii. 56). Third captivity: Those now carried away were the gleanings of those led off with Jehoiachim. In Jeremiah (lii. 28, 30) they are called Jews, to distinguish from foreigners, *etc.*, who shared their captivity. The difference in numbers of first captivity and 10,000 of 2 Ki. xxiv. 14, results probably from Jeremiah not counting soldiers. The great difference between the total and those who returned may show how large were accessions from previous captivities, and especially from the ten tribes."—*Topics for Teachers*.

22-26. (22) **people that remained**,^f vs. 12. **Gedaliah**, prob. recommended to Nebuch. by Jeremiah. **Ahikam**,^g 2 Ki. xxii. 12. **Shaphan**,

B. C. 586.

Jerusalem besieged and taken

^a *Lit.* "chief of the executioners."

^b *Je.* xxi. 10; xxxiv. 2; xxxviii. 18, 23.

Nothing develops deep character like sorrow, if the hand of God is allowed to soothe and elevate it."—*Sheldon*.

the temple is pillaged

"The breaking up of the pillars, bases, etc., shows that it was for the material, and not for the workmanship, that they were valued."—*Spk. Com.*

^c 1 Ki. vii. 45, 50.

"Men might be better if we better deemed of them. The worst way to improve the world is to condemn it."—*Bailey*.

the captivity of Judah

^d *So Sept., Syr., Arab., etc.*

"A priest of the second order, *t. e.*, an ordinary priest."—*Keil*.

^e "Prob. instigators of the people to rebellion against the Chaldeans."—*Wordsworth*.

Gedaliah made governor of Judah

^f *Je.* xxxix. 10; lii. 16.

^g He had saved Jeremiah's life, See *Je.* xxvi. 24.

B. C. *cir.* 586.

a2 K1. xxii. 3.

b Jos. xviii. 26.

c Ezr. ii. 22; Ne. vii. 26.

d Comp. Je. xli. — xliii.

"Were half the power that fills the world with terror, were half the wealth bestow'd on camps and courts, given to redeem the human mind from error, there were no need of arsenals nor forts." — *Longfellow*.

the last days of Jehoiachin

e "This slight variety shows that we have the evidence of two independent witnesses of the same event." — *Wordsworth*.

f *Berosus* calls him *Evil-maraduchus*, and says he provoked his fate by lawless government and intemperance.

g "The sovereigns of the dependencies of China are required to present themselves at court, with presents, once in 3 years." — *Huc*.

h Je. lii. 31-34.

Psi. lxxviii. 38, 39, cvi 46; Da. xl. 34.

vs. 27. This kindly feeling is said to have originated in a familiar acquaintance formed in prison, in which

Josiah's scribe.^a (23) **captains, etc.**, mentioned as *scattered*, vs. 5. **Mizpah**,^b now *Nebi Samwil*. **Ishmael**, a man of royal birth, vs. 25. At first he acted as if friendly to Gedaliah, but after a short time, at a banquet where he and ten friends were entertained by Gedaliah, the murder of the governor was perpetrated, and at the same time all the Jews in the house with Gedaliah were likewise slain. All this was done with such precaution and secrecy that for two days nobody outside the governor's palace knew what had been done. — *Cam. B. Johanan*, comp. Je. xl. 18-16. **Seraiah, etc.**, comp. the more perfect passage, Je. xl. 8. **Netophathite**, inhabitant of Netophah, a place connected with Bethel.^c **Maachathite**, De. iii. 14; Jos. xii. 5. (24) **sware**, this assurance was necessary bec. these parties had not hitherto given in their submission. (25) **smote, etc.**, narrated in Je. xli. 1-3. (26) **came to Egypt**, against earnest advice of Jeremiah, whom they forced to go with them.^d Many Jews had already taken refuge in Egypt. Colonies of them were living in Pathros, and at Migdol and Noph, under the kindly protection of Pharaoh Hophrah.

The captivities (continued). — B. C. 586-536 the Jews were captives in Babylon. This interval is marked by the history of Daniel and his companions (see Nebuchadnezzar); the founding of the Persian Empire by Cyrus; the siege and capture of Babylon. From B. C. 536-400 (*i. e.* from decree of Cyrus to close of Old Testament canon) is marked by the first return (42,360 and 7,367 servants, Ezra i. 5), the founding of the temple, elevation of Mordecai, appearance of Ezra (*q. v.*); second return (6,600, end of March, B. C. 458), reformation of religion, commission of Nehemiah (*q. v.*), completion of wall, Nehemiah's return and second commission, followed by his second reformation. "While the restored Jews were thus completing the fabric of their religion, the irregular worship of the Samaritans assumed the form of an organized schism, by the erection of a rival temple on Mount Gerizim." The precise date of its erection is doubtful, but "this much is certain, that such a temple was built as an assertion of the religious independence of the Samaritans, and that this act of schism formed the climax to the hostility between them and the Jews. The temple was destroyed by John Hyrcanus (*cir.* B. C. 109). "It was to this sanctuary that the woman of Sychar referred" (Jo. iv. 20). — *Topics for Teachers*.

17-30. (27) **seven and thirtieth**, B. C. 562. — 1. It might seem a trivial act of mercy, yet the Jews remembered in their records the very day of the month on which it had taken place, because they regarded it as a break in the clouds which overshadowed them — as "the first gleam of heaven's amber in the Eastern gray." — *Exp. B. seven and twentieth*, comp. Je. lii. 31.^e **Evil-merodach**,^f son of Nebuchadnezzar. **lift up, etc.**, showed favor to, Ge. xl. 13, 20. (28) **kings, captive kings, or vassal kings.** (29) **changed, etc.**, R. V., "he changed," *i. e.*, Jehoiachin, for robes becoming to his royalty. (30) **allowance**, enabling him to keep up some degree of royal state.^h

Jehoiachin's daily allowance (vs. 30). — We are all a little like this king of the olden time. We live on the daily portion that the great King of kings allows us. Consider — I. The fact that we have a daily portion. A daily portion — 1. Is all that any one really needs. To be anxious about the morrow involves us in double toil, and care in the present, and lays up disappointment for the future. 2. Is all that we can enjoy. We can only eat and drink one day's food in a day, and wear one suit at a time. 3. It is all we should expect Nature, providence, promises of God, prayer Jesus taught us, teach us this. II. Let us look at the portion itself. 1. It is our Father's allowance. He knows what we need, and what is best. His children have different portions suited to them. Some more, some less than others. We give our children different sized suits of clothes to fit them. Our heavenly Father knows what will fit our spiritual needs, better than we know the bodily needs of our little ones; 2. It is a King's allowance. Nay, "the King of kings." It is therefore sure; 3. It is a perpetually renewed portion. "All the days of his life," many or few days, each one is provided for. Learn — 1. "Man doth not live by bread alone." This portion is the provision of providence. Divine grace has provided another portion. Daily grace, help, blessing. This too may be ours. 2. If you have the portion of providence, and nothing more, you will have all your "good things in this life." He who has made provision for the less has also made provision for the greater. He who blesses the body with health, food, raiment, is willing to bless the soul with pardon, peace, holiness, heaven. — *Hive*.

Mercies remembered.—Bishop Hutton was once traveling between Wensleydale and Ingleton, when he suddenly dismounted, delivered his horse to the care of one of his servants, and retired to a particular spot at some distance from the highway, where he knelt down, and continued for some time in prayer. On his return one of his attendants took the liberty of inquiring his reason for this singular act; when the bishop informed him that, when he was a poor boy, he traveled over that cold and bleak mountain without shoes or stockings, and that he remembered disturbing in his extremity a cow on the identical spot where he had just prayed, that he might obtain a little warmth from the place where the animal had lain. His feelings of gratitude to God for all that He had done for him would not allow him to pass the spot without presenting his thanksgivings for all His mercies.

B. C. cir. 586.

Evil-merodach had lain till his father's death, on account of some fault while acting as regent during his 7 yrs. illness. (Da. iv. 32, 33).

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